

VIJAY TENDULKAR'S KANYADAAN: A STUDY OF POWER-POLITICS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract

Vijay Tendulkar is one of the greatest critics of evils prevalent in society like violence, domination and discrimination among human being with respect to their social or economic conditions. He always raises a stormy voice against these through his works. His *Kanyadaan* is also one of his precious gems. The play is about an inter-cast marriage and its consequence but much more that that it is a study of power politics by different power block in modern era. The play highlights how Jyoti, an innocent girls is used by her father to maintain his supremacy in the power-structure whereas her husband used her as a stepping stone to grab the power reach at the top. The play focus on these hegemon-subaltern relationship

Vijay Tendulkar is one of the greatest critics of evils prevalent in society like violence, domination and discrimination among human being with respect to their social or economic conditions. He always raises a stormy voice against this whether it is in *Kamala*, *Vulture* or *Ghasiram Kotwal*. With his every play he has spotted one or another issue creating stir in society. His *Kanyadaan* is also one of his most admired plays which have highlighted some critical issues. At one level the play deals with *Dalit* consciousness and ideology domination and at another it bring to notice the strife between man-woman relationships where women whether illiterate or educated, financially dependent or independent, attain the role of subaltern.

Staged in 1978, play is considered as Tendulkar's last major staged play. It places a unique place in the canon of Tendulkar's dramatic writings. Though it was staged after *Ghasiram Kotwal*, it is quite different from the earlier one in content and form. It is a discussion play with a story of inter-caste marriage. But according to Nutan Gosavi, *Kanyadaan* is written with an intention to settle scores with the detractor of *Ghasiram Kotwal*. In *Ghasiram Kotwal*, Tendulkar attacked Poona Brahmins orthodoxy during Peshwa period and thus the:

Conservatives in their turn had challenged him to write a similar play on the other section of society and proclaimed that Poona Brahmins, Shorn of their age-old eminence and power were the softest target imaginable. (Gosavi 153)

But with this play Tendulkar took these members of Poona Brahmin Community on to the other side of political spectrum. They are the political progressive community with socialist learning. The play is fascinating with some contemporary issues like class-division and spousal abuse but with a deeper analysis. The play is about the relationships and struggles between two blocks and how these power blocks uses others as subaltern to achieve their goals.

In Kanyadaan Tendulkar highlight the psychological and sociological implications of caste and gender inequalities. He also hinted on the fact that people in power and politics to what extent are really interested in eradicating these social injustices.

The discussion serves to bring out the fact that in the name of different versions of justice in our times—racial, social and gender—new false ideologies are replacing the false ideologies of the old, how can one call this state of affairs an improvement on the past? (163)

The Kanyadan Tendulkar talks about these false ideologies of past and about the also the new impractical idealism. Though the play is short but is compact and divided into Acts and further into scenes. Act I is divided into two scenes and Act –II into three scenes. It opens in a house with the pictures of Mahatma Gandhi, Acharya Narendra Dev, Yusuf Meherali and Sane Guruji, hanging on a wall. The setting seems calm and confident. Audience is introduced to Jyoti, a young girl about twenty, Jayaprakash, a boy who is about twenty three and their idealist father who is shouting on a phone to get information about a bus service from Pune to Asangaon. He is angry on controller because he is not able to give information about his own bus service. He discusses his anger with Jyoti saying:

NATH. The controller must be fully informed about every single bus which departs from his terminal. After all, hasn't he been appointed for just this purpose?

JYOTI. Bhai, the way you talk, it's as if you have be specially appointed for the talk of reminding all the people in world of their duties. (CP 498)

The very introductory dialogues between father and daughter suggest that Nath is an idealist who wants to see the world according to “The visions we had of the future of this nation before Independence!” (498). He is pained to see the careless and irresponsible behavior of people today, “Disgusting. It hurts” (498). Jyoti also seems to be impressed with his idealism and share his idealism. She is busy in arranging the things his father wants for the tour to Asangaon.

