THE CONCEPT OF CRIME AND SIN IN INDIAN ENGLISH DRAMA

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DECLARATION

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PREFACE

The work closely examine the concept of crime and sin in Indian English drama, This investigation is especially important in our era, As modern enlightened society increasingly denies the idea of ‘’sin’’ seeking to erase it from human consciousness . Modern society does not acknowledge “sins” but only “crimes”. The presented work helps to understand an act that human society denounces and making the gradual disappearance of the concept of sin which signifies we must compare this concept with the parallel one that has taken its place: crime. Thus before we can ask, What is “sin”? we must ask what is a crime ?. The work also include the plays with the concept of crime and sin in Indian English drama.

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In every organised society certain acts are forbidden on the pain of punishment. Crime is an action that is against the law. In general, this means the civil law of the society. Sin is Abraham concept that is a violation of god’s will. Crime is Identified by the Government but sin is Identified by God. The punishment of crime is given in this world but the punishment of sin is given after death. Every crime is a sin but every sin is not a crime. Crime is something that is set by social codes of the country you live in, And if broken a punishment is to be given. Sin is a subjective term, And has no parameters to base exactly what it is. It is believed by religious people and ignored by others as a delusion. A sin may not necessarily be a crime and a crime may not necessarily be a sin. For example: Cheating on your partner is not a crime but it is a sin, Smoking weed is a crime but it is not a sin. There is no forgiveness in the law. God will forgive sin if you repent. To repent means more than just saying that you are sorry or to ask for forgiveness. You must turn away from sin, which means to make things right as best as you can, You must feel sorry for what you have done, And you must ask god for forgiveness. Sin is an offense against reason, Truth and right conscience. Sin is that destroys one’s inner wholeness.

In Indian English Drama there are plays which consist of frequent references of imaginary personal predicament or sense of sin and crime in them, In these plays we have a portrayal of scenes where a character undergoes with a situation of committing crime and sin at the same time or may be separately.

In this investigation we will study about the concept of crime and sin in various verities of topic like nature, religious scriptures such as Bible and Quran and Indian English Drama’s like ‘Silence! The court is in the session’ by Vijay Tendulkar, ‘Andha Yug’ by Dharamvir Bharati and ‘Tara’ by Mahesh Dattani.

CHAPTER- 1

TO COMMIT A CRIME AGAINST THE NATURE IS A SIN

The sin of harming creation and has drawn attention to the moral and spiritual crisis at the root of environmental problems such as for humans to cause species to become extinct and to destroy the biological diversity of god’s creation, for humans to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, stripping the earth of its natural forests, or destroying its wetlands, for humans to contaminate the earth’s water, its land, its air and its life with poisonous substances- these are sins. Further, “to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God.”

One can prevent committing acts which goes against the nature and are sinful, our acts like avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other human beings, using public transport or car- pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. We must not think that these efforts are too small to improve our world. They “call forth a goodness which, albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread” and encourage “a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption.

Pope calls global warming sin and says protecting creation is work of mercy as in a message released by the Vatican on Thursday, Francis pointed out the “sin” against creation, which include humans destroying the ecosystem and degrading the integrity of the earth, keeping in mind, Francis called for Catholics to add a new work of mercy which is “care for our common home.” The pope’s message titled “ show mercy to our common home” is divided in to five sections, and it’s largely an appeal for “ people of faith and goodwill” to come together in “ showing mercy to the earth as our common home and cherishing the world in which we live as a place for sharing and communion.”

“If human beings were to treat one another’s personal property the way they treat the natural environment, we would view that behaviour as anti-social and illegal. We would expect legal sanctions and even compensation. When we will learn that to commit the crime against the natural world is also a sin. The fundamental criterion for an ecological ethic is not individualistic or commercial it is deeply spiritual. For, the root of an environmental crises lies in human greed and selfishness. What is asked from us is not great technological skill, but a deeper repentance for our wrongful and wasteful waste. What is demanded is a sense of sacrifice, which comes with a cost but also brings about fulfilment.

We have been commanded to taste of the world’s fruits, not to waste them, we have been commissioned to take care of the world, not to waste it. When Christ fed the multitudes with a few loves and fish on a hill in Palestine, he instructed its disciples to “Gather up all the remaining fragments so that nothing may be lost.” This instruction should serve as a model in a time of wasteful consumption, where even the refuse of affluent society can nourish entire population.

