

CHAPTER IV

Chapter IV

Victimization of Jyoti

Vijay Tendulkar in his play *Kanyadaan* attempts to trace the elements of social change with the special emphasis on the structure and form of the institution of marriage and the people's attitude towards it. It is essential for people to accommodate social changes in their lives in order to survive. This is a psychological play, pictures the situation of an individual against the society and endeavours the suitable environment and situation in shaping the behaviour of man in the modern society. In this play, he raises various queries regarding the social justice and inequality.

Vijay Tendulkar in his play *Kanyadaan* explores the reciprocity between political idealism and casteism and the individual and the institution of marriage. The play presents and arises the great deal of clash between reality and social norms through the depiction of a daughter's sacrifice in pursuing her father's ideology and also highlights the inherent blot in Indian husband's mindset, his violence and discrimination towards his wife.

Kanyadaan is about a revolutionary daughter, Jyoti, of an over idealistic democratic couple who marries a down caste poet and gets disillusioned in the consequent turn of events due to the unexpected barbaric behaviour of her life partner. The play centers on marriage – the evolution of Jyoti from a soft spoken, highly cultured Brahmin girl into a hardened dalit girl who revolts against the outdated conventional moral values.

Nath Devalikar, an MLA, insists on democracy at home and promises his daughter, Jyoti, to help her in her marriage with the dalit youth, Arun Athavale; while the

reaction of Seva is the voice of the sensible mother who is surprised to listen to that which is not expected. Jyoti's decision to marry Arun leads to a crisis, which worsens after marriage, as Arun proves to be a violent husband. At the end Jyoti is forced to come to terms with her fate as Arun's wife, as she realizes that it is not possible to correct men and change society. Tendulkar focuses on this problem that there is no bridge between the various sections of society and that the attempt to overcome a taboo often leads to greater pitfalls.

Nath Devalikar is an idealistic man whose philosophy is based on democracy – both in thoughts and deeds. This progressive person hates casteism and he takes an active part to eradicate this social evil and to cause dalit upliftment. Nath's wife, Seva, an organizer of women's rallies and an activist of some sort, is also an active social worker, who works for the upliftment of women's causes in society. Both Nath and Seva, have been championing the cause of eradication of casteism from society. Their nuclear household is established on their philosophical and ideological leanings to such an extent that their children, Jayaprakash and Jyoti, hardly evince any deviations and individuality, and appear, by and large, extensions of their parents' personalities.

The ambience of the household is very democratic, though, the term appears later merely a euphemistic ploy. Yet mutual understanding and liberty of expression percolate the Devalikar menage: "We have a democracy in this house and we are proud of it" (500). In such a household, Jyoti assimilates the ideals and philosophies of her parents. She has been witnessing her parents consistently engaged in crusades to uplift the downtrodden and marginalized sections of society.

Jyoti's exposure to her parents' ideals has developed a sympathetic impulse in her for the marginal sections of society. This sympathetic impulse leads her to marry a dalit youth, Arun Athavale. Her preference of Arun can be ascertained as a natural corollary of her socialization in a politically charged nuclear household. She meets Arun at a socialists' study group; she is fascinated by his autobiography and poems and develops a liking for him. But the manner they decide the issue of marriage appears naive and shallow, more so on the part of Jyoti:

Jyoti. . . . Arun asked me, isn't the very idea of marrying me dreadful to you? I said, what is dreadful about that? Arun said, you don't think that I am an absolutely worthless fellow? I said, no! He said, this is incredible, and added, in that case let us get married. And I nodded. (507)

Jyoti utters these words when she decides to marry Arun: "I don't even know if it is a matter of such importance or not. I am still unable to make up my mind . . . that is . . . I have decided to get married" (503). She is unaware about the importance of marriage even at a marriageable age. Jyoti decides her marriage in haste and ignores circumstances. She takes up the issue in a very casual manner as if testing herself against life itself.