The family belongs to upper middle class with political background; both mother and father are social workers. They maintain freedom of thought and action at their home so that there won't be “two-timing tricks” (500). He claims again and again that they have a democracy in their house and is quite proud of it. With this mother comes to house and with her arrival Jyoti discloses to her parents her decision to marry Arun Athavale, a *Dalit* boy whom she has met in the socialists' study group.

Act I scene one focuses on Nath Devalikar, a social worker who is living a life on a vision what they have dreamt for the society, “The visions we had of the future of this nation before Independence! He is pained and disgusted to see “what we are forced to see today!” (498). He and his wife are self proclaimed democrats who “have a democracy in this house” (500), because he is an idealist who doesn't believe in “Democracy outside and dictatorship in the home, we don't know these two-timing tricks” (500). Tendulkar, brings the real face of this democrat who while getting pained by social condition gets worried for his lime juice flask and his stomach as “If the stomach is not in order, speeches becomes worthless” (500). Though he

keep telling that he is worried for his children but keep it saying and shifting the solution, “This is all too much of a rush, baba! This matter will have to be reviewed seriously sometimes” (499). After this serious matter he at once inquired about his medicine bottle. He who was worried for his family and children few seconds ago, says that “The call of the nation is far more important than the call of a wife!” (50) and family.

This is a way to maintain power which Nath used throughout the play. He is always show that he is worried but shrink whenever eyes are on him for help. Seva, his wife seems to rightly comment “not the call of the nation, Nath, it is the craze for speech mongering!” (50). Nath and Seva are the real face of the social worker and society changer. She, another social worker for social development program married her husband because:

SEVA. At that time I thought this man was ‘all right’, could become a minister or something of he did, then there would be a chance for me to show off a bit. . . . but this man stays an ordinary MLA!

NATH. Just you wait! Let our socialists get hold of the government, and then watch out! Who else is there to take the chair? (502)

Jayaprakash satiric comment, “Your dreams and mine!” (502), clears that Nath is an opportunist, waiting for an opportunity to get what he wants and till then he is a democratic social worker.

He is a hegemon who keeps everything according to his own convenience. He grants “fifteen minutes” (500) for her daughter to discuss her life with her parents. He makes everybody sit with him to listen to Jyoti. He made all the promises also on Seva’s behalf and not even let her to go for a little wash because then he has to adjust his time, “No! No means no. Then it will be time for me to go . . .” (503) Even Jyoti request her father to let her go but he said:

No! First we listen to you, everything else afterwards we do so much for the world, and we don’t have time for our own children?! We should be ashamed to call ourselves your parents. (503)

He never let other talk when Jyoti said that she has decided to get married. He got excited and when Seva has her doubts, “Why? If she has made a decision, what is your objection to it? She is a major now. Not a child anymore” (504). He wants to run everybody according to his own wish. He sounds unexcited as “A Brahmin?” (504), but as he comes to know of him as a *Dalit* boy he got overjoyed “Marvelous! But the name sounded like a Brahmin’s” (504). He claims to be a socialist who doesn’t believe in Castes but “if my daughter had decided to marry into high castes, it wouldn’t have pleased me as much... well, I’m telling you the absolute truth” (504).

He is so much exited on his being a *Dalit* that he didn’t let Seva enquire about his family, education and intelligence. He is busy in making Arun a hero. When Jyoti said that Arun is the only one who is bearing all the responsibility in seven brothers and family has debts also, he portrayed him as, “A typical picture of those people. What is so special about that?” (505). Even after this he didn’t allow Seva to speak because “if he is a boy from the *Dalit* community” (505), he must be endowed with great qualities, “See, it’s as if the boys of this community are endowed from birth with the genius for writing poetry” (506).

Jyoti like Nath also seems to be following her father idealism. She knows Arun just for two months and get ready to marry him. Besides give very unconvincing arguments to marry Arun:

JYOTI. He is writing his autobiography. I have read some parts of it. I felt that I could do anything to make him happy.

NATH. Great, Jyoti! (506)

Nath didn't let Seva to inquire about the boy. He keeps arguing on Jyoti's part:

SEVA. Is he trust worthy?