CHAPTER-2

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CRIME AND SIN IN QURAN AND BIBLE

*IN QURAN*- Islam teaches that God (Allah) has sent guidance to human beings, through His prophets and books of revelations. As believers, we are expected to follow that guidance to the best of our ability. What is the definition of a “sin”? The prophet Muhammad once said, "Righteousness is good character, and sin is that which wavers in your heart and which you do not want people to know about."  sin is something to be avoided. From an Islamic perspective, however, there are some sins which are extremely serious and are thus known as Major Sins. These are mentioned in the Quran as being worthy of punishment both in this world and the hereafter.  We each try our best, we each fall short, and we each hopefully seek Allah’s forgiveness for our shortcomings. Allah is prepared to forgive, as the Quran describes “God will love you and forgive you your sins; for God is Much-Forgiving, a Dispenser of Grace.”

 sins are sometimes overlooked by a believer, who then engages in them to the extent that they become part of their lifestyle. Making a habit of sinning brings a person further away from Allah, and causes them to lose faith. The Quran describes such people: “their hearts have been sealed by the sins they have accumulated” . Additionally, Allah says that “you counted it a little thing, while with Allah it was very great.” One who recognizes that he or she is engaging in minor sins must vow to make lifestyle changes. They must recognize the problem, feel remorse, vow not to repeat the mistakes, and seek forgiveness from Allah. Believers who sincerely care about Allah and the hereafter must do their best to avoid both Major and Minor sins.

MAJOR SINS IN ISLAM/QURAN:

* Murder
* Adultery and fornication
* Theft
* Consuming usury
* Drinking alcohol
* Bearing false witness
* Stealing from an orphan’s estate
* Engaging in magic or fortune-telling
* Abandoning a battle field during the time of war
* Slandering chaste women
* Disrespecting one’s parents

These prohibited acts in Quran are subject to a separation in terms of their legal effects. The first group involves acts that involve an infringement upon individual rights such as homicide, theft, fraud, robbery, etc. These acts are considered as crimes and our punishable by public authorities. The second group involves such prohibited acts that do not involve an infringement upon individual rights such as gambling, drinking, fornicating, taking interest on loans or disobeying god in various religious duties like praying, fasting, dressing modestly, etc. These acts are considered as sins and are punishable only by god himself in the afterlife.

One can rectify their sins by seeking forgiveness from Allah, and then practice good deeds such as giving to the needy in charity. Above all, we should never doubt Allah’s Mercy:"If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall remit from your small sins, and admit you to a Noble Entrance.

*IN BIBLE*- The definitions of sin in the Bible are not simply arbitrary dos and don’ts. Instead, they show us the way God lives. They show the spiritual principles by which He lives, the same standard of conduct He expects His human creations to live by. What, then, are the boundaries and standards God has set for us that define sin? The most basic definition of sin is “Whosoever committed sin transgresses also the law for sin is the transgression of the law”. Here God defines a boundary for mankind. He says that sin is transgressing His holy, spiritual law. Breaking that law means crossing that divine boundary, that limit God set for us is sin. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness, lawlessness means without law or against law.

The Bible words defines sin as that if any action or behaviour is wrong, unrighteousness, iniquity and action that causes visible harm to other persons in violation of the divine standard is sin.

Jesus Christ clarified the divine standard by stating:“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.” Here One commonly understood standard of behaviour was to refrain from murdering another human. If someone committed murder, he would himself be put to death. Here Jesus drew attention to the law’s underlying principle: If you think of other people as worthless, viewing them as undeserving of life or existence, then you are in danger of eternal death, not just physical stoning. Jesus Christ showed that sin includes not only our physical actions, but also our thoughts and attitudes. One of the insidious things about compromise is that it spreads. If we get away with something once, we find it much easier to try it again next time. Compromise grows like a cancer. It comes on slowly, then spreads. Before you know it you can be in a fight for your spiritual life. That is why God says that, if our actions aren’t done in faith or according to faith, if they violate our conscience, we are sinning. Jesus said “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar”, that means it is a sin to cheat on your taxes, not just a crime. If you hire an employee and you don’t pay the appropriate taxes and you do other things to break your agreement with the employee then you are not just cheating the employee and the government, but you are sinning against god too. Then you can beg forgiveness until you are blue in the face, but as long as you keep your ill gained profit, you have not repented and therefore god will not listen to you. We need to be sure that what we do is out of faith and confidence that it is right and acceptable to God or not do it. We need to be sure our motives are right and our conscience remains clear in everything we do. For this reason it is vital that we properly educate our conscience so that it is in accordance with God’s Word, the Bible. It is not within our natural ability to discern right and wrong. We are to learn God’s ways that define right and wrong for us. God wants us to live within the boundaries and standards He has set for us, to change our values, attitudes, thoughts and lives so they are in line with His standards, not our own. The process of conversion can be simply defined as replacing our standards, values and thoughts with God’s standards, values and thoughts.

