

“A Terrible Beauty is Born”: Investigating Dattani’s Ambivalence towards Indian Independence in *Final Solutions*

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Abstract

The paper aims to dig deep into the history of Indian Independence and its traumatic effect on communalism through the lens of Daksha and her diary. Mahesh Dattani’s play *Final Solutions* (1993) revolves around the themes of communal hatred, riots, use of history, memory, partition or migration, religious prejudices, and woman’s identity formation in gender and caste-stricken society. Through the character portrayal of Daksha, Dattani exposes the native or Indian resistance against the British to bring freedom after many movements and fights. It has taken the precious lives of the freedom fighters and patriots, and then finally the country frees itself from the bondage of colonial rule. But yet ‘things have not changed that much’ during Independence and even after Independence in India though India is considered as a multicultural, multi-religious, and multilingual country. But Dattani’s ambivalent attitude is presented through his emphasis on the life of a woman like Daksha and the lack of unity, and harmony of the Indian people after getting Independence. Rather, it gives birth to the issues like casteism, communalism and communal hatred, violence among them. Apart from communalism, Indian Independence remains futile because it fails to bring freedom to the restricted or confined life of a young bride Daksha in a hetero-patriarchal society and even her dream to become a singer remains unfulfilled. Dattani deals with the issues related to class, caste, and gender in Indian society. He questions the religious ideologies, moral ethics, and marriage institution as well as he traces the process of woman’s identity formation in a man-made society. The paper attempts to show Dattani’s ambivalent attitude towards Indian Independence in *Final Solutions*.

Keywords: communalism, history, memory, partition, ambivalence

Introduction

Mahesh Dattani is the first Sahitya Academy Awarded Indian English playwright in India. He has such a tremendous contribution to Indian English Literature and has written many plays such as *Dance Like A Man* (1989), *Bravely Fought the Queen* (1991), *Final Solutions* (1993), *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* (1998), *Where Did I Leave My Purdah?* (2012) etc. Dattani does not write plays for reading only, but rather his plays are basically written to be performed on stage. His plays are categorized as stage play,

and he prefers to be a part of the audience while his plays are performed on stage. Therefore, he can directly communicate with the audience through the representation of his characters. While explaining the reasons behind writing plays, Dattani asserts in his preface to the *Collected Plays* (2000) firstly, “ I am certain that my plays are a true reflection of my time, place and socio-economic background” (Dattani x). Secondly, he elucidates further that “I also know that I have a lot to say and am probably not saying it well enough. But my characters have a lot to say too, and they seem to be doing rather well at having their say” (Dattani vi). That is to say his plays are the perfect photographic representation of the contemporary Indian society from social, familial, political and religious perspectives. This paper intends to focus on the political condition of India, history of the nation, Indian Independence and how it impacts on the lives of the people individually as well as collectively regardless of caste, class, gender and religion.

Final Solutions is a stage play in three acts and first performed on stage at Guru Nanak Bhavan, Bangalore on 10th July 1993. The director of this stage play Alyque Padamsee explains that - “As I see it, this is a play about transferred resentments” (Dattani 161). The present paper aims to critically analyze *Final Solutions* and to investigate Dattani’s ambivalence towards Indian Independence in this play. As an Indian, Dattani takes the themes of his play from Indian history, heritage, cultural diversity, difference, religio-political condition, and social structure. India was under British or colonial rule for almost 200 years. But after lots of battles, fights, movements, and sacrifices of the patriots, India gets Independence on 15th August 1947. Dattani’s symbolic representation of Daksha’s diary reveals the history of Indian Independence, its effect on women’s lives, partition issues, migration problems, and communal riots in India- “...in August, a most terrible thing happened to our country” (Dattani 166). Though for every Indian, it seems a beautiful thing that the country gets freedom, but Dattani describes it as a ‘terrible thing’, as W.B. Yeats described Irish National Movement and Easter Rising 1916 as “A Terrible Beauty is Born”. Dattani unmask the masked deep-rooted problems of India and exposes another side of Indian Independence that gives birth to communalism, communal hatred, riots, partition, and migration issues in India. Instead of bringing harmony and unity among Indians, Indian Independence builds an invisible wall between two communities- Hindus and Muslims. Apart from that, Dattani reveals that Indian Independence fails to bring freedom to the lives of women. Though, the country gets freedom from British domination, but women do not get freedom from male domination. That is why Independence remains quite useless and it does not affect to the Indians especially women. They remain the same before Independence under colonial rule, and after Independence under patriarchal rule. They are now as they were before. That is why this paper attempts to show Dattani’s ambivalent attitude toward Indian Independence.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Dattani’s *Final Solutions* is a thematically as well as theoretically loaded play. Daksha’s diary brings in the issue of Memory Studies. On the other hand, Aruna’s blind religious or caste consciousness and her prejudices regarding the stigmatization of Bobby or Muslim man’s body as pollution or impure paves the path for Dalit Studies. Though in 1955, the Untouchability Offences Act was passed in India for the legal abolition of untouchability followed by the Protection Civil Rights, but still the caste discrimination prevails in contemporary Indian society. Dattani wonderfully describes the futility of

