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SPECIAL ISSUE

On the Occasion of One Day International Conference On

RECENT ADVANCES IN LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

17th February, 2018

(BOOK- 10)

Guest Editors

Dr. Rmkishan Bhise
Dr. Vishnu Patil



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*Special Issue on the Occasion of International Conference on
Recent Advances in Languages, Literature and Social Sciences*
17 Feb., 2018

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'Tara' an agonized soul in Mahesh Dattani's play *Tara*

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Introduction : Mahesh Dattani is a name that has supported faltering Indian English Drama on the path of distinct identity. He is internationally acclaimed as the most outstanding playwright of Indian English drama in the twentieth century. He is the first Indian Playwrights in English to be awarded the Sahitya Academy Award in 1998 for his book of plays *Final Solutions and Other Plays*. Dattani writes about the real life situation of Indian society and his plays are about the marginalized sections of our society: minorities, women, gays, and hijras (eunuch). They are the weakest but integral part of our society and culture. Alyque Padamsee calls him one of the "most serious contemporary playwright." As we see today gender issue has become a global issue. As far as Indian society is concerned, here too, we are worried about women rights, women education, women safety and women betterment. For this purpose various committees has been formed at various working places as for instance VISHAKHA and Internal Complaint Cell. But when we come across such issue which Dattani has very authentically presented in his play *Tara* that is the choice between male and a female then our society favours a male side.

Gender discrimination : 'Tara' is a play that raises questions to the society for gender discrimination even in between the children of the same womb. *Tara* is an emotional play which shows the bias towards the male child in an upper middle class educated society. The play centers on the emotional separation of the Siamese twins, Chandan and Tara Patel, who are born with three legs. The probability of the third leg's survival is greater with Tara as it is supplied by Tara's blood system. Mr. Patel was forced to decide for the surgery of kids for their separation. The surgery was conducted with the force of Bharati's father and her co-operation by Dr. Thakkar. She manages to convince him to favor male child at the risk of female one. Dr. Thakkar performs the surgery of separating conjoined Siamese twins resulting into Tara being cripple.

Dr. Thakkar defamed his godly profession and led himself to be bribed by Bharati's father into becoming a partner in crime in the bizarre act of severing the leg. He should have upheld his profession by denouncing the decision at his inception whereas he in a way took Tara's life by severing the leg. His wise decision could have given Tara a safe, secured and complete life. For doing this wicked act, the doctor was bribed with a plot of land in Bangalore by Bharati's powerful and political father.

Sense of guilt and repentance : Mr. Patel and Bharati both are responsible for Tara's worsen condition. Parents are whole and sole power for the better life of

children and their love must not be selfish one at the time of making decisions. At the time of performing surgery he did not gather up courage to go against his wife or her father so he remains silent but his silence also has meaning, a meaning of consent. It is his silent permission for the male child to be saved. Now his conscience pricks him for stepping into such a hateful act. The consequences of the conspiracy of retaining the male child at the risk of female child are far and wide adverse on everybody. The psychological imbalance is seen among all the members of the family. Bharati's suppression of her guilt makes her overreact with Tara to express her love. She endeavours to patch-up with her guilt for her daughter's life is the culmination of her committed mistake. She tries to fill the void by showering extra care for Tara. Mr. Patel doesn't want her to meet Tara alone and confess he didn't want her to get satisfaction of confessing. But we also witness, though Bharati dotes on her daughter Tara, she thoughtlessly attributes a piece of her daughter to the son.

Relationship between Tara and Chandan : Tara and Chandan have an emotional as well as physical attachment being Siamese twins. Her attachment towards her brother and internal anguish is expressed in her conversation with him, when she says, "Maybe we still are. Like we've always been, inseparable. The way we started life. Two lives and one body, in one comfortable womb. Till we were forced out.... and separated." The relationship between them is quite strong. They were conjoined from a breast bone down to the pelvic area. Indeed, it was a miracle that they were born alive. Chandan is being admitted in the college but Tara is not. Chandan is not ready to go without Tara. He always wants equal opportunities to be given to her. In one of the instances, when father asks him to join the office with him, he tells him to take Tara. It may have also been a sense of guilt in Chandan for Tara's loss and his profit, physically. They are also spiritually dependent on each other. Chandan also does not take undue advantage of the opportunities given to him. He always tries to do justice to her. Tara eventually dies as her prognosis was already fatal. Chandan could not bear and goes to London where he becomes Dan. He wishes: But somewhere, sometimes, I look up at a shooting star... and wish. I wish that a long forgotten person would forgive me. Wherever she is... Forgive me Tara. Forgive me for making it my tragedy.

Symbolism in the name 'Tara' : The name given to a girl child character in the play "Tara" has symbolism in its meaning as it means Star in English which appears in the sky at night. At one hand it has high position and rewarded with beauty and twinkling but on the other

hand its existence is only for some period of time than it disappears. In the same way Tara in the play is born in a happy family with a curse that she is one of the Siamese twins lived happily for some time unaware of the consequences that is going to take place in her life after surgery. A twinkling star is destined to live in darkness forever. Chandan, another part of Tara envisages their reconciliation towards the end of the play as they get together in a tight embrace, back to their former fused form. They stand for two sides of the same concept.

Conclusion : Thus the play focuses on the harrowing fact of the concealed issues of the contemporary society wherein human relationships are not based on values, emotions and love but on selfish motives. Tara is more enthusiastic and full of spark of life with high aspirations which were not fulfilled owing to her handicapped state. Throughout the play she bears some kind of bitterness against the society. She seems to have some kind of disliking with the outside world though her world consists of only her parents and her brother whom she was ever close to. The play explores the typical Indian mind set which has from time immemorial preferred a boy child to a girl child. "Tara, a feisty girl who isn't given the opportunities given to her brother [although she may be smarter] eventually wastes away and dies.

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