CHAPTER-3

CRIME AND SIN IN THE PLAY SILENCE! THE COURT IS IN SESSION

Silence! The court is in the session is written by vijay Tendulkar in 1967, the play become part of the new Indian Drama phenomenon of the sixties and the first significant modern Indian play in any language to centre on women as protagonist and victim. The play is the milestone in dramatic career of Vijay Tendulkar.

Leela Benare, the central character of the play possesses a natural lust for life who ignores social norms and dictates. Being different from the others she is easily isolated and made the victim of a cruel game cunningly planned by her co-actors. During the course of this so-called “game” which is meaningfully set in the form of a mock-trial, Miss Benare’s private life is exposed and publically dissected, revealing her illicit love affair with professor Damle, a married man with a family, which has resulted in her pregnancy. Professor Damle is significantly absent at the trial denoting his total withdrawal of responsibility, either social or moral, for the whole situation in to which 41 he had landed Miss Benare. During the trial he is summoned merely as a witness while Benare remains the prime accused as the unwed mother of her illegitimate child. Interestingly, the accusation brought against her at the beginning of the trial that of infanticide turns in to the verdict at the conclusion.

Vijay Tendulkar, who is known for his concern for burning social problems of Indian society, through this play tries to explore certain issues of contemporary society like-

* Disillusionment in search for individuality by a woman
* The concept of modern woman v/s traditional woman
* Middle class mentality and its pettiness

The play also shows disillusionment in individuality by a women as in this play Tendulkar tries to explore the world of woman in which a women, the heroine gives up the role of an ideal women and behaves according to her own wishes and as usual the society cannot accept her as an individual and she becomes the object of criticism only. Unfortunately the status of women remains secondary in this world. She is still considered secondary or weaker sex. An Ideal woman is she who confines herself within the four walls of the house and rears up the children and looks after the family. In India, it is believed God dwells, where women are worshipped but she is exploited more due to patriarchy society.

Subha Tiwari in her article Silence! The court is in session. States “the whole responsibility of morally upright behaviour is bulldozed on women. Men are by nature considered to be wilful, wild, childish, innocent and mischievous. Their *sins* are no sins at all. The society has a very light parental and pampering sort of attitude when it comes to sexual offences of men. In case of women the iron rod gets hot and hotter. No punishment is actually enough for such a woman. There is no respite, no 44 shade and no soothing cushion for a sinning woman. She must be stained and abandoned. Her femininity, her needs, her very existence must be ignored or rather destroyed. She must be cornered and brutally killed both in physical and psychological senses. This play is about the pathetic position of women in the male dominated Indian world.”

Benare enters the play with her aggressive, even at times mischievously, seductive, streak in evidence – in her initial interaction with Samant the innocent, compassionate observer in the play. As a teacher Benare is proud of herself she says- “In school, when the first bell rings, my foot’s already on the threshold. I haven’t heard a single reproach for not being on time these past eight years. Nor about my teaching. I’m never behindhand with my lesson.” Thus, she is not ready to be imprisoned in the cage prepared by the society for women. She considers herself as an individual and not merely a woman.