legal system that fails to eradicate prejudice or the darkness of the heart of Indian people. Jyotibarao Phule and B.R. Ambedkar and the Dalit Panthers of Maharashtra fight for the annihilation of caste system. Kancha Ilaiah aims to grow Dalit consciousness or collective consciousness that he terms as 'Dalitbahujan' or 'Dalitization' in his book *Why I am Not a Hindu*. Daksha's married life, her changed name and unfulfilled dream lead us to interpret the play from Feminist point of view to trace the tragedy of her life and how she remains as the 'Other' or 'Second sex' or subordinate creature in her family. Betty Friedan condemns the myth of happy affluent housewife in her book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) and Germaine Greer also fulminates the myth of marriage in *The Female Eunuch* (1970). But Hardika's attitude towards the Muslim boys and her description of pre- Independence and post-Independence India can be interpreted through the Partition and Postcolonial perspectives. This paper aims to focus specially on Dattani's attitude towards Indian Independence through the lens of Homi K. Bhabha's ambivalence.

The Birth of the Nation

Final Solutions leads us to the threshold of the origin of India as a nation-state. The country has a long history of its origin, name, and fame. From the mythological perspective, the nation is called 'Bharat' following the name of the half-brother of the Hindu God Rama who appears in the great Indian epic *Ramayana* (Fox 64). While exploring the ideological way of making India, Richard G Fox states, "Its identity rests on a Hindu consciousness and on a nationalism that constructs India as a Hindu nation" (Fox 63). That is to say, the naming or origin of the nation is very much spiritual as well as religious in nature. Later, it develops another term from 'Bharat' to 'Hindustan'. But from the political perspective, the nation can be interpreted as 'the modern form of collective political organization' (Sarkar 2). In 1940, Muslim League proposed to the British Government regarding the establishment of 'Pakistan' for Muslims and 'Hindustan' for the Hindu Community. Though at the beginning of the liberation movement, it was a form of resistance to British colonialism and westernization, not against Muslims; but very soon just after the Independence, it is followed by migration and partition. After its Independence in 1947, it was divided into two nation-states- Hindustan or India and Pakistan. So, the nation-state is redefined by the two communities- Hindu and Muslim, and the subcontinent's division is actually a 'political consequences' (Pandey 176). That is to say, the concept of nation or nationhood is not a natural thing, but rather it is socio-politically constructed. As Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin state that

"nations are not 'natural' entities, and instability of the nation is the inevitable consequence of its nature as a social construct. This myth of nationhood, masked by ideology, perpetuates nationalism, in which specific identifiers are employed to create exclusive and homogenous conceptions of natural traditions. Such signifiers of homogeneity always fail to represent the diversity of the actual 'national' community..." (135).

That is why Muslim and other minority communities fight for liberating themselves from British rule as well as from the Hindu rule. This is how the liberation movement, sacrifices of the freedom fighters, and patriots bring Independence to the country from the British rule and its colonial ideology. This constitutes several binary structures- Hindu and Muslim, Hindustan and Pakistan, past and present, tradition and modern,

individual and group, national identity and religious identity, living story and dying history or memory. 'The colonial construction of the Indian nation' (Kumar 76) proceeds towards the legacy of partition followed by the ideological function of partition. In the context of the Indian partition, Liah Greenfeld states that

"It is also significant that as a major factor in shaping individual and group identities in India, dividing Indians' political commitments, and pitting Muslim Indians against the huge majority of others, Islam emerged only when absorbed into national consciousness" (Greenfeld 118).