NATH. Objection! If he had not been trustworthy how could my daughter have chosen him? Do you means that being a *Dalit*, he . . . (506)

Seva clears her situation that it is not his caste but it is her daughter she is concerned about who decided to marry a person on the reliability of his poetry and autobiography. Seva is surprised to know of this, "And simply on the strength of this stock you have made up your mind to marry him!" (506)

Nath is unhappy to see Seva doubting Jyoti's decision. He in a fit of excitement, and realizing that he has got that opportunity to get the chair with political power, again interrupted her. He said that if one keeps gathering the information about the person for three or four year and then decide to marry him. He calls it is nonsense. Jayaprakash checked his arguments by saying that marriage is not a deal for few days it is a lifetime decision, so one should crosscheck all the information regarding the person. To this Nath stands with a new argument:

Jayaprakash, do you know what is it to love at first sight? Tsk . . . studying is of no help here, this is a matter of plucking the heart strings If it rings here. It echoes there! (507)

All his hopes get dashed when Jayaprakash tells him that Jyoti is not experiencing any sign of first love and Jyoti also conforms this. She said the decision is not bases on any feelings but on her ideological perceptions, "I too am surprises. It was as if someone had asked, shall we have some tea?" After that I kept feeling that it was all my imagination" (507). Seva is worried on her daughter's casual attitude towards marriage. She felt the influence of Nath's ideological hegemony on her. She further questions her:

SEVA. Do you think you have done a wise thing?

JYOTI. Sometimes I do. Sometimes I think I have acted like a fool. (508)

Finding Jyoti's part weak he put a new argument that they should come to the conclusion after meeting the boy Arun. He said that he can be made more compatible; and Jyoti can help him fulfilling all the responsibilities of his family. He keeps on arguing for Arun without even knowing and him.

Jayaprakash and Seva both interrupted him:

SEVA. Why are you arguing in the boy's favor even before looking at him? Why you are in such a hurry over Jyoti's wedding.

JAYAPRAKASH. Bhai, that is true enough . . . (508)

Nath Devalikar, is not only dominating his house but his daughter's mind also. Jyoti, being a daughter of socialist leaders and reformers get attracted towards Arun, a Dalit boy because of his powerful poetry and his autobiography. Jyoti takes the responsibility on herself to make Arun happy because of the idealistic humanitarian values of her father who is ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of his values. Nath has inculcated these values in his children and to follow her father in letter and spirit, she is ready to take a decision of which she herself is not sure and also think that she has acted like a fool. She agrees to marry Arun for ideals of a caste free society and *Dalit* upliftment not because of passionate love. He herself admits that she just met him two month earlier and does not even know him well:

I don't know much about him. The little I know about him is through his poems. He asked me, I said yes, quite spontaneously. To tell you the truth, I have been learning something of him only since then . . . And sometimes

he shows such a different side, that it strikes me, I don't know him at all.
(525)

Jyoti is not sure that she is doing something right or wrong. She is doing it due to the values inculcated in her. It is due to his autobiography that she felt like reducing his worries and pain, "I felt that I could do anything to make him happy" (506). He gets ready to sacrifice her on the road of removal of castes. Nath's appreciation made her more rigid about her decision. She pay no heed to her mother's advice:

My anxiety is not over his being a *Dalit*. You know very well that Nath and I have been fighting untouchability tooth and nail. So that's not the issue. You have been brought up in a specific culture. To erase or to change all this overnight is just not possible. He is different in every way. You may not be able to handle it. (509)

Her mother tried hard to save her daughter but being a loyal subaltern Jyoti is blind towards everything. She said that she is not going to run away of her decision now. Though she is still not sure what has happened and how has happened, she said, "I will manage, mother!" (503), she was further boosted by Nath words "carry on, Jyo...(510)" and pats.

