

**READING VIJAY TENDULKAR'S KANYADAAN IN/FOR OUR TIMES: SOME REFLECTIONS**

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**Abstract**

*It is now almost, more than three decades, that Vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play Kanyadaan was first performed and published. But, the controversy and the discussion around the play have stood the test of times. Rather, it refuses to settle down, in all probability because of its controversial and explosive depiction of an inter-caste marriage, its sheer violence (read gendered violence) on stage, its (un)conscious depiction of historiography of repressive caste system. The play being further cited as an example –iterating the problems of liberal reforms, which are not only the problems structured in the context of the play but have a much larger bearing for the Indian society in particular and the Indian state in general. Foregrounding a literary work, the article makes critical reflections on the ideologies of caste and that of liberal reforms in contemporary India.*

**Key Words:** Caste, violence, gender, liberal reforms

**Introduction**

Though originally written and performed in Marathi in 1983, *Kanyadaan* took off as a play once an authorized English translation came out by Gowri Ramnarayan in 2005.<sup>1</sup> The 'success' of *Kanyadaan* as a play also accounts for the potential of Indian regional literatures, whose potential has long been undermined. Barring a few acclaimed writers (Tendulkar is one of them) among the regional writers whose writings are now available in multiple languages, the academic discourse at the national level, by and large, remains pessimistic towards the cause of regional Indian literatures.<sup>2</sup> The larger debate, in the end, is about our (non)acquaintance with the ongoing debates and discourses in the regional languages which actually debates the fabric of our society.

*Kanyadaan* is one such literary expression which acquaints us with the contentious issue of inter-caste marriage, caste relations per se and the hypocrisy of liberal imagination as

imagined in the Marathi regional. Before we dwell on the existing scholarship and criticism of the play, a short synopsis of its plot will suffice.

A short play, with Two Acts and Five scenes, *Kanyadaan* depicts the life narrative of Nath Devalikar and Seva Devalikar whose daughter Jyoti, by employing her agency of freewill, gets married to Arun Athavale, a dalit young man. In build up to this 'contentious' marriage, Jyoti's mother Seva and her brother Jayaprakash object to this match between a brahmin girl and a dalit boy. Nevertheless, Jyoti gets full support from her father, who comes before us in due course of time, as a self proclaimed liberal reformer. Not adhering to any ideal romantic imagination, the transgressive marriage alliance between Jyoti and Arun goes for a toss due to Arun's alcoholism, foul mouthed and indecent behaviour which reaches to its climax in the second act where extreme physical violence is unleashed on Jyoti's body. Despite all this, Jyoti in a subversive epiphany, accuses her own father for creating a false world view around her and thereby makes him responsible for her predicament.

Having said this, the play, by no means offers a simplistic reading. Firstly, the complexity of the play creates an intellectual confusion.<sup>3</sup> For instance, it reverses the hierarchy of common assumptions. Arun's so called ideas of 'dalit difference' are not something which get articulated after the marriage. In fact, he gives ample proof of this even before the marriage takes place. He never tries to hide his 'original' behaviour, but still gets the nod to marry Jyoti from Nath Devalikar. Secondly, it averts the stereotypical depiction of an inter-caste marriage which is commonly opposed by the parents, family, society or the state. On the contrary, the match is accepted by the entire family sans any violence and as a result the marriage did not face the backlash which it was most expected to face. Nevertheless, the violence returns, from an unexpected quarter, through Arun's behaviour, who tortures his wife Jyoti both physically and psychologically.

Further, due to the complexity of the play and its intellectual confusion, it is not a surprise that dalit and non-dalit intelligentsia reacted sharply to the play. In diverse consequences for writing the play, Tendulkar had a slipper hurled at him and at the same time awarded the Saraswati Samman<sup>4</sup> for outstanding literary contribution for the year 1993.<sup>5</sup> According to Tendulkar himself:

The work which has been selected for the Saraswati Samman is not the story of a victory; it is admission of defeat and intellectual confusion. It gives expression to a deep-rooted malaise and pain.<sup>6</sup>

What is this deep rooted malaise and pain that Tendulkar is hinting at? In all probability, this malaise and pain is rooted in prevailing caste system, gendered violence and liberal hypocrisy of post colonial Maharashtra in general and India in particular. The play's translation in English created a robust interest in scholars; both in India and abroad. Much of the scholarship in Indian context though comes from the scholars and teachers of English departments; who in turn, on most occasions, if not all, have done a paraphrasing or theme

based study. Furthermore, the understanding of the play is manufactured and divided along caste lines. According to a recent study by Ania Loomba, the upper caste audience and critics regarded the play an expose of liberal reformism, whereas the dalit intelligentsia and audience either ignored the play or read it as an appropriation and stereotyping of dalit masculinity, which in turn is termed offensive.<sup>7</sup> If we wish to take a recent example, dalits intelligentsia was offended by a critical and annotated publication of B.R Ambedkar's 1936 classic, *The Annihilation of Caste*, whose introduction was written by Arundhati Roy. Her essay in the book *The Doctor and the Saint* was termed by dalit scholars as an example of 'politics of appropriation. They argued that under the name of Ambedkar –Gandhi and his ideology was publicised. Tendulkar too, is often charged for stereotyping dalits and their ways.