Sarkar elucidates further the effect of partition—"partition, as the underside of independence, remains a festering wound in the collective psyche of South Asia... Partition emerged as a national trauma" (Sarkar 1-2).

Heterogenization of Indian Culture

Dattani deconstructs the slogan 'unity in diversity' and sheds the light on the cultural differences among Indians. He exposes how this slogan is inculcated into the psyche of the people to transcend all the barriers and differences on the basis of race, ethnicity, caste, religion, and gender. Dattani demonstrates that apart from national identity, there is also individual identity based on gender, race, culture, religion, and community. The chorus and the masks represent the existence of two different community-Hindu and Muslim. His metaphorical representation of the mask unmasks the disharmony, disintegration, and divisions among the communities. Sarkar asserts that

"The end of the British Raj led to the birth of two sovereign nation-states: on August 14, Pakistan came into existence; the next day, India was born. This truncation, referred to as the Partition of August 1947" (Sarkar 1).

Dattani shows his ambivalent attitude towards Indian Independence and also to the question of partition, migration, communalism, and disintegration of the Indian people and their cultural legacy or difference.

Ambivalence and Impact of Independence

The term 'ambivalence' means 'co-existence of contradictory feelings or impulses toward the same object' (Buchanan 15). Sigmund Freud adopted this term from Eugen Bleuler for psychosexual reasons to consider the transference process called resistance. But in Postcolonial Studies, Homi K Bhabha used this term to describe the contradictory feelings of the colonized people toward the benefits of colonialism and the loss of national sovereignty (Buchanan 16). As Bhabha in his, *The Location of Culture* states, 'It is a non-repressive form of knowledge that allows for the possibility of simultaneously embracing two contradictory beliefs' (Bhabha 80). He explains the term in detail-

"The 'true' is marked and formed by the ambivalence of the process of emergence itself, the productivity of meanings that construct counter – knowledge...within the terms of a negotiation (rather than negation) of oppositional and antagonistic elements" (Bhabha 22).

As Dr. R. Devanand in an article writes that *Final Solutions* is Dattani's "honest attempt at sensitizing the public about the dangers of prejudice and discrimination based on one's race, ethnicity and religion" (Devananand 104). This play deals with the issues of communalism, the partition of Hindustan and Pakistan, migration and the traumatic

memory of immigrants, demolition of Hindu God's idol, killing of 'Hindu poojari', the concept of 'Hindu khatre mein hai' (Hindus are in danger), communal violence, hatred, and unjust religious ideologies. While considering the context of the play, Vijay Nair asserts that-

“...the Babri Masjid, a Muslim mosque in the city of Ayodhya, considered by the Hindus to be the birthplace of their god Ram, was demolished by a rampaging mob. The aftermath of that event led to a flaring of communal tensions and sparked riots between Hindus and Muslims in many Indian cities. *Final Solutions* was Dattani's response to the violent events and a plea for tolerance” (Nair 3).

Prakash Bhadury elucidates further the context behind this text saying that Dattani's play is “in the wake of the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992 in India that unleashed violence and riots between the two major communities, namely the Hindus and Muslims” (Bhadury 19).