When Jyoti asserts her decision to get married, Nath's happy family gets a sudden jolt. The family becomes divided in two opposite groups – one comprising Nath Devalikar, the idealist-reformist who dreams of changing this caste-ridden society with his daughter Jyoti as a soldier and as a stepping-stone to reach his desired goal; and the other is Seva and Jayaprakash who ask Jyoti to rethink her decision of marrying Arun. At

this stage, both, Nath and Seva, give opinions on the prospective match as per their outlooks.

Nath gets buoyed and bolstered and congratulates Jyoti. He is very enthused and effervescent over the fact that Jyoti selects a dalit boy as her life partner: “I know it [caste] doesn’t make a difference. But if my daughter had decided to marry into high caste, it wouldn’t have pleased me as much . . . well, I am telling you the absolute truth” (504). The experiment of an inter-caste marriage is a step of social development and Nath wants to start from his own house with an initiative from his daughter.

In order to practice democracy in the real sense in his home Nath asks the family: “Hereafter all of us must forget our differences of opinion and go with Jyoti. Whatever support she may need, we must give whole-heartedly” (526). He is naturally very elated as he declares “. . . Seva, until today, ‘Break the caste system’ was a mere slogan for us. . . Today I have changed” (519). Nath as a staunch idealist, seems to have lost touch with reality. His eulogizing of the boy, Arun, even before meeting him proves the fact that he has his own notions and designs over the issue on the occasion.

In the case of Seva, she appears guarded and surprised. On learning that, Jyoti’s decision arises more out of haste and immaturity, Seva forewarns Jyoti about the problems she perceives in her match. She categorically states that once one marries a wrong person, there is no retreat for a girl. She further elaborates:

Seva. My anxiety is not over his being a dalit. You know very well that Nath and I have been fighting untouchability tooth and nail, God knows since when. So that’s not the issue. But your life has been patterned in a certain manner. You have been brought up in a specific culture. To erase

or to change all this overnight is just not possible. He is different in every way. You may not be able to handle it. (509)

Seva's engagement with women's movement has schooled her considerably. Her exposure to different strata of society and the cognizance of the significance of marriage in a girl's life has instilled in her the belief that economic stability is the over-riding concern in married life and a girl should ensure that before getting married: “. . . , she has to look for some kind of stability. For some compatibility in lifestyles. After all, it is a matter of life long relationship” (508).

Seva starts a detailed investigation regarding the would-be-groom because it is a very serious matter and a question of her daughter's future. On learning that her daughter has decided to get married, she ushers in a deluge of questions about Arun's family, background, education, economic position and personality. She believes that before embarking upon a life long voyage, one should always ensure the levels of compatibility, economic stability and future aspirations. This proves her practical wisdom and concern as a mother.

Seva also conforms to her daughter, the obligation in marital contract for sticking to one's decision throughout. “Saying something is easy, by doing it is very difficult . . . and later there is no chance for a woman to hide or run away” (509). Seva is aware of cultural deformity, which can foster the problem of identity crisis causing problem in marital disharmony. For which, Jyoti asserts, “I made a commitment and now I can't run away . . . I will marry him . . . my decision is final” (525). But Jyoti appears a concrete embodiment of Nath's ideals and values. She imbibes his philosophies and ideals to the

hilt and fails to view the practical implications of such an enforced yoking together of the two completely incompatible individuals.

Jyoti brings Arun to her home to introduce him to her parents, the incompatibility in their lifestyles and outlooks appears more apparent and glaring. In contrast to her 'unwrinkled Tinopal world' and 'fragrant, ghee spread, wheat bread culture' (513), Arun belongs to a family of scavengers who has been bred and brought up in a slum-like atmosphere. Sensing the unease that Jyoti evinces at his description of his manners and culture, he brings home to her the idea of existing incompatibility between them.

