ABSTRACT

Mahesh Dattani is a prominent voice of the subalterns in the contemporary Indian dramatic scenario. He has carved a niche by giving a vent to the pent up frustration and silence of the long suppressed, unrecognized and marginalized communities and genders. The most spectacular aspect of Dattani’s oeuvre is its potential to break a fresh ground by highlighting the issues which have hitherto been swept under the carpet by society. His plays possess the power to stir the consciousness of society and compel every individual to revert to the norms and values of society which is deeply rooted in the Gendering process.

The mainstream Indian society lives in a state of compulsory synchronization with the cultural norms. Majority prefers to conform to cultural, social and gender stereotypes which results in the ghettoisation within the society. Hence, little spaces are created to which marginalized are pushed. This thesis is aimed at the study of the selected plays of Mahesh Dattani in order to explore the cognizant efforts of the playwright to rebut the conventional understandings of pre-assumed characteristics of men and women and subverting one kind of characterization or construction of gender stereotypes. Dattani’s entire opus can be seen as a relentless assault on Indian patriarchy which shifts women at the margin.

The study highlights Dattani’s vision by analyzing his major selected plays where he raids the treasuries of social construct where our meaning of male and female has been preserved, in order to highlight that identity of Indian woman is deeply linked to social, cultural, religious and regional features and is a bricolage. An analysis of the selected plays of Dattani establishes him a living personification of deconstructing gender dichotomy and revisiting gender tyranny in the Indian context. Towards the end it will be highlighted that the new image created by Dattani is multi-dimensional and discrete image of woman as opposed to the earlier uni-dimensional chimera.