

## **The Theme Of Violence And Communalism In Arthur Miller And Mahesh Dattani's Plays, With Special Reference To "Final Solution" And "Incident At Vichy".**

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### **Abstract**

The Purpose of this paper is to show how the inhuman behaviour is seen among people based on caste community, and religion all this is a cause resulting in violent outbursts and communal riots. This is shown through the plays of Indian play wright Mahesh Dattani and American dramatist Arthur Miller. Miller's 'Incident at Vichy' (1964) and Indian English playwright Mahesh Dattani's 'Final Solutions'(1992) both deal with a historic moment that points out, how violence can be common to racism, religion, and national imagining. Miller through the Nazi experience and Dattani's centred around the recent Hindutva movement in India. Both show an image of the Holocaust and communalism, which is a serious threat to humanism. Miller through his play reveals the theme of racism, anti-sentimentalism, and the holocaust occurs during the German's slaughter of the Jews out of racist hatred. During World War Second many people wanted to escape from Europe to America. Communalism is an instrument for divining and exploiting people on a status-quo. It strives at the root of national integration. Here both the plays writers tried to present a solution to this problem. The dramatist feels that mutual trust, communication, and respect for one- another beliefs and religion help in overcoming communalism hatred, tension and violence.

**Keywords :** Communalism, Riots, Racism, Violence, Holocaust.

Mahesh Dattani, the most unconventional and modern playwright related to Indian English drama, used the stage to bring unseen topics to the audience's attention. Mahesh Dattani is a multifaceted artist who specialises in modern Indian English plays. He is a director actor, dancer, instructor, and writer. All of these personas are the outward expression of the persona that was born on August 7, 1958, into a Gujarati family that had settled in Bangalore.

Arthur Asher Miller (October 17, 1915 – February 10, 2005) was a prodigious American playwright, essayist and prominent figure in the twentieth century. He was born in October

1915 in New York City to a woman clothing manufacturer, who faced economic depression in 1930s.

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"Final Solution" is a three-act play about prejudice against communalism, which leads to violence against Hindus and Muslims. The play opens with two Muslims young boys Bobby and Javed chased by an angry mob seeking shelter in the house of Ramnik Gandhi a Hindu family.

Daksha is as a young girl. Hardik remembers the seed of eternal hatred sown by the Britishers in India; they declared independence and left India with a complex problem of communalism. Daksha's speech implies communal hatred.

Daksha: "My father had fought for that hour.

And we were happy; when it came he said he was happy

We were rid of the British. He also said something did not understand then, He before leaving them had let loose the dogs.

I knew they were thinking the same of us."(Dattani 5)

Daksha's father was killed by Muslims in the riots that's why she hated the minorities. She is the character that symbolizes the majority of Hindus and their sufferings.

Javed becomes a terrorist, and the politicians in the name of Jihad exploit him to kill the pujari during the rath yatra procession. He first throws a stone to create chaos. When he is about to kill the pujari the knife falls and somebody else kills the pujari, but the blame falls on Javed. He tries to convince the police but later says the police always harass innocent and common People.

Bobby whose original name is Babban a Muslim and a friend of Javed. He holds the idol of lord Krishna in the puja room of Aruna wife of Ramnik, who gives shelter to Javed and Bobby, who were running from the mob of Rath Yatra procession. Bobby tells Aruna that you can try to bathe him day and night, splash holy water on God to remove the touch of him from the idol.

Bobby tries to make Aruna understand that to God all are equal and God welcomes the warmth of his hand. Because God respects, believes, and tolerates human beings. Bobby also believes in one another. He holds the idol of lord Krishna in the puja room of Aruna wife of

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Ramnik's wife fears the entry of Muslim boys as she has religious intolerance towards them.

She comments... "Please try to understand we have nothing against you,

It is only that we have our ways and customs,

We respect your religion and we wish you well.....

Only the ways to god and many" (Dattani 55).

Dattani shows maltreatment towards religion through the character of Ramnik's wife, who is narrow-minded towards the other caste whereas her daughter Aruna has sympathy towards them. Ramnik is guilt-conscious about the deeds of his ancestors.