When Arun's proposed wife's mother, Seva asks him about his financial condition in their very first meeting, he quickly understands her pricks and retorts by talking about their traditional livelihood of illicit liquor-selling only to hurt Seva's culture. Seva is shocked to hear Arun say that he and his wife shall be brewing illicit liquor as "this business is highly profitable If there are children, there's work for them also, to wash glasses and plates, to fetch *paan* cigarettes. . . . Many hands to work, and so many chances to rake money" (517). At the end virtually it becomes a confrontation of two cultures, one elite and dignified and the other dalit and neglected.

Being a dalit, Arun harbours a grudge against "high caste society". He feels an urge to wreak havoc upon the cruel world. His manners and posture appear completely uncouth. At this stage, one comes to know that Arun is pursuing his B.A., but does not have any definite future plans; nor does he have any residence to house his married life. In no respect does he appear to be a desirable match for Jyoti.

The play reveals that Arun's acute consciousness of his low class origin induces in him a fiercely convulsive attitude towards the 'white collar culture' of his wife, which

later on has a devastating impact on their marital life. Even at Jyoti's home, Arun engages in deriving a morbid pleasure by shaking the senses of Seva and Jayaprakash. His manners and conversation with Seva, Jayaprakash and Nath prove his deep-rooted abhorrence for elite society and their culture.

Seva and Jayaprakash are unhappy, after they meet Arun and are shocked by his language and his behaviour. They feel apprehended of Jyoti's disastrous future after her marriage with that dalit boy. When a storm of tensions, brew up in the house due to Arun's effrontery and obstinacy, Nath rushes in and starts talking in his usual enthusiastic tone.

When Seva and Jayaprakash offer strong opposition to Arun's claim, Nath enthusiastically asserts:

Nath. It is perfectly natural that the boy should have rough edges; they are the product of the circumstances he has endured.... You cannot imagine at what cost these people have made the little progress that they have.... Remember, it is we who are responsible for the age old sufferings of these people. We have betrayed them for generations. (526-27)

Unmindful of the tension in the air, he elaborates on the prospective marriage: "Seva, until today, 'Break the caste system' was a mere slogan for us. I've attended many inter- caste marriages and made speeches. But today I have broken the caste barrier in the real sense. My home has become Indian in the real sense of the term" (519). Nath says that Arun's mentality should be understood as he is not a middle class man like them and further adds that, "He has been brought up in the midst of poverty and hatred. These

people's psychological make-up is altogether different . . . We must try to understand him and that is extremely difficult" (523).

The problem with Nath's endorsement of this inter-caste marriage is that, in his attempt to uproot casteism, he fails to plumb the nuances at the personal level in Arun's personality and demeanour. As compared to Nath's idealistic and avant-garde stance, Seva's counsel appears to be more realistic and practical. But her stance also unveils the fact that her political rhetoric has an internal ambiguity. She preaches other women to rise and revolt against the oppression of the traditional regimen, but at home, she herself, being rattled at the risks involved in Jyoti's decision, tries to avoid the situation. She bursts out, "I will oppose this marriage. In your words I shall break party discipline and revolt. Does Jyoti's resolve seem sensible to you? Tell me, as a father, hand on heart" (526). There is a wide gap between her political rhetoric and real life. However, her concerns, seen from her ideological perspective, appear well grounded when one notices the way Jyoti decides to marry Arun Athavale.

Seva and Jayaprakash try their best to prevent this marriage from being solemnized, but Nath further motivates Jyoti. In spite of repeated warnings from his family Nath describes Arun "As a human being he has potential. He has intelligence, drive and creativity He is like unrefined gold, he needs to be melted and moulded. This is the need of the hour. Who can perform this task if not girls like Jyoti?" (527). It also becomes clear that he is aware of the potent disastrous consequences of this experiment: "I am with you, Jyoti. What you are doing could be both wise and foolish. But one thing is certain. It upholds the norms of civilized humanity, and therefore, I stand by you. Go ahead my child, let us see what happens." (527). Nath's attitude is typical

male chauvinistic attitude, which rejects his wife's apprehension about accepting Arun as her son-in-law. But in a patriarchal society a female has no personal opinion of her own. She has to remain subservient to her husband's decisions. Trevor May in the book *An Economic and Social History of England 1760-1970*, exemplifies the typical Indian family structure as,

