PREFACE

It has been well said that no writer has ever written or can ever write in isolation for his socio-cultural, political and economic environment. Literary techniques from time to time have undergone a visionary as well as an aesthetic metamorphosis, necessitated by the demands as well as the exigencies of race, ethnicity and gender. Writers worldwide have made feminist articulations in poetic, fictional, dramatic and theoretical forms. Compared to other literary genres, drama by its nature holds two-fold significance — that of the text and the performance. This multi-dimensional nature of drama connects it to society more closely particularly the Indian society which has which has been constantly undergoing the upheavals of cultural flux. Mahesh Dattani’s theatre is committed to social transformation particularly to the stereotypical role assigned to women. The power dynamics that operate in the dramatic world of Mahesh Dattani not only raise issues of patriarchal assumptions about gender and gender roles that continue to oppress women but also highlight alternatives to the concept of gender where feminine and masculine need urgent redefinition. Various feminists and writers worldwide have been deeply perturbed over the very basic and bitter fact that fairer sex is gender and male society is power.

In this dissertation, the major selected plays of Mahesh Dattani are analysed to highlight the vision of the dramatist to re-position gender stereotypes within patriarchy in the Indian context and also to dissect the cauldron of gender which has been stifling Indian women for ages. The confrontation of binaries that has been pondered and debated by various feminists and writers in the Western and Indian context is relevant to the argument of the thesis and makes Dattani emerge as a sui generis in the galaxy of various literary luminaries. What makes Dattani extremely convincing is his creative genius to highlight the gender inequality with a fresh and innovative perspective.

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