RAMNIK: "And we burnt it. Your husband, my father, and his father.

They burnt it in the name of communal hatred.

Because we wanted a shop. I don't think

I will be able to step into that shop again.

I'll be able to step into the shop again." (Dattani 75)

His father did injustice to the Muslims in the name of communalism. His father burns the shop of a Muslim. That's why Ramnik is liberal towards the Muslim boys who suffer a sense of insecurity.

Mahesh Dattani at the end of the play ends with a 'Final Solution' to forget and forgive the past like Ramnik and leave a note of religious tolerance attitude, which will enhance human and national relations. The playwright wishes to end the religious discord.

'Incident at Vichy' is a one-act play about ten men detained based on "racial" discrimination by German military officers, during World War second for the suspicion of being Jewish. In the fast half of the play, the characters are unable to understand, why they were brought there. There is fear and anger among them to know the motivation behind their arrest. They try to wait for their fate and do not try to escape from the police station.

The characters are "frozen there like members of small

Orchestra at the moment before, they begin to play". (Miller 1)

They think it might be a routine identity check. The second half of the play shows the different reactions of various characters to the situation. Lebeau says that the Germans will kill them.

LEBEAU: I'm nervous.....I mean I'm nervous anyway. (Miller 3)

Bayard tries to calm down Lebeau.

BAYARD: It's not your mother. The monopolies got control of Germany.

Big business is out to make slaves of everyone,

That's why you're here. (Miller 6)

Marchand and Monceau say it is just a routine identity check. Marchand is called by the captain of police, the professor and two detectives interrogate him and then a pass is given to leave. Bayard tells the detainees about the mass killing on trains going to Nazi camps in Germany and Poland.

"My faith is in the future and the future is socialist." (Miller 31)

But he says that he believes in socialism. Every prisoner examines their paper and thinks they will be fine till they have their papers in order, Monceau believes that the Germans enjoyed his acting; they have respect for his art.

MONCEAU: I'd like to agree with you, Prince von Berg, but I have to say that the German

Audience – I've played there – no audience is as sensitive as the smallest.

The nuance of a performance; they sit in the theatre with respect, like in a church.

And nobody listens to music like a German. Don't you think so?

It's a passion with them. (Miller 24)

So they cannot kill the Jews. Monceau becomes panicky by the conversation and asserts that they are part of history.

Prince von Berg says that....

"Ninety-nine per cent of the Nazis are working-class people" (Miller 33)

Bayard warns Ludes to unite the prisoners to escape. He requests the German army to let them go free, but the major is bound by the army command which is not significant. During the talk, the gipsy and Bayard are taken for interrogation, but they do not return. When the turn of the writers comes, he refuses to summon. The captain beats and drags him, but they don't return. The major argues with the professor about their method of investigation. Leduc disagrees with such racial laws. Von Berg is released after cross-examination.

In the end, Von Berg gives his pass to Ludes to escape. The professor, the captain and the detective rush to catch him. The play shows, how the Nazis manage to make the holocaust and how the Nazis resist. If every person in a society like von Berg has a conscience of such sacrifice, then every victim can be saved.

The reason for the passes and the uses of those passes however shows radical difference. Von Berg says that he never said a word against Jewish people; Leduc says it is everyone's responsibility to fight against such human brutality.

Von Berg suggests that

“They are nothing. It is the hallmark of the age-less

You exist the more the more important it is to make a clear

Impression” (Miller 38)

The play ends with the notion of justice through human communication. The play shows guilt, fear and complicity. In the last moment of the play, a new group of detainees arrive to occupy the bench. Miller through his play reveals the theme of racism, anti-sentimentalism, and the holocaust occurs during the German's slaughter of the Jews out of racist hatred. During World War Second many people wanted to escape from Europe to America. Communalism is an instrumet for divining and exploiting people on the status quo. It strives at the root of national integration. Here both the plays writers tried to present a solution to this problem. The dramatist feels that mutual trust, communication, and respect for one-another beliefs and religion help in overcoming communalism hatred, tension, and violence.

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