The role of husband and wife, as indeed of children and servants, were strictly delineated, and all were assured of their place in a hierarchal structure. The undisputed head was the husband Wives were subordinated (legally as well as socially) to their husbands, as were children to their parents. In the idealized version all were happy in their allotted place, but in reality the home could subject its members to insufferable pressures. (204)

Nath's mental make-up has been shaped and structured by the pre- Independence Indian values. His cry is an echo of an exacerbated dream that could not keep pace with the changing values of the time. This realization of the failure of the dream of an egalitarian society, which pre-Independence thinkers and politicians had, persistently coaxes him. He endeavours to revive that dying project. And in his crusade, he is devoured by his idealism so intensely that he puts the life of his beloved daughter, Jyoti, at stake.

Nath thrusts his daughter zealously into an inter-caste marriage that heads towards a failure. Almost all the speeches concerning Jyoti's marriage made by Nath Devalikar is steeped in irony, which reveals that he is a dreamer to whom his daughter becomes a sacrificial goat to be slaughtered at the altar of his improbable ideals. She becomes an

offering in the sacrificial fire of social change because of her father's aggressive backing, which stands out. It becomes clear that Jyoti's marriage is an experiment for her father:

Nath. Look, Seva, society cannot be transformed through words alone we have to act as catalysts in this transformation. The old social reformers did not stop with making speeches and writing articles on widow remarriage. Many of them actually married widows. Why did they do it . . . ? That was also an experiment, a difficult experiment. But they dared to risk it. (524)

Jyoti has demolished the societal divisions of caste, power, and affluence to marry Arun but what she gets in return is total negation of her identity and individuality through the revolting behaviour of her husband, who wants to see revenge on high society people whom he considers responsible for the age-long deprivation and marginalization of the dalits.

Arun-Jyoti bond has started taking a heavy toll upon Jyoti. From the very start, he seldom shows any interest in his marriage with Jyoti. On entering into comfortable middle-class house, Arun feels quite nervous and ill at ease. He does not want Jyoti to leave him alone, saying "I feel uncomfortable in big houses. . ." (512). Jyoti is surprised and Arun continues saying:

If you see my father's hut you'll understand Ten of us, big and small, lived in that eight feet by ten feet. The heat of our bodies to warm us in winter. No clothes on our back, no food in our stomach, but we feel very safe. Here, these damn houses of the city people, they're like the bellies of sharks and crocodiles, each one alone in them! (512)

As the conversation progresses, Arun grows more and more eloquent on the subject of untouchability. His words spit venom. They express his hatred of brahmins. He asks

Jyoti: “Will you marry me and eat stinking bread with spoilt dal in my father’s hut? Without vomiting? Tell me, Jyoti, can you shit everyday in our slum’s village toilet like my mother? Can you beg, quaking at every door, for a little grass for our buffaloes? Come on, tell me! (513).

Jyoti finds such talk revolting and she begins to weep uncontrollably on hearing Arun say: “And you thought of marrying me. Our life is not the socialists’ service camp. It is hell, and I mean hell. A hell named life” (514). Then he sings ““It’s a jolly game, caught a Brahmin dame”” (514). When Jyoti tells him that she is not a touch-me-not girl, he suddenly seizes her arm and twists it violently. Jyoti is painfully hurt, more so because of this sudden change in Arun’s behaviour. Jyoti is in great conflict and doubt; pain and confusion. She is not only attacked physically but also verbally.

Slowly, he starts perpetrating inhuman atrocities upon her. Arun fails to secure a residence, and they have to stay at friends’ houses. She learns to live not only in a house which is bereft of the simple necessities of life but also to adjust to a lower caste man who might have seemed to be attractive as a young, brash intellectual with revolutionary ideas but in reality seems to be taking revenge against centuries of exploitation by the higher caste of the society.