Jyoti is in great conflict and doubts. Jyoti is shocked to see Arun aggressive behavior, he grab her arm and twist it. She was in pain and confusion. Not only physically he hurt her verbally too. While telling her of their family's condition, he says:

Will you marry me and eat stinking bread with spoil dal in my father's hut? Without vomiting? Tell me, Jyoti, can you shit everyday in our slum's village toilet like my mother? Can you beg, quaking at every door, for a little grass for our buffaloes? Come on, tell me! (513)

At this Jyoti covered her face and start crying. At one time he made her weep and at another he is saying sorry. Jyoti really is in fix. She has realized that she may have made a mistakes. She soon begins to sense that Arun may not be the kind of person she thought him to be, it is now impossible for her to check or change the decision.

Her idealistic training trap her and she says, "But right or wrong, what does it matter anyway? I made a commitment and now I can't run away."(525) and Nath added more strength to this commitment by taking Arun side. He said that Seva and Jayaprakesh is against him because he is a *dalit*. He further adds that brewing Liquor is a hard fact of society. He charged Seva and Jayaprakash for having artificial manner. Though he himself gets shocked on Arun's decision of selling illicit liquor but he keeps on advocating him:

Not only is he not a middle class man, he is a *Dalit*. He has been brought up in the midst of poverty and hatred. These people's psychological make-up is altogether different . . . we must try to understand him and that is extremely difficult. (523)

Jayaprakash and Seva are sure that Jyoti is making a wrong move. They both try to convince her to reconsider her decision. Seva even suggest her to reconsider the decision of marriage. She says that if Jyoti is finding it difficult to tell Arun she herself will go and tell Arun about her decision. Jayaprakash also tried to convince that she should think about it as their mother is not happy about the decision. But the idealist subaltern refuses to back out and said, "I would hate to do that. I will marry him" (525).

Nath blames them of pressurizing her and at once decided that the matter is closed and all of them have to support Jyoti despite of their differences of opinion as it is Jyoti's decision. He ends all discussion with a long speech advocating Arun. He frees him of every charge of rough edges on account of his being a *dalit*.

He may not a gentleman . . . He is like unrefined gold, he needs to be melted and moulded. . . Who can perform this task if not girls like Jyoti? . . . Remember, it is we who are responsible for the age old suffering of these people. We have betrayed them for generations. We should feel guilty about this. And now if Jyoti breaks her word, if she wriggles out of her responsibilities, it would be a kind of treachery. It would amount to running away from the challenge. As a father I would feel ashamed if my daughter were to run away . . . (527)

Nath is very pleased to see Jyoti ready to surrender herself for Nath's dream. He fights tooth and nail with his family for his dream. In Jyoti he sees the potential of becoming another Christ to endure suffering for other people's sin. He wants her to marry Arun to compensate the age old suffering and exploitation all *Dalit* has experienced at the hands of people belonging to his caste. Nath give away his daughter (*Kanyadaan*) for his dreams and ideals. "I am with you Jyoti. What you are doing could be both wise and foolish . . . I stand by you. Go ahead my child, let us see what happens" (527).

It is not Jyoti only who is a loyal subaltern working for Nath's dream, Arun also is one of them. Arun, a violent subaltern is also used by Nath. When Jyoti said that she has decided to marry Arun Athavale, he thought Arun is a Brahmin and lose interest but as soon as he comes to know of Arun as a *dalit*, he starts praising him. He does not let Jyoti to leave him because Arun is the agent with whom he is going to reach what he wants. He thoroughly defend Arun, his rough and violent manners and supported Jyoti decision despite his own doubts about Arun.

The little of the play thus suggests a daughter's sacrifice, which Nath performs in the name of the "norms of civilized humanity" (527). It is not only Nath but society with its social customs also has created hegemony for the weaker section of society. They dominated women with its moral codes and *Dalit* with its social codes. Arun, though in a fit of anger, express the suppression and suffering which *Dalits* has been suffering for years by upper cast of society:

Ten of us, big and small, lived in that eight feet by ten feet. The heat of our bodies to warm us in winter. No clothes on our back, no food in our stomach . . . (512)

In the first scene of second Act, Jyoti come home sad and tired refusing to go back to Arun. She is perplexed and is visible unhappy. Nath is one of those who have made *Dalit* suffer for ages, when it suits them and now when he has a new dream of equality to get name and power to become great like he put his daughter in front. He used a *Dalit* Arun and his daughter Jyoti as things. Seeing her, Nath is in great distress one is not sure that it is because of his daughter's concern or because of his experiment; he is restless and tells Seva.