Miss Benare is very vocal, very open and frank in her attack on male chauvinism and false concepts of masculinity. So to pay her back in the same coin, the actors plan to expose and humiliate her through this trial. She gets into the trap. Once the trial begins, there is no shelter for poor Benare. She is labelled by all dirty adjectives. Her private life is exposed and publicly dissected, revealing her illicit love affair with Professor Damle. Miss Benare rejects all boundaries/limitations that are set for a woman. But in her search for individuality she faces only treachery, hypocrisy, shallowness and vanity of the people. Which let herself accused of the crime of infanticide, during the trial sukhatme tries to present the value of Motherhood by saying “women is a wife for a moment, but a mother forever”, so it’s unfair on Miss Benare’s part to take the life of the delicate bundle of joy she has borne. Mr. Ponkshe is called as the first witness. He is asked about the social status of Miss Benare and he gives ambiguous answer that to the public eye, Miss Benare is unmarried but to the private eye… He is also asked about the moral conduct of Miss Benare and he replies that she runs after men too much Mr. Rokde & Mr. Karnik are called as second witnesses. They are asked whether they have seen Miss Benare in a compromising situation. She tries to run away from the dock and goes to the doorway and she tries to unbolt it but it is locked from outside. She is trapped symbolically.

Miss Karnik also admits that the accused had very bad past. The accused Miss Benare attempted suicide because of disappointment in love with her own maternal uncle, This revelation shocks everyone and they all exclaim “what an immoral relationship!” and then Mr. Kashikar says “Miss Benare is in education field, so much immoral life of a teacher can corrupt a younger mind.” Nanasaheb the chairman of the education society has decided to dismiss such a lady from the job who is pregnant before marriage. Sukhatme pleads for the punishment to Miss Benare and strongly puts his argument – “ The women who is an accused has made a heinous blot on the sacred brow of motherhood which is purer than heaven itself, for that any punishment, however great, that the law may have give her, will be too mild for her The character of the accused is appalling. It is bankrupt of morality. Not only that but also her conduct has blackened all social and moral values. The accused is public enemy number one. If such socially destructive tendencies are encouraged to flourish, this country and its culture will be totally destroyed therefore, I say the court must take a very stern, inexorable view of the prisoner’s crime without being trapped in any sentiment. The charge against the accused is one of infanticide. But 53 the accused has committed a far more serious crime. I mean unmarried motherhood. Motherhood without marriage has always been considered a very great sin by our religion and our traditions, Moreover, if intention of the accused bringing up the offspring of this unlawful maternity is carried to completion I have a dreadful fear that the very existence of society will be in danger. There will be no such thing as moral values left. Milord, infanticide is a dreadful act. But bringing up the child of an illegal union is certainly more horrifying. If it is encouraged, there will be no such thing as the institution of marriage left. Immorality will flourish. Before our eyes our beautiful dream of a society governed by tradition will crumble into dust…… I make a powerful plea that “Miss Benare is not fit for independence’ with the urgent plea that the court should show no mercy to the accused, but give her the greatest and severest punishment for her terrible crime.”

So, contemporary Indian society, with its roots grounded firmly in reactionary ideas cannot allow the birth of a child without wedlock. So Benare is accused of immorality, *SIN*, promiscuity, over-sexuality and so on. The situation of Miss Benare suggests that women are to be used, stained forever and then thrown away. The men responsible for it do not have the courage to accept the act he has performed. He cannot bear the responsibility to attached to romantic liaisons. The significant presence in the play is absence of Damle. It is as though the women got pregnant all by herself, the male counterpart has no role, no responsibility in the matter.

In the end after listening to Miss Benare’s justification the court pronounces the verdict. Mr. Kashikar gives the judgement that her sin cannot be forgiven. It must be expiated. Social customs should be observed and marriage is the very foundation of the stability of society. Motherhood must be sacred and pure and Miss Benare has tried to dynamite all these. She is a teacher and the future of posterity is entrusted to her. The authority of the school has decided to dismiss her from the job and he pronounces the verdict – “No memento of your *sin* should remain for future generations therefore this court hereby sentences that you shall live. But the child in your womb shall be destroyed.”

So the play dramatizes extreme form of powerlessness for a woman. A woman can never live as an Individual. A woman is either “devil” or “devil”. A woman who enjoys sex is something odd and dirty. In this patriarchal society, pleasure is considered to be the sole domain of males. The society does not accept women as normal human beings who have vices as well as virtues. Subha Tiwari in her article “Silence! The court is in session : A strong social commentary” writes – “At a deeper level, the play is a comment on lack of individual importance in life, the meaninglessness of life, and the absurdity of various human situations, In philosophical terms, this play is a blow to all those who seek meaning out of this mundane, bizarre, ordinary human existence. To live is to be “exuberant” and “exuberant” one is not allowed to be.