Daksha's Diary, History and Pre / Post Independence India

The paper aims to reflect on Dattani's ambivalence towards Indian Independence and people's response to it. Through the character portrayal of Daksha and her documentary diary, Dattani describes the history, heritage of India, Indian society, and culture. Daksha preserves all her thoughts, opinions, beliefs, incidents, and experiences in her diary. She wonderfully memorizes all her childhood memories, her dreams to become a singer, her position or role in the family, marriage life, and all the affairs of the private and public world. She tells her tale of how she becomes a woman, a Hindu woman, and how communal hatred starts to grow within her heart. Daksha describes how the two tremendous things or incidents have terribly changed her life, her father's death on the one hand, and her marriage to Hari on the other. Daksha's father fights for Indian Independence, but just after partition he was brutally killed by a Muslim mob on the street in Hussainabad - “He was beaten up on the streets. While we were waiting for him at home to take us away from the hell, he was dying on the streets” (Dattani 222). She narrates her story of how the country's freedom fails to bring freedom to her life and leads her to solitary confinement due to the partition or migration issues and communal violence. She wants to be a singer and has a gramophone in her home that contains all the beautiful songs of Shamshad Begum, Noor Jehan, and Suraiya. But the mob outside her home breaks it with stone and destroys the entire collection. Though her father's death by the Muslim mob begins to sow the seed of communal hatred within her soul gradually, but yet her fascination for listening to the Muslim singers remains constant until she gets married to Hari. Her early marriage at the age of fifteen to Hari brings disaster to her dream- “All my dreams have been shattered...I can never be a singer, like Noor Jehan. Hari's family is against my singing film songs” (Dattani 166).

After forty years of Indian Independence, she is going through the same communal violence, hatred, and riots; when the Muslim mob breaks the chariot and God's idol and kills the poojari- “After forty years...things have not changed that much” (16). Indian Independence and the patriots' sacrifices seem futile when it fails to keep and sustain order, equilibrium, unity, and harmony among Indians. It also fails to bring freedom to women's lives and how marriage institution or custom becomes a barrier to Daksha's career, and after getting married to Hari how she becomes Hardika from Daksha. She is

learned to obey her in-laws and her husband “After all, he is my lord and master” (175). Apart from her internal or private world, its politics and gender division, and marginalization, she also exposes all the affairs of the public world, the partition issues after Independence- “But things are changing around them. The violence has stopped. Hari tells me that all the bad people have left for Pakistan... There must be someone who is thinking about the country’s future” (196). Daksha’s fascination for Noor Jehan’s songs and her friendship or kinship with Zarine lead her into the threshold of Zarine’s house. Despite her family’s disapproval or unwillingness, she advances her hands toward Zarine to build a good friendship. Noor Jehan’s song bridges the gap between two communities, Daksha and Zarine. Daksha documents all her opinions, and traumatic experiences from her personal life affairs to the political affairs of the country, social relations among communities, and the effects of Indian Independence in her diary. She traces her journey from a young bride to Smita’s grandmother. Her friendship with Zarine ends abruptly due to her husband’s disapproval and physical-mental torture. She sacrifices her dream, and friendship with Zarine and confers her at the feet of her husband. This is how she becomes a woman and a Hindu woman. When after forty years of Independence, she again confronts two Muslim boys Javed and Bobby at her house and starts remembering the unforgotten painful memories. Her statement clarifies her transformation and her attitude towards the Muslim community-

“HARDIKA. They hurt me so much.
DAKSHA. Oh God! Why do I have to suffer?
HARDIKA. My own family. Because of them!
DAKSHA. I just wanted them to be my friends!
HARDIKA. I would have been so happy if I hadn’t met them.
DAKSHA. Oh! I hate this world!
HARDIKA. I hate your pride! I lost respect forever in the eyes of my husband because of the pride of your people! I was ruined.
DAKSHA... I promise! I won’t do it again!
HARDIKA. Confined. Never let out of the house. Like a dog that had gone mad!
DAKSHA. (hysterically). Let me out!
HARDIKA. I hate the way you look! I hate the way you dress! I hate the way you eat!” (Dattani 223).

Dattani’s *Final Solutions* is politically loaded with the themes of Indian Independence, partition, migration, border, nationalism, and communal riots. Though the constitution of India alludes to the freedom of individual religion in article 35 (1), but Dattani exposes the reality of Indian society where even after forty years of Independence, the communal riots, communal violence, religious conflict, and intolerance issues prevail in India. The reason for communal violence is wonderfully traced by Ahmad and Van der Veer in an article- “The partition of British India following widespread communal violence immediately draws attention to the particular origin of the Indian citizenship regime” (131). Through the representation of the Chorus, Dattani reveals communal hatred and violence. He explores how the religion and rituals or customs are not safely practiced in India and it becomes an issue of intolerance. While the procession of the chariot is going through the mohallas, the Muslim mob breaks the chariot, and the God’s idol as well as kills the poojari. This event or incident instigates communal hatred among Hindus towards the Muslim community-

“CHORUS1. It is in their blood!
CHORUS 2, 3. It is in their blood to destroy!
[...] CHORUS 4. (questioning) Send them back?
CHORUS 2. (pounding with the stick). Drive... them... out.
CHORUS 5. (questioning). Drive them out?
CHORUS 3. Kill the sons of swine!” (Dattani 168-169).