Seva, let not this wonderful experiment fail! This dream which is struggling to turn real, let it not crumble into dust before our eyes! We will have to do something. We must save this marriage. Not necessarily for our Jyoti's sake . . . This is not just a question of our daughter's life . . . this experiment is a very precious experiment. (537)

Nath is not restless for Jyoti but for a purpose with wider significance. Arun come in drunken position and ask for forgiveness. He created a big drama and convinces Jyoti to come back with him again. Even at this movement when a father should be worried for his child he was more concerned for the experiment. He says to Jyoti, "Jyoti, I feel so proud you. The training I have you has not been in vain." (541) He said his wife that he is worried for his dream though is fully aware of the condition his daughter, Jyoti and the hell she is living in.

To Nath, Jyoti is not an individual with her own rights as human being, but a mean to fulfill his dream. His words to Seva, “Let her go, Seva. She must go” (541) clears his position as a hegemon to whom the pain, feeling and destruction of a subaltern is of no importance.

Theorist of subaltern studies have noted that gendered subalternity is particularly complex as is the case with Jyoti Athavale, wife of a scavenger and daughter of a Brahmin social worker with a high political status, Jyoti is educated, self-earning woman, who not only support herself but her family also. In spite of this entire she has to suffer and is given a subaltern status. She faced the exploitation at both emotional (by her father) and physical (by her husband) level. She is forced to marry a raw brute scavenger, Arun Athavalkar. She is emotionally conditioned by her father to sacrifice herself to his dreams and faiths, to bring change in society and its age old customs.

It is not Jyoti but Seva also have subaltern status Seva is a known social worker who fights for the rights of women but in her home despite her firm determination to save her Jyoti was not able to save her. Tendulkar in his *Silence!* The court is Session has worked on this issue of social conditioning. The work is a big cry of Leela Benare refusing to except her status as a subaltern. Vijay Tendulkar focused on these marginal and subaltern voices to give the actual state of power-hierarchy in our social set up. It seems that subaltern status is assigned due to caste or economic-strength but it raises some doubts regarding this view as then why high class educated women also receives this marginalized status?

Nath has used Jyoti, his daughter and Arun, on outcast for his aspirations. But the real twist comes with the reversal of roles, when it is Nath who is used and dominated. In Act-II there is a shift in role. Tendulkar beautifully worked with this shift of power. Arun Athavale, a subaltern in Act-I, gets nervous in front of Brahmins, the hegemons. But now he not only rejects their dominance but is out to revolt and harass them. One can witness the signs of counter hegemony is Act-I also when he kicks the ball to Seva and Jayaprakash court by talking of selling illicit liquor as a business for future security. Seva and Jayaprakash were visibly discomfited and Arun was enjoying the situation. The twist he gave to Jyot’s arm is symbolises his try to hurt the upper caste and a revolt against them. In fit of his anger against his suppression he made Jyoti cry and put forth his aggression as:

Our grandfathers and great grandfathers used to roam, barefoot, miles and miles, in the heat, in the rain, day and night . . . till the rags on their butt fell apart . . . used to wander shouting ‘Johaar, mayai-baap! Sir-madam, sweeper! And their calls polluted the Brahmins’ ears. (513)

He challenged Jyoti and with this tricks shift his role from a subaltern to a hegemon. Now he used Jyoti to take the revenge.