CHAPTER-4

OTHER PLAYS AS CRIME AND SIN

ANDHA YUG BY DHARAMVIR BHARATI

Andha yug was written originally in hindi by Dharamvir Bharati , A Legendary writer in 1953 in Hindi. The English rendering of it is done by Allok Bhalla in 2005. The play begins on the evening of the eighteenth day of the war and ends with the final pilgrimage and death of lord Krishna.

The opens with a prologue which describes the present time as Kali yug or the age of darkness, as described in Vishnu purana. All thoughts and deeds of men will be corrupt and perverse. Lord Krishna only can unite the intertwined good and evil as he is dispassionate and detached. All others are blind, self-absorbed, depressed and confused. The play consist of five acts in total and ends with epilogue.

*ACT 1- The Kaurava Kingdom*: It is the evening time of last day of the battle, the kaurav kingdom is full of depressive mood after their loss in the battle. Two gaurds feel the futility of carrying the arms and guarding the deserted place, vidura feels that origin of bad omen of vultures flying is in the violation of the code of honour to which even Dhritrashtra agrees. Gandhari deeply mourns the loss of her sons and accuses Krishna for it. Vidura warns her not to do so. An old mendicant appears and announces the Kaurav’s final victory, as he had done earlier. Eventually he too admits that he was wrong and Krishna can only change the course of the stars.

*ACT 2- The making of the Beast*: Sanjaya is aimlessly moving in the forest as he does not know how to convey the news about Kaurav’s loss to Dhritrashtra. Ashwatthama, Kritavarma, Kripacharya are the only survivals from the Kaurava camp. Ashvatthama is full of revenge against Pandavas. Ashwatthama kills old mendicant for telling the false prediction of kaurav’s victory. Ashwatthama sleep gets haunted by the thought of killing the old man. At the end chorus informs that it is night of celebrations for Pandavas and concealment of Duryodhana.

ACT 3- The Half- Truth of Ashwatthama: Sanjaya, at last informs Dhritarashtra and Gandhari about Kaurav’s defeat. Yuyutsu, a son of Dhritarashtra also comes along with the crowd. Gandhari insults him for helping Pandavas in the battle. A dying soldier refuses to drink water at his hand; Sanjaya enters and informs everyone about Duryodhana’s killing in the dual. Ashwatthama informs Kritavarma and Kripacharya how Duryodhana’s killing is against dharma, law. Balaram too accuses Krishna for helping adharma, illegal behaviour of Pandavas. He calls Krishna as ‘unprincipled rouge’. Ashwatthama, now mad in rage, takes oath to kill Pandavas by any means. Ashwatthama, Kritavarma and Kripacharya take rest under the tree, on which an owl kills a sleeping crow. Immediately Ashwatthama decides to kill unarmed, sleeping Pandavas.

ACT 4- *Gandhari’s Curse*: Initially Chorus informs that it was Shankara, whom Ashwatthama saw at the Pandava camp. He begs for mercy and Shankara blesses him victory. Shankara also tells him that the final day of Pandavas in coming near. Ashwatthama creates havoc in the Panadava camp by killing many. Gandhari is very happy and wants to see Ashwatthama. Sanjaya with his divine power makes Gandhari see the scene at the battleground. Gandhari wants to remove her blindfold and empower Ashwatthama. Suddenly Sanjaya loses his vision. Ashwatthama hides for the fear of life. Ashwatthama now uses the deadly Bramhastra against pregnant Uttara. Krishna protects Uttara and her child. He takes out the divine diamond from Ashwatthama’s forehead and sets him free to suffer. Gandhari accuses Krishna for this condition and curses him that his Yadav cult will end with infighting and war. Krishna accepts Gandhari’s curse immediately. Gandhari realises her mistake and apologies to Krishna. Krishna consoles her.

ACT 5- Victory and a Series of Suicide: The time moves on and Yudhishthira finally wins the throne of Hastinapur. However he can enjoy peace of mind. The pandavas are victorious but their self-confidence is shattered. The forest catches fire in which Gandhari, Dhritrashtra Kunti die of burning. A burning branch falls of at lonely Sanjaya’s foot and damages him badely. Yuyutsu too meats tragic death as his wounds gets exposed. The scene ends with conversation between the two Guards. They inform the audience about the tremendous ruin that their city is witnessing.