Dattani aims to focus on the cultural differences and discrimination of the Indians. Indian Independence instead of uniting the Indians divide the people and breaks the harmony of the nation. Throughout India, communal riots and hatred are visible here and there everywhere. Independence leads to the counter-movements, counter-history, and events like partition and migration -

“CHORUS 1. Why did they stay?
CHORUS 2. This is not their land. They have got what then wanted. So why stay?
CHORUS 3. They stay to spy on us.
CHORUS 4. Their hearts belong there. But they live on our land” (Dattani 176).

Dattani harshly criticizes the political ideology that aims to perpetuate nationhood by transcending all the differences based on race, ethnicity, caste, religion, and community. He condemns and attacks the attitudes of the Indians who are religiously prejudiced and politically ignorant of their fundamental rights of religion and humanity. By representing Hindu Chorus and Muslim Chorus, Dattani generalizes the whole community as if the Chorus seems to be a representative of the community. He deals with the binary oppositions to explore the socio-cultural diversity and differences- Hindu and Muslim, ‘them’ and ‘us’, ‘we’ and ‘other’, superiority and inferiority, majority and minority, Hindustan and Pakistan, etc. The Muslim Chorus exposes the identity crisis and the minority issues in India-

“CHORUS 1. What must we do? To become more acceptable? Must we lose our identity? Is that what they want? Must we tolerate more? Does our future lie in their hands? Is their anyone more unsure more insecure than us? Oh what a curse it is to be less in number!” (Dattani 208).

Dattani tries to represent the issues of both communities and paves the path for counter-discourse. He gives voice to the voiceless minority community as well as to the majority and makes a platform where they can stand together to share their individual experiences. The Hindu Chorus declares their sense of insecurity and loss-

“Our future is threatened. There is so much that is fading away. We cannot be complacent about our glorious past seeing us safely through. Our voices grow hoarse. Our bellowing pales in comparison to the whisper of a pseudo-secularist who is in league with the people who brought shame to our land! Half-hearted, half-baked, with no knowledge of his land’s greatness. He is still a threat.” (Dattani 212).

Continuation of Communalism

The concept of ‘Time and Space’ plays a major role in this play. The play represents three generations of the Gandhi family in the different time-period - pre-independence in the 1940s, Independence in the 1947s, and post-Independence or after forty years of

Independence to show the difference and continuation of attitude towards life, humanity, and community. Daksha's life narratives from 1940 to 1948, and her documentary diary expose the historical events of Indian independence along with the cultural difference between communities. In this play, 'space' refers to the kitchen room and the 'pooja room' from where the seeds of communalism and the issue of untouchability grow among Hindus and Muslims. Dattani sheds light on these two spaces to explore how the religious ideology works to spread hatred among people against people. Aruna and Smita share oppositional ideas regarding religion and differentiate the cultural and religious practices of Hindus. My paper attempts to show how Smita dares to dismantle the unity of the Hindu community, and unmask the truth of religion. Apart from the communal or religious identity, each and every individual is carrying own idea of religion and identity. There is not only a difference between Hindus and Muslims but also a difference in-between the Hindu community. So, it is not the communal difference, but an individual one-

“ARUNA. Does being Hindu stifle you?

SMITA. No, living with one does.

[...] SMITA...We would never have spoken about what makes us so different from each other. We would have gone on living our lives with our petty similarities” (Dattani 211).

Bobby also expresses his idea of religion, “Maybe my religion oppressed me far more” (213). So, the concept of religion is not something natural, but rather it is a kind of imposition on everyone, and its ideologies are socio-culturally constructed by the community leaders. In this context, Ram Ahuja defines 'communalism' -

“Communalism is an ideology which states that society is divided into religious communities, whose interests differ and are, at times, even opposed to each other. The antagonism practiced by the people of one community against the people of other community and religion can be termed 'communalism'” (20).