In Act-II, when Jyoti and Arun get married. He beats and tortured her. They don’t have a home. Jyoti goes on staying with her parents while Arun puts up with his friends. Seva and family get worried about her changing attitude. Seva rightly observes that “This impertinence –it is not yours. We know very well who puts you up to it” (529). It is Arun who is doing this willing and enjoying it. Arun refuse to accept himself as guilty and blames society and his culture for it. He said:

When have I claimed that I am civilized and cultured like your people?
From childhood I have seen my father come home drunk every day, and
beat my mother half dead, see her cry her heart out . . . My poor mother!
She didn’t have a father like Bhai, nor a mother like you . . . (540)

Arun is treating Jyoti like an animal to take revenge but Tendulkar has not used Arun to criticize or present *Dalit* as rash and vulgar. He through Arun actually tried to present the condition of *Dalit* in society. In Act-I, Arun says:

Generation after generation, their stomachs used to the stale, stinking bread they have begged! Our tongues always tasting the flesh of dead animals, and with relish! Surely we can't fit into your unwrinkled Tinopal world. (513)

His speeches regarding their condition brings out the economic and social condition of this marginalized section of society. Though it is also true that Arun is a cheat who in order to create counter-hegemony used Jyoti, the other weak character as an instrument or mean.

Arun serve dual purpose in the play. At a level Arun is a *Dalit* who has suffered a lot with his community but at another level he represents the class of shrewd politically successful *Dalit* leader who manipulate things to his own use. He beats Jyoti mercilessly but when he wants her back he is ready to touch her feet and blames his upbringing. In Act-II, scene-ii he created a big drama to take Jyoti back. When Seva asked him “WHY DO YOU BEAT JYOTI?” (540), he put the whole blame on his cast and their way of living. He answered:

What am I but the son of scavenger. We don't know the non-violent ways of Brahmins like you. We drink and beat our wives . . . We make love to them . . . but the beating is what gets publicized . . . (540)

He exploits the discourse of freedom and self-pity to promote their own interest and to harm others. Later in Act-II when his book get published and acclaimed, he cunningly blackmailed Nath by printing his name on the poster and invitations without his consent. His posture of sitting on sofa was also different one. Nath refused to come as he has not given his promise to come but he forced Nath to come to the function to praise him:

Of course you are not responsible, but the crowds will come with the expectations of hearing Nath sahib's address. Am I right, Hammer Rao? If you don't come, all sorts of rumors will float . . . silly reasons will be fabricated . . . (551)

Arun though is a *Dalit* and has suffered as a subaltern for ages but now he has successfully created the counter-hegemony and attain the role of hegemon he not only dominated but also destroyed other to satisfy himself. Jayaprakash comments rightly on him as:

. . . the very victims of violence may go on to perpetrate the same brutal violence upon others. Perhaps they get a peculiar enjoyment out of it. Perhaps those who are hunted derive great pleasure in hunting others when they get an opportunity to do so. The oppressed are overjoyed when they get a chance to oppress others. (547)

Arun is shown as a victim of the discourse of hatred towards upper castes often perceived among the victim classes. He hates Jyoti for being a Brahmin and beats her as a revenge of the violence they have faced for generation. He hates everything about them—even the idealism of Nath, which according to him is false and fake. Arun is a complex character and his behavior shocked critics. He considers upper caste, his oppressor bad and contrary to them, himself good.

It is not only Arun who rejects her status but Jyoti, the loyal subaltern also rejects the roles and raise a voice. Jyoti listen to Nath appreciative speech of Arun's autobiography. She criticises him for failing to stick to his ideals he has been inculcating in his children for years. She blames him for making them emotional rather than practical. She says: “I was deeply

offended by your hypocrisy” (CP 585). She left her parents and rejects the idealism as a way to face practical life. She accepts that:

There is a savage beast in his eyes, his lips, his face . . . in every single limb. And bestiality is something which cannot be separated from him. In the beginning, like an idiot, I used to search for that Arun who is above and beyond this beastliness, I used to call out to him, take him in my arms. (564)

It is only now she realises that the idea that she can change him, is a lie. Jyoti remembers a scene from her childhood which she often used to see. While in school a man used to carry two twisted creatures in his baskets. Those persons were kidnappers who break limbs of children and make them crippled. Jyoti compared her father to those kidnappers who has crippled them psychologically. Jyoti is hurt and broken. This image suggest her of her own crippled self and she tries to be a normal being now. Her father betrayal pushes her towards Arun so she left them forever. She raises her voice against the exploitation and tells her father, “You made me waste twenty years of my life before I could discover this. I had to learn it on the strength of my own experience” (503). She left her imaginative world and realised her real identity and said, “I am an untouchable, a scavenger, I am one of them. Don’t touch me” (566).

