The Construction of Contemporary Indian Subjectivity
in the Selected Plays of
Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani

Abstract

of

the Dissertation Submitted for PhD

Supervisor: Dr. Rajesh Kumar Sharma
Reader, Department of English
Punjabi University
Patiala

Submitted by: Alpna Saini
Reg. No. 124-PUP (PhD) 07

Department of English, Punjabi University, Patiala.

2010
The Construction of Contemporary Indian Subjectivity
in the Selected Plays of
Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani

Alpna Saini

The present dissertation examines the construction of contemporary Indian subjectivity in the selected plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani. It is organised into five chapters. The first chapter is divided into three parts. The first part deals with a brief survey of the historical course of drama in India, including a survey of the criticism with special reference to Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani. The second part deals with the Western perspective on subjectivity in terms of theory. The third part briefly studies the Indian perspective on subjectivity.

Chapters Two examines subjectivity as it appears in the selected plays of Vijay Tendulkar. Tendulkar explores the socio-political matrix of Indian subjectivity in his plays. In the third chapter of the dissertation Girish Karnad’s selected plays are examined for the construction of contemporary Indian subjectivity. Karnad addresses the problematic of Indian subjectivity chiefly by employing the devices of myth, folklore and history. The fourth chapter deals with the plays of Mahesh Dattani who addresses the relatively unexplored and very contemporary issues of sexuality as constitutive of the contemporary urban Indian subjectivity.

The Conclusion tries to forge a common ground on which the plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani can be compared so as to help us form a more or less composite conception of contemporary Indian subjectivity. Together the three playwrights seem to yield a substantial picture of contemporary Indian subjectivity which,
needless to say, is at the same time ever evolving and extremely malleable.

The study of the selected plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani helps us to grasp contemporary Indian subjectivity complementarily. While it cannot be claimed that the picture of Indian subjectivity which emerges from our study is a completed and closed picture, it may be reasonable to state that certain important constituents of that subjectivity stand revealed to us through a theoretically informed analysis of the plays of the three great Indian playwrights of our times.