When Daksha makes friendship with Zarine, her family threatens and tortures her, similarly when the Gandhi family comes to know Smita's friendship with the two Muslim boys- Javed and Bobby, Smita faces the same threats from her family-

“HARDIKA. Where did you meet them? In college?

SMITA (unsure). Well – yes.

RAMNIK. What does that mean?

ARUNA. Stop her studies! From now on, she can stay at home” (Dattani 188).

Dattani tries to connect the past with the present, and demonstrate that the present is nothing, but a continuation of the past. 'Nothing has changed that much' before independence and even after independence. The attitude towards women and the opposite community remains the same and constant. My paper concentrates on the heterogeneous national cultures, the difference between communities, and the displacement and disjunction among Indians. That is why Dattani expresses his ambivalent attitude towards Indian Independence and reveals the reality behind the concept of 'unity in diversity'.

Religion as Political Institution

Dattani gives more emphasis on individualism and selfhood and discovers the dirty politics of the community where each and every individual becomes a victim of the disciplinary mechanisms of institutionalized religious practices. Javed's pride in his faith in religion and community brings disaster to his life. Javed's family throws him out of the house because of his affiliation with the political parties and communal groups. Though, he is claiming that he is fighting to preserve his religious faith and motherland, then why he is not accepted by his own family. Dattani showcases the cultural or ideological differences and heterogenization of the Muslim community. Smita discloses the game of politics while introducing Javed - "You are the victims and we, the offenders!" (195). Though, she elucidates further how Javed falls prey to the politicization of religious ideology- "SMITA. Those...parties! They hire him! That's how he makes a living. They bring him and many more to the city to create riots. To ...throw the first stone!" (195). Javed problematizes the formation of political and religious institutions by disclosing its underneath dirty politics and ideology. His realization or actualization of his own deeds leads him to the world of disillusionment from where he has no escape as well as 'no purpose to his existence'. Dattani emphasizes how the religious ideology and the seeds of communal hatred or violence are imposed on and inculcated into the psyche of the people-

"JAVED. [...] Raise my voice in protest...The first screams are of pleasure. Of sensing an unusual freedom. And then...it becomes nightmarish...Everyone is alone in their cycles of joy and terror...Why am I here? What am I doing? ...It is a terrible feeling. Being disillusioned...I hate myself...They always talked about motherland and fighting to save our faith and how we should get four of theirs for every one of ours" (204-205).

Religion also becomes a hindrance for Smita and Bobby. They never share their secret feelings for each other due to their religious consciousness. Smita knows very well that if she loves Bobby, her family will never support that relationship. So, they feel that religion is a kind of superimposition that never let them love each other by transcending all the psychical, social, and cultural barriers. Smita's statement alludes to her depth of feeling and unrequited love for Bobby - "There are some things that need to be forgotten" (218).

Duality and Darkness of Heart

Dattani seeks to show the duality or contradictory feelings of the Gandhi family members as no one is free from religious prejudices. Dattani gives more emphasis on the heterogenization of cultures, the demystification of religious beliefs, and hegemonic ideologies. He discloses that religion is not something natural, but rather it is constructed and communal riots are created for political purposes. He unmasks the masked politics of the institutionalized religious practices, through the representation of the characters, the Chorus mob, and the psychological description of Hindus and Muslims. Dattani criticizes how the ideology is imposed on the people who try in vain to get free themselves from the religious consciousness. Ramnik knows the history and reasons behind communal hatred that begins when his father and grandfather burn the shop of their neighbor Muslim community. Since Ramnik is carrying a sense of guilt, so he provides shelter and jobs to those Muslim boys in order to reduce his guilty conscience. Though he pretends to be liberal at the very beginning, but ultimately his true nature

reveals when he humiliates and threatens Javed to derogate his pride, arrogance, and anger-

“RAMNIK. Now you are provoking me? How dare you blame your violence on other people? It is in you! You have violence in your mind. Your life is based on violence. Your faith is based on [...] You are the criminal [...]

JAVED. [...] You don't hate me for what I do or who I am. You hate me because I showed you that you are not as liberal as you think you are” (198-199).