Arun is used by Tendulkar as a motif to bring Jyoti as well as Nath from idealism to real word. Jyoti realised that “Putting man’s beastliness to sleep, and awakening the godhead within is an absurd notion” (563). It is interesting to note that Nath the advocator of casteless society and *dalit* upliftment program, who sacrificed his twenty years old daughter for his dreams himself changes into a Brahmin whose house has been polluted by the visit of an untouchable. He says:

Seva, he . . . his visit has polluted this drawing room, this house, and this day . . . It strikes. Seva you know—you see--I feel like taking a bath, like cleaning myself! Clean everything! (513)

His these words reminds of his speech in front of Arun when he said that he is so much happy on Arun and Jyoti’s decision that he is feeling changed and new. He said:

. . . today I have broken the caste barrier in the real sense. . . I am happy today, very happy. I have no need to change my clothes today. Today I have changed. I have become new . . . (519)

He represents the hypocritic upper caste socialists who keep switching their roles in personal and public life regarding treatment of *Dalits*.

Besides these power struggles, Tendulkar has worked on other tender issue also like the strife between man-woman relationship. Tendulkar in his *Silence!* The court is in Session, Kamal and most prominently in his *Kanyadaan* has highlighted on this complex issue. It is always women who are used as a target to weak the opponent. Whether it is a fight between two armies, countries, communities or in family, it is always this physically weaker person is harassed and tortured. Jyoti also suffers due to her gender. Nath used her as a compensation of the age old suffering he and his ancestors has given to *dalits* and Arun is returning it all to them by beating and abusing Jyoti, a Brahmins’s daughter. Seva rightly observe that Arun is beating her to take revenge from upper caste.

. . . he is returning all the kicks aimed at generations of his ancestors by men of high castes. It appears that this is the monumental mission he has set out to fulfill. (544)

Regarding the present status of women Catherine Thankamma says that though time has changed but the condition of half of the population is still worth considering. She comments:

In a joint family the senior-most male is the head, the Patriarch, while in the nuclear families of today it is the father. Of course with the advent of feminism and a more 'liberated' mindset an open advocacy of the system is no longer considered fashionable particularly among the intellectual elitevery often one finds evidence that shows that what was once an active and overt avowal has only gone underground to surface in more insidious and frightening forms. (Thankamma 80)

Jyoti is a typical case where girls become what the hegemon wants them to be. She was born in political family with progressive views and thus was expected to participate in eradication of social problem. She is continuously feed with some values so that when time comes she willingly sacrifices her life for experiments. But when Jyoti realized the truth she took the relationship with a new perspective "I have to stop thinking and learn to live. I think a lot. Suffer a lot," (565). She accepted her new world:

No. when I come here I begin to hate my world. I want to ignore that truth which I have come to perceive though rather late in life. I want to become blind once again. Hereafter I have to live in that world, which is mine . . . (Pausing.) and die there. (566)

Seva also, though was not able to save Jyoti in beginning but it is she in the end that took the charge in her hand and suggests Nath to go to speech and put everything to an end on practical ground. It is due to her efforts that Jyoti realized her mistake and stop worshipping her hegemon. Jyoti is a new person now who rejects the idealism and accepted reality as it is. Now she starts a new day on a real ground with a hope of a new world. She is not any reformer now, she is one of them who believes to change it from within not from outside.

It is not Jyoti only but Nath, a hegemon also rejects the dominance of idealism on him. He realized that he had ruined her daughter, her whole life despite the regular warning of his wife. He accepts that she could be saved but it is he who did this. He said, "I put our social commitments to the test" (551), and "closed the doors upon her return" (557). He advised his son to not rely on his idealism and wisdom to save him from destruction.

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