EPILOGUE- Death of the Lord: The play ends with the death of Lord Krishna. Krishna leans against the tree. Ashwatthama enters and sees Krishna in that pose. He curses Krishna for being responsible for destruction. Sanjaya too enters without arms and legs. He is even not able to see. In the meantime, a hunter mistakes Krishna’s foot for deer and aims at it. The hunter releases the bow and there is a flash of lightening. Ashwatthama laughs and Sanjaya screams. A bad smell of blue blood from Krishna’s foot feels the atmosphere and Ashwatthama’s wounds stop soaring. The old mendicant is the hunter who killed Lord Krishna. Yuyutsu says that the death of Lord Krishna is full of cowardness. Such death is not going to secure the future of human race. Ashwatthama feels that Krishna’s death has created faith and hope in his mind. The old mendicant informs about the last words of the Lord. The chorus informs that it is this day, from which the world is descended into the age of darkness. However there is a small seed in the mind of man about courage, freedom and imagination to createsomething new.

The Mahabharata, the longest epic of the world is full of variety of characters and their ways of perceiving things. The great war of Mahabharata and the deep darkness that accompanies it are the central issue in Andha Yug. The play provides a select slice of this epic drama which is full of hatred, self-centeredness, treacheries, sacrifices, massacres, fraud, falsity, disbelief, diseases and unending darkness and blindness and *sins* they have been committing. This war is referred as ‘the dharmayudha’ a war upholding the principles of thought and action.

It is not just a story of the on-field violence but it is a saga of abyssal darkness inside the human mind. It is this inner darkness that makes one blind in spite of the physical sight. Everyone seems to carry the load of self-centeredness and ‘will to dominate’. Hence every character tries to create a way for him in order to establish his presence. It is through the social conditions the discursive and ideological practices get formed. Hence at the beginning the degrading social conditions are elaborated as described in Vishnupurana. The great of war Mahabharata is the starting point of the ‘age of darkness’. It is the condition where everything good and pious would degrade. The virtuous rulers would be replaced by powerful and wealthy. The very thinking of man would be corrupt. The good and conscious have to retreat back from all fields and hide in real caves. Thus the darkness outside and blindness inside the human being would prevail throughout. The condition of the present era would be horrible in every sense. Blind fear and blind love, blind power and blind justice shall prevail in the end.

The life in this condition for any sensible individual is meaningless and absurd. The city is ruled by the king, who is blind from the birth i.e. Dhritarashtra. His wife, Gandhari has accepted blindness voluntarily. The king is unable to guess the forthcoming dangers of the war. He is narrow-minded and visionless. The empire is ruled by the blind and therefore there is no possibility of any hope. The Pandavas have lost the bearing of their character and action after they become the rulers. The attraction of power cripples them to the extent of becoming insensitive towards the outside reality. They are victorious but they are confused about how to rule. They have lost the elders to guide them and the fellow mates to support. Their reign becomes ‘confused and inauspicious’ and even virtue less. Interestingly the sense of dharma has been lost and they turn out be like the savage beast. All the Pandavas, except Yudhishthira have even lost the sense of reality, and do suffer from lacunae.

Every character shows the darkness inside the heart. The Pandavas have already lost their ‘dharma’ while participating in the battle. They have violated all the codes while killing Dronacharya and the other Kaurava warriors. They are wildly ecstatic about their victory without realizing the serious consequences of it. Dhrishtadyumna killed Guru Dronacharya when he was unarmed. It was a treachery because Dronacharya was made to surrender his arms by false news. The news was spread that ‘Ashwatthama is dead’. When asked for the clarification by Guru Drona, Yudhishthira replied ‘The man or the beast.’ It is against the code of war to kill the unarmed. Dhrishtadyumna is guilty of that *sin*. Moreover Yudhishthira, who is known for speaking ‘truth’, too compromises for the sake of victory. Truth gets defeated before the imperial concerns. The Pandavas get more and more morally corrupt as the war progresses. In the final battle Bhima kills Duryodhana by treachery and violatesdharm again. Thus Pandavas are so intoxicated with and because of their powers that they forget that they are fighting to defend dharma. It is the Pandavas who played the foul game.