Arun turns out to be a man, who seeks vengeance on aristocratic people, whom he considers responsible for the ageless deprivation and degradation of dalits. Arun’s excuse for his attitude is the mistreatment meted out to his family and forefathers at the hands of the society. He tells, “From childhood I have seen my father come home drunk everyday,

and beat my mother half dead, seen her cry her heart out. Even now I hear the echoes of her broken sobs. No one was there to wipe her tears. My poor mother. She didn't have a father like Bhai, nor a mother like you. . .” (540). Vijay Tendulkar highlights how such psychological problems of early childhood become the cause for Arun's violent behaviour later at home.

As far as Arun's recourse to ill-treatment of Jyoti is concerned, Tendulkar has imputed it to Arun's culture and background. Arun shows ample evidences of it in his agony and anxiety towards upper caste society. He can't transcend his caste complexes and fails to treat Jyoti as his wife and life partner. About his inhuman treatment of Jyoti, Seva avers: “. . . Because this man himself exploits my daughter. Like a shameless parasite, he lives on my daughter's blood, and on top of that he gets drunk and bashes her up” (545). Through Jyoti's 'uncontrollable sobs' and 'quivering voice,' Tendulkar exposes the hatred which she feels for her husband as a result of her husband's inhumane cruelties.

When Seva asks Arun the reason of the quarrel, he shocks them saying that he has beaten Jyoti for which he does not feel shy but defends himself saying that abuse and beating are knitted in the webs of their lives. It is part and parcel of their lives. Arun accepts that wife beating is a usual thing in his community and his own father used to beat his mother. Having grown in such a culture and under the stress of casteist ideology and family responsibilities, Arun crumbles and starts beating Jyoti. For him beating of the wife does not mean that he hates her. He loves Jyoti immensely but he gives in, under the stress of various ideological and day-to-day forces.

According to Arun, the negative sides evaluate a man. He says: "I am a barbarian, a barbarian by birth. When have I claimed any white collar culture?" (540). Arun's brutality has been exposed in his non-hypocritical behaviour, when he defends himself by saying: "What am I but the son of scavengers. We don't know the non-violent ways of Brahmins like you. We drink and beat our wives . . . We make love to them . . . but the beating is what gets publicized" (540). Through the victim and victimizer relationship between Jyoti and Arun, Vijay Tendulkar points out that Arun takes his wife Jyoti as a hostage, from the high class family to settle scores with the powerful, privileged and affluent class of the Brahmin society, which he considers to be responsible for denial of opportunism to him to move upward and forward in life.

Jyoti's presence reminds Arun of his traumatized existence for which dalits hold upper castes responsible. To Arun, Jyoti appears merely a hostage from the upper caste and he seems to have commenced a mission against her class and community. Her being a high caste girl who has enjoyed all amenities at her home makes him all the more restless as a dalit and down-and-out husband who can't perform the duties of the provider, producer and protector of the household. His subjugated position further enhances his agony. And his pent-up emotions and frustrations find an easy prey in Jyoti, and make her life a hell.

Jyoti's identity is persistently thwarted by Arun's unwillingness. He seems to be suffering from persecution complex. He is of the opinion that there cannot be any give-and-take between dalits and upper class people. Thus, their marriage, instead of being source of happiness, proves a nightmare. Arun becomes a victimizer and destroys his own married life. The dramatist conveys that Arun marriage could have been a successful

marriage had he not been so much conscious of his low origin and differentiated himself from the high class people. Seva's fear and anxiety comes true. Arun's consciousness of Jyoti's upper class origin makes him feel inferior and restless. The dalit male, 'a complete boor' persecutes his upper class wife, speaks rubbish, comes home drunk, mercilessly beats her and kicks her even during her pregnancy. Thus Seva recounts Jyoti's pathetic condition as,