Coming back to *Kanyadaan*, only a handful of critics have commented on the subjectivity of female sexuality in the context of the play. By marrying Arun, Jyoti's life narrative takes a turn from 'gendered elite' to 'gendered subaltern'. How can we account for such a transition in the context of the play? What about the historiography of caste represented in the play through Arun's character? How that past- of caste is juxtaposed in the present; with the sugar coating of Gandhian liberal reforms advocated emphatically in the play by Nath Devalikar? In the sections that follow, I seek to examine some of these questions and show how *Kanyadaan* is a 'breach of piece'<sup>8</sup>; more, when it unravels the troubled relationship of caste, marriage, gender and liberal reforms in post colonial contemporary India.

### **The Dialectic of Caste: In Consciousness and in Practice**

There is no denying the fact that caste *was* and *is* an 'important' element to understand India's hierarchical society. In literature too, this can be emphasized by looking at the huge corpus of dalit writings which started to come out, initially from Maharashtra and later from other states, especially after the late eighties.<sup>9</sup> In all these genres of dalit writing, expression of protest against the inhuman conditions remains central. Tendulkar's *Kanyadaan* is not an exclusive document of dalit protest per se but Arun's occasional, direct outburst against the hierarchical society and the inhuman caste system must not go unnoticed.

But how do we understand the question of caste in *Kanyadaan*? We all know that the character and application of caste has also changed over the years. For instance, the inhuman gospel of untouchability which was so rampant in Peshwa rule of the Maratha Empire and in other parts of India, is almost invisible, more or so in the urban spaces now. So in this respect, caste has a dynamic character and it is not static. Acclaimed sociologist like Andre Beteille<sup>10</sup> and M.N Srinivas<sup>11</sup> have also argued in the past regarding the changing and dynamic nature of caste in India and argued for its changed avatar.

But a close reading of *Kanyadaan* accounts for a contradictory framework. Here caste is both static and dynamic. Of late, legal protection, reservations for equal representation, concept of equal citizenship has challenged the practice of caste. The legal advertisement of inter-caste marriage through liberal reform is one such example to challenge the practice of caste. This

weapon is used to full effect by Nath Devalikar who seeks to challenge the practice of caste by happily giving his nod for Arun and Jyoti's marriage. For instance, his reactions when he comes to know about Jyoti and Arun's decision to do an inter-caste marriage:

..., 'Break the caste system' was a mere slogan for us. I've attended many intercaste marriages and *made speeches*. But today I have broken the caste system in real sense. My home has become Indian in real sense of the term. I am happy today, very happy. (p. 23, emphasis mine)

For Nath, the event of inter-caste marriage is the breaking of caste itself. His desire to convert his speeches into action is nothing but to challenge the practice of caste at the outer surface. According to him caste only exists in practice and not in mind or to use our previous word, consciousness. In the next few lines, I argue that Nath and his family challenge and confront caste in practice but preserve it in their minds. Jyoti's mother, Seva, claims to be an anti-caste crusader with her husband and boasts of fighting caste throughout her life. But when Jyoti decides to get married to a dalit, she is both skeptical and a non-advertiser for the relation:

My anxiety is not over his being 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 not just possible. He is *different in every way*. You may not be able to handle it. (p. 13, emphasis mine)

Seva's above utterance should not be treated as an innocent articulation or a mere anxiety of a mother. She raises some serious questions. At a crude level, she contradicts her credentials of an anti-caste liberal democrat by posing a sophisticated resistance to Jyoti's association with Arun. Further, she juxtaposes a counter picture where the aspect of caste has crucial interconnection with class and gender. According to her, Jyoti's life is patterned in a certain (read upper middle class/elite) manner. There is no doubt in our mind that she is hinting towards materialistic and cultural differences between the dalits and non-dalits. She brands Arun as 'different' and perhaps in our postcolonial vocabulary, he should be read as the 'other' of Devalikars 'self'.