Gandhari prefers to live in her own created world, which is full of air and noise. Her self-imposed blindness is a symbol of confinement of the vision as well as thought. She exhibits the influence of the ideological formations which do not allow her to think realistically. She is so blind, uncontrollable with the rage against Krishna after the Kaurava’s defeat that she curses Krishna. She herself suffers with a curse of darkness throughout her life. It is only at the end that she seems to understand her mistake. She confesses to Sanjaya, “I was the first victim of my own curse.” She is confined in the hut around which the forest is burning. She is sure to die of burning in that fire. She appears to be enlightened about the ‘darkness’ that she carried throughout her life. She like her husband thinks about getting hope, light, knowledge and salvation through purification. Gandhari too is a creation and victim of the discourse to dominate and self-interest. Interestingly she has accepted the blindness on her own; hence she preferred to stay in that condition throughout her life. Her ‘voluntarily blindness’ is an indication of her willing participation in the discourse of darkness. She is full of contradictions – rationally she is aware about the horrors of war but emotionally she refuses to learn anything from it and continues to support the animality of Duryodhana.

Ashwatthama too is the creation and victim of the discourse of darkness. He is the Kaurava camp and a staunch supporter of Duryodhana. He is enraged with the Pandavas because they killed his father; Guru Dronacharya with hatchery. He is burning with the fire of revenge. He too suffers from the darkness of irrationality, rage and vengeance. During the wartime Ashwatthama feels extremely frustrated, dejected especially after Dronacharya’s ‘heartless murder’. He smashes his bow in this vein of dejection. He is enraged with the feeling of vengeance. He has decided to turn himself into a blind, ruthless beast. He releases himself from all types of moral bondages. He accuses the Pandavas and especially Yudhishthira for this degradation. Yudhishthira’s half truth led to Dronacharya’s killing. After this act Ashwatthama loses all goodness in him. He turns into wild beast. He blames Yudhishthira’s half-truth for his condition as he has lost faith in anything innocent and gentle in the world. His present is devastated with one small event. His future is also lurking in the darkness. He as a result of this uncertainty and helplessness develops self contempt. He starts looking down upon himself.

Yuyutsu is another character, who suffers because of the discourse of conflicting interests. Yuyutsu is the son of Gandhari and Dhritarashtra but he prefers to participate in the war from the Pandava side. He therefore hated by all the common people, the Kaurava soldiers and even by his mother; Gandhari. When he enters Hastinapur after getting badly wounded in the war, he is welcomed with rumors and bad words. People in the city shut their doors in fear of Yuyutsu. They perceive him as a sorcerer, a giant, a child- eater and a vulture. They look at him as some kind of supernatural spirit or ghost. There is a contempt shown towards him even by a dying Kaurava soldier. He refuses to drink water from Yuyutsu as Yuyutsu only killed him in the war. Yuyutsu is reduced to some ‘strange, unwanted’ phenomena. Interestingly he fought with lot of zeal and commitment. Yet he is dishonored. He is victimized because he did not follow the traditional path. He went to the Pandava camp and fought against his own father and brothers. He switches over to the Pandavas because he sincerely perceives them as the warriors fighting for upholding dharma(principles). He opposes Duryodhana for his behavior, which even the great people like Bhishma or Dronacharya could not do. In a way, Yuyutsu, by revolting against Duryodhana shows that Duryodhana’s approach and ideology are wrong. He shows the courage to oppose adharma. He feels that his birth in the Kaurava clan does not necessarily ensure his support to their evil actions but he can follow dharma by switching over to the Pandava camp.

the guards who are protecting the palace of Dhritarashtra. It is extremely ironical that they are protecting that palace which is deserted. They feel that their life is ‘meaningless’ as they are protecting sick and blind kingdom. They even feel exhausted to live such ‘meaningless’ existence. They witness the fall of great warriors, humiliation of Yuyutsu, animality in Ashwatthama, helpless conditions of Sanjaya and Vidura. They are the onlookers of this great destruction. They expected some change in the condition after the defeat of the Kauravas. Unfortunately the things remain the same even if the ruler has changed. After assessing the overall situation, they conclude that the rule of Dhritarashtra was far better. They feel that at least he knew how to rule though he was blind. They wish to have a strong and firm leader whose orders can be followed. They represent the common man’s stand about the situation. A common man may not be interested much in ideal and philosophical things. He is more concerned about the practicalities of life. The opinions of the guards clearly mention the fact that ideal things proves to be useless in day today practice.