The truth is that your dalit son-in-law, who can write such a wonderful autobiography, and many lovely poems, wants to remain an idler. He wants his wife to work. And with her money he wants to drown himself in drink, and have hell of a time with his friends. On top of that, for entertainment, he wants to kick his wife in the belly. Why not? Doesn't his wife belong to the high caste? In this way he is returning all the kicks aimed a generations of his ancestry by men of high caste. It appears that this is the monumental mission he has set out to fulfil. (543-44)

Tendulkar presents a realistic picture of our society. He neither idealizes nor dehumanizes the real life; it has been presented very realistically. The husband and wife relationship speaks intensely of physical, psychological and verbal violence against women in the male dominated Indian society. Shailaja Wadikar in the article "New Directions in the Marathi Drama and Vijay Tendulkar's Contribution to the Marathi Drama" from her point of view writes about the violence in the play endured by Jyoti stating that,

The violence projected in the play has three dimensions: physical, psychological, and verbal. Psychological violence is noticed in Arun's

cruel inhuman treatment to Jyoti, which is also his way of overcoming his inferiority complex. The vicious pleasure that he seeks from it is shocking. It speaks volumes of the degenerate mode of living peculiar to the Dalits or the backward caste people in our society. Verbal violence can be seen in Arun's abusive and obscene language. (21)

Though Arun loves Jyoti very much but the dalit part of his mind lives in his tormented past and unleashes torment on his high caste wife. He has crude satisfaction that he has — caught a Brahmin dame (514). His past returns to haunt him every night and he turn into unpredictable savage beast, which has strange malice and a sadistic desire to punish his wife. According to Jyoti, Arun, the lover at the beginning and later the husband, is a bundle of contradictions: “Arun is both the beast, and the lover. Arun is the demon, and also the poet. Both are bound together . . . Tell me, where is that beast I should drag out and destroy, where is that God I should rouse from his sleep?” (564). She asks Nath to come and watch Arun at night when he staggers home roaring drunk, if you have the guts. “There is a savage beast in his eyes, his lips, his face . . . in every single limb . . . I have to accept him as he is, because I cannot reject him” (564).

Not only is Jyoti punished but Arun derives sadistic pleasure in abusing her parents too. Seva, who is the leader of Sevalal is accused by Arun as a procuress who supplies girls from the sevalal to the socialist leaders. Arun even accuses that Jyoti's real father is not Mr. Nath but Guruji', the guide and philosopher of Seva.

Jyoti loves Arun wholeheartedly, but in return, Arun abuses Jyoti and treats her badly. The man-woman relationship informs the basic structure of a society, mutual cooperation, love, understanding and reciprocity are expected from both sides. However,

this mutual relationship degenerates into power as one – a man, tries to dominate the other – a woman. Consequently such a society, based exclusively on power-system, always relegates women to subservient roles. Neeru Sharma, in the book, *Portrayal of Women in media and Literature*, articulates the contribution of this play for the social reformation:

It is in *Kanyadaan* that Vijay Tendulkar portrays quiet convincingly the pain that women experience by undergoing repression and subjugation in the context of Indian society.... Through matrimonial relationships, the playwright, very sensitively, locates family and gender relations in the large context of “the class conflict”. The social clash and the battle of sexes become one and inseparable in the complex framework of personal relationships of husband and wife. He goes deeper to highlight how patriarchal system of marriage unleashes a reign of terror, misery and violence in an Indian woman for whom her husband is Pati Parameshwar.

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Though educated, Jyoti never takes a step against her husband’s cruelty. She considers him as her ‘Pati Parmeshwar’ a tag given by the patriarchal society. Jyoti’s father preaches that only a woman can change her husband’s life and turn him into a good man by her loving and caring attitude.