Through Ramnik's behaviours and attitude toward Javed, we get his dual nature. On the other hand, Aruna was born and brought up in a well-practiced Hindu cultural family. But instead of being humanitarian, her 'sanskar' or culture makes her blind and conservative. Though, she knows and believes that God is one and all religion is equal so does people, yet her attitude towards Javed and Bobby exposes her duality in nature that increases the intolerance and untouchability issues -

“ARUNA (to Javed). Please try to understand. We have nothing against you. It is only that, we have our ways and customs and...and...we are all equal. There is no doubt. We respect your religion and we wish you well. Why we have friends who are...Smita has so many friends who are not...All religion is one. Only the ways to God are many” (209).

After saying that she shows the other side of self and ambivalence towards Javed - “we don't allow anyone to fill our drinking water. No outsiders” and then she defends her viewpoint by saying that “we bathe our God with it”, that is why “It has to be pure. It must not be contaminated” (209). In this context, Dalit theoretician and an eminent social scientist Gopal Guru states that “The ideology of purity-pollution helped the top of the twice born to transmute the human body as an aesthetic idea into a filthy reality” (Guru 213). He uses the term ‘rejection of rejection’ in order to reject the formation of disciplinary society based on caste system. He also claims that “The body of the Dalits is treated as if it is trapped into a septic tank” (Guru 213).

Quest(ion) of Solutions

Memory plays an important role in Daksha/ Hardika's life. Her life experience and memory never let her forget the haunted history. Nothing and no one can alter her memories. Dipesh Chakrabarty defines memory -

“is a complex phenomena that reaches out to far beyond what normally constitutes a historian's archives, for memory is much more than what the mind can remember or what objects can help us document about the past” (143).

Even after forty years of Independence and the Partition of India, Hardika neither forgets the past nor completely accepts the present. Still, she is carrying the seed of communal hatred within her heart since her father's death -

“All those memories came back when I saw the pride in their eyes! I know their wretched pride! It had destroyed me before and I was afraid it would destroy my family again! (pause.) They don't want equality. They want to be superior” (172).

Hardika's painful past and mournful memory always let her speak about displacement, disintegration, migration, and partition issues. Within Hardika's heart, the communal hatred grows due to her father's death by the Muslim mob, so she questions Javed and Bobby "Have you ever thought of going to Pakistan?" and also gives them some unwanted advice- "There you can live the way you want. Without blaming other people for your failures" (221). Based on her own memory and experience, she wants them to do the same as she did forty years ago- "like we did. Many years ago. Me and my family, we left Hussainabad. My father died in Hussainabad" (222). Her father's death memory explores the duality in nature and her contradictory feelings within Hardika's heart that neither let her love her own community people who fail to save her father's life nor does she accept the opposite community who kills her father just after the Indian Independence and Partition- "where were our own people when we needed them?" and Ramnik explains the reasons of her anger, hatred and deepest pains- "Her father died in Hussainabad, soon after partition" (191). Though at the end of the play, Bobby tries to convince and negotiate with Hardika to bring a solution to the existing burning communal issues by forgetting the past and tolerating each other community people, but she remains constant in her point and her memory or experience, because she knows there is no freedom at all and no way to escape- "I still am not willing to forget. Days have passed since that night and not one of us has forgotten. One more memory? We do not speak to each other. We move in silence. And I-I remain confined" (225). Alyque Padamsee, the direction of this stage play questions "Can we shake off our prejudices or are they in our psyche like our genes? Will we ever be free or ever –locked in combat...Arabs against Jews, whites against blacks, Hindus against Muslims? Are there any final solutions?" (161).

Conclusion

In *Final Solutions*, Dattani documents historical events like Independence of India, Partition of India, the consequence of Independence in the private world and public domain, communal riots or violence, people's response to it, migration, and marginalization of women. This paper explores Dattani's ambivalence towards Indian Independence and how he is against gender violence as well as communal violence. So, he gives more emphasis on the consequence and effects of Independence instead of glorifying Indian Independence. He questions the religious ideologies, institutionalized practices, and prejudices. Dattani breaks the myth of 'unity in diversity' or homogenization of cultures and demonstrates the heterogenization of Indian cultures based on different classes, caste, gender, and ethnicity.

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