there is a scene where Ashwatthama asks Kripacharya that “What should I do? I don’t think that it is a sin to kill. I am obsessed with killing. I long to break the neck of anyone I meet. Tell me what should I do tell me” here ashwatthama is filled with revenge and anguish and is saying that according to him killing someone is not a sin, but according to god’s will killing is one of the major sin one commit. Then in one scene Yuyutsu is saying “What is my crime? That I was on the side of the truth? Here he is asking that is supporting the right is the crime or not. Then in Interlude Vidura’s Spector says that “I am vidura a devout and righteous follower of Krishna. In an age when everything is so strangely complicated my faith is simple and unassuming. But now my voice is full of doubt for it seems that my Lord is like a useless axle which has lost its wheel and cannot turn by itself. But it is a sin to doubt and I do not want to sin.” Here in this scene vidura is doubting in whom he has immense faith and says it is a sin to doubt the Lord and the sin which he don’t want to commit. Hence these all explaination of Andha Yug with the concept of crime and sin proves and shows various incidents and scenes regarding characters committing the crime and sin.

TARA BY MAHESH DATTANI

Mahesh Dattani is an Indian Director, Actor, Playwright and Writer. He is the first playwright in English to be Awarded the Sahitya Akademia Award. He is described as one of the India’s most serious contemporary Playwrights writing in English. By Alexander Viets in the International herald Tribute. All of the plays of Mahesh Dattani are based on social issues, Tara is one of them.

Tara is a story of a girl who wants to twinkle and shine, just like her name. Dattani using the themes like gender identity, discrimination, middle-class life, revelation etc. He through these themes has beautifully shown the agony of a girl in typical Indian society. Also, in this play we can see him experimenting with the stage.

Right from the beginning we can see the difference between male and female. Like, in scene where Bharti has finished her pooja, and Patel is getting ready to go to work. These are stereotypical gender roles and Dattani makes full use of them. Another example is when Tara explains to Roopa about the conversation between father and son, "The men in the house were deciding on whether they were going to go hunting while the women looked after the cave".Another, theme is revelation where Tara comes to know that it was not her father but mother who discriminated between herself and her brother right from the age of 3 months when Bharti, her mother insisted on giving the third leg to her brother which rather suited her more Dattani as a playwright breaks the unity of place, time and action in the very beginning of the play. After the soliloquy of Dan where he is shown in London at the lightening speed he appears in Mumbai from present to past. Here, he is able to disregard the unities by the help of lighting alongwith the music effects.

When the play begins a spot picks When the play begins a spot picks up Dan and faint music is played when he is imagining the past and for past spot lights is up the stage level to highlight Tara and Chandan who walks in. Then the lights cross fade to the Patel's living room and the action moves there. Again, when Dr. Thakkar is introduced to us, the light picks him up while Dan fades into darkness. But, Dr. Thakkar's interviewer is Dan who continues to speak from his level. Dattani very cleverly uses the lights to highlight the action wherever he wants at any level without any breaks for change of scene. It is this that gives the play the feeling of unity of action. Music is so well used that it creates and enhance the mood of characters. Fade music for past- flash backs and different music when Tara is hurt or fight between Bharti and her husband or when the secret is revealed.

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Erin Mee writes in the note of the play, ``Tara centres on the emotional separation that grows between two conjoined twins following the discovery that their physical separation was manipulated by their mother and grandfather to favour the boy[ Chandan] over the girl [ Tara] .Tara , a feisty girl who isn`t given the opportunities given to her brother [although she may be smarter ] eventually wastes away and dies. Chandan escapes to London, changes his name to Dan , and attempts to repress the guilt he feels over his sister`s death by living without a personal history. Woven into the play are issues of class and community , and the clash between traditional and modern lifestyles and values.``

CONCLUSION

Simply we can say, all crimes are sin but all sin are not crime and some crime are crime not a sin in the society. Crime is a legal concept sin ia moral concept. Crime is defined, therefore, by civil codes. Sin is defined by god. Social sin is committed when sin’s power affects others and directly affects human rights, basic freedom, human dignity justice and common good. In this report I have discussed the concept of sin in Indian English Drama, reference of sin in context of nature, religious scriptures, its definition. And I have also discussed it in Indian English Drama’s like ‘Silence! The court is in session,’ by Vijay Tendulkar ‘Andha Yug’ by Dharamvir Bharati and ‘Tara’ by Mahesh Dattani.

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