Unfortunately the mother’s fear and anxieties come true and the marriage turns into a nightmare. The causes of Jyoti’s predicament can be traced to Arun’s barbaric attitude towards Jyoti, which compels Seva to think of their separation so that Jyoti will be liberated from the atrocities knowing well that Arun will never change. Jyoti decides

to separate from Arun, tired of his behaviour and constant battering by him. Jyoti stays at her own parental home. She appears weak, exhausted and shattered in her marital role. The shift that marriage marks in Jyoti's duties and relations is that she herself turns into an outsider at her own home as Seva says, "After your marriage the atmosphere of this house has changed. And do you think you have remained the same, Jyoti? You live here like a stranger taking shelter in this house out of sheer necessity..." (529). This inter caste marriage also introduces some riveting role-reversals. As a 'dalit' and 'untouchable,' Arun is a 'subaltern,' and Jyoti, being a Brahmin, is superior to him. But after marriage Arun assumes the superior in their household as per the norms of patriarchy. As a result of role-reversal, Jyoti turns an outsider in her own parental home.

In due course Nath compels Jyoti to go with her husband since he is firmly bound with his ideals citing his belief: "No man is fundamentally evil, he is good. He has certain propensities towards evil. They must be transformed. Completely uprooted and destroyed. And then, the earth will become heaven. It is essential to awaken the good slumbering within man" (563). Jyoti in turn tells her father,

The truth is, you know very well that man and his inherent nature are never really two different things. Both are one, and inseparable. Either you accept it in totality, or you reject it if you can. Very often you don't have a choice. Putting man's beastliness to sleep, and awakening the godhead within is an absurd notion. (563)

But Nath gets worried not for his daughter's life but for the failure of his experiment. He reminds Seva that he does not want to see their marriage broken for the sake of his ideals. For him the reformation of society needs certain sacrifices as

maintained by the nation builders. This is how he passionately exhorts his wife to say about this inter-caste marriage. He tells Seva:

. . . let not this wonderful experiment fail! This dream which straggling to turn real, let it not crumble into before our eyes! We will have to do something. We must save this marriage. Not necessarily for our Jyoti's sake . . . This not just a question our daughter's life, Seva, this has . . . a far wider significance . . . this experiment is a very precious experiment.
(537)

Jyoti lives a life of illusion as propounded by Nath, since he wants to make his home a place for democracy. So far Jyoti is impotent to rebel openly, and manoeuvres to manipulate what her father suggested. Jyoti comes to the conclusion that "Filthy cursing is a part of his frenzied love" (564). But now she discovers that she has been 'a mere pawn' on her father's 'ideological chess board.' She accuses her father of making an experimental 'guinea-pigs' to test his socialist ideas. The realistic expose of life is not made known to her thereby making Jyoti aggravated in the end as her dreams and reality come into clash when she frequently becomes the victim of violence by her so called educated husband.

Jyoti learns the bitter truth from her own bitter experiences rejecting the idealistic notions taught by her father: "You made me waste twenty years of my life before I could discover this. I had to learn it on the strength of my own experience. . . . Arun gave me what you had withheld from me. I must acknowledge my debt to him" (563). Jyoti's inability to return to her paternal house also corresponds to the internalization of cultural values for a woman in Indian social system. She clamors: "I don't have the time, nor a

cool head. I have to go and get on with the struggle.” (563-64). Jyoti says that henceforth nobody should come to her house and touch her because she is an untouchable.

Tendulkar attacks the hypocrisy of the patriarchal society where a father’s socio-political ideology too becomes a tool of oppression for the weaker gender – the daughter in the family.

Jyoti is a very strong woman. Though she marries under the influence of her father’s idealism, towards the end, she appears a tough and confident woman who has learnt a lot from her experiences. However, she seems disillusioned with what she has imbibed, and blames Nath for injecting wrong values and beliefs in her. Nath’s offer to support is rejected by her. At this stage, she seems to carry the message of Tendulkar that crusades like inter-caste marriage need a firm commitment and people may have to sacrifice a lot to make such enterprises a success. Her words with Nath reflect her commitment:

Nath. Your delivery . . .

Jyoti. [*Harshly*] I have my husband. I am not a widow. Even if I become one I shan’t knock at your door. I am not Jyoti Yadunath Devlalikar now, I am Jyoti Arun Athavale, a scavenger. I don’t say harijan. I despise the term. I am an untouchable, a scavenger. I am one of them. . .

(566)

Jyoti says that she is not Jyoti Yadinath Devalikar but Jyoti Arun Athavale Jyoti’s words sting Nath. He feels helpless and defenseless. He is pained to see his ideals crumbling before him. This is a way of avenging her father who brings her up to believe that no man is evil, that some instincts within a man could be evil subject to correction

and modification. Tendulkar sows the seed of protest in Jyoti. When Nath as a helpless father suggests Jyoti to give up the ideals, she in a philosophical manner rejects it for she thinks it to be cowardly to surrender to circumstances.

In Jyoti's rejection of Nath as her guide and more painfully a father, Tendulkar highlights the development of Jyoti's character from an educated and a cultured girl into a hardened spouse of her dalit husband. It is not possible for her to back out from her promise to her 'self' identity. When her father agrees for a felicitation meeting for her husband, she confronts with her father for his 'hireling speech' at the occasion. The very values he instills in his children, she tells him, have made it impossible for her to turn back on Arun, but she cannot survive in Arun's world if she continues to inhabit her parents' civilized sphere.

The women in inter-caste marriages could end up being the double victims, both of caste and of patriarchy, and Tendulkar has tried to show this in *Kanyadaan*. Despite the suffering, Jyoti chooses to remain with her husband, not out of love, but purely for the principles of duty and sacrifice. Though women remain largely dominated by men, Vijay Tendulkar manages to impart to them an urge and commitment to challenge the authority of men as Jyoti does in this play.

Seva and Jyoti in the play endorse the playwright's proposition that in the modern society women's voice and authority cannot be ignored. Both Seva and Jyoti are modern educated women. They cannot be considered as submissive women and silent sufferers. Seva has been depicted as a social activist who takes part in social and political movements, marries a man of her own choice and, even in her married life, and enjoys the liberty to pursue her political and social commitments. With Nath, she runs her

household smoothly and, in the hour of need, works with her husband for the good of her family. She is free from any stereotypical characteristics like passive, docile, submissive, tender, mute and emotional. In fact, in contrast to Nath, she appears to be a successful wife and a good mother who tries her best to save her child.

With the passing of time, changes have occurred in the society, culture, religion and literature in India but the complete revolution has not taken place yet. Vijay Tendulkar is always concerned with predicament of human being. As an individual of the society he deeply involves in the existing state of his society and works against all exploitations and feels that all exploitations must end. Arpita Banerjee presented her view point on women's state and Indian government's further plans to uplift them, but their position still remains the same. In her article, "Status of Women and Gender Discrimination in India: A Statewise Analysis" as,

The deprivation of women in getting the similar level of opportunities relating to education, health, decision making as men due to prevalence of patriarchal society and socioeconomic backwardness in India put women at a backstage. After independence Indian planners and policy makers recognized the problem and framed variety of policies and programmes to provide women equal status as men. But after six decades of Indian planning after making various efforts Indian women are still at a backstage than men on various aspects. (57)

The play alludes to the traditional Hindu custom of marriage in our society – to give a marriageable daughter by one's guardian to an eligible young man who will give her safety and security in her life. It is also desired that the young man will prove himself

a constant companion of this woman. Naturally it concerns much to the bride's father about her daughter's post-marriage life.

The man-woman relationship becomes an emblem of destruction of an unkind world of many Jyotis and Sevas of an unequal situation in modern Indian society, in which women suffer from the sting of misfortune, social inequalities and injustices committed on them by a cruel male-dominated society. The treatment of the woman – Jyoti, highlights the psychic and corporal oppression to which women are subjected and their intense suffering, violence and betrayal of her husband with great effect.