There is enough evidence in the play where we see this contradiction about caste in practice and in consciousness. For instance, at first when Nath comes to know about Jyoti's decision to get married to a person of his choice, his guess: A brahmin? (p. 8) is interesting, more or so because as a socialist and liberal reformer, he ends up matching his daughter only with a brahmin; through his (un)conscious revelation. And again, Nath Devalikar contradicts his caste consciousness by challenging it in practicality. Here, he is conversing with Arun:

Often when I sit alone and think, it seems to me that all that was a dream...everything looks upside down. Just think, did it strike anyone that you people will stand up and flex your muscle and challenge the Establishment as you are doing now? (p. 24)

On such a juncture of caste debate, the character of Arun Athavale needs to be contextualized. As a historiographer of caste in the play he challenges both caste consciousness and caste practice.

### **Historiography of Caste: Arun and his Dalit Consciousness**

By looking at the above position, we may ask a question –What is the relationship between history and fiction that I am trying to hint at? At the levels of disciplines, history and fiction are contradictory. History deals with real events and fiction with imagined ones. But the subaltern studies collective<sup>12</sup> which incidentally came around the same time when *Kanyadaan* was performed and published, argued for a symbiotic relationship between fiction and history.<sup>13</sup> So much so that at times this relationship may push a fictional writer from literary-subjective position to historical form. Tendulkar positions himself as some sought of literary historian when he claims:

I have written about my own experiences and about what I have seen in others around me. I have been true to all this and have not cheated my generation. I did not attempt to simplify matters and issues for the audience when presenting my plays, though that would have been the easier option.<sup>14</sup>

In some probability, Tendulkar is hinting towards an empirical methodology of writing fiction. His wish to be true to his experiences and to others, his intention not to temper with material for the sake of appeasing audience gives ample hints towards the ‘historian’ in him. I further argue that the historian in Tendulkar comes out through Arun’s character who posits a counter narrative to caste consciousness and caste practice presented by Nath Devalikar and his family. Furthermore, according to me Arun Athavale’s character is gripped more in history than in present. Unfortunately, as far as I know, none of the criticism available to us has hinted in that direction. His character is mostly read as an example of ‘dalit masculinity’, a wife beater, a lover or a poet. But we should also note that throughout the play, he is very much conscious of the fact that he is a dalit, has a dalit past. He resists what M.N Srinivas calls *Sanskritisation*<sup>15</sup> and comes before us as a subaltern anti-hero figure who searches the ‘history from the below’. He is not flaunted by a rich family and wife that he gets associated with. Almost all upper caste characters in the play are of the view that dalits inhibit a ‘different culture’ and this culture in turn is shaped by ‘dalit histories of dispossession’. Arun recasts towards that history of dispossession thus:

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 felt very safe. (p. 16)

Again,

Our grandfathers and great grandfathers used to roam, barefoot, miles and miles, in the heat, in the rain, day and night...till the rags on their butt fell apart...used to wander shouting 'Johaar, Maayi- baap! Sir-Madam, sweeper! And their calls polluted the brahmins' ears. (p. 17)

Arun displays his characteristic behaviour which according to him, stems out from his 'perceived difference' from the upper caste society. He tells Jyoti:

Generation after generation, their stomachs used to stale, stinking bread they have begged! Our tongues always tasting flesh of dead animals, and with relish! Surely we can't fit into your unwrinkled Tinopal world. How can there be any give and take between our ways and your fragrant, ghee spread, wheat bread culture? ... 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, quacking at very door, for a little grass for our buffaloes...? 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. (pp. 17-18)

With his foul-mouthed and indecent behaviour Arun irks almost every upper caste character in the play. He taunts Jyoti continuously for her upper caste upbringings and possible susceptibility towards a dalit mode of life. When she resists, Arun responds by twisting her arm. This is the first sign of violence inflicted on Jyoti's body. What are its implications for both Jyoti and Arun? I will try to return to these questions a little later. Nevertheless, when Seva, Jyoti's mother asks Arun regarding his financial liabilities after the marriage and how he will cope with them. He shocks everyone by announcing that he and his wife will do the business of brewing illicit liquor:

It's a first class profession for two persons. The man bribes the police and the wife serves customers. People call her aunty. The more striking the aunty's looks, the brisker the trade. (p. 21)

Accordingly, I propose that Arun should also be read as a subaltern historian who through his behaviour and speech unearths the subjective history of dalit subjugation and humiliation. His caste consciousness is opposed to Nath Devalikar's. Nath attempts to forget caste by his idea of liberal reforms and inter-caste marriage whereas Arun reminds Nath and others about the history of caste struggle, a struggle which is difficult for him to forget and reconcile. Such a reading is also necessary to undermine the earlier readings of Arun as a mere combination of stereotypical dalit masculinity which is: wounded, vulnerable, threatening, and sexually bestial.<sup>16</sup>

### **A Subversive *Kanyadaan*: Politics of Inter-caste Marriage and the Hypocrisy of Liberal Thought**

The depiction of an inter-caste marriage is crucial to the overall dynamics of the play. Not only in the context of the play but such a marriage is still considered as an ultra transgressive and non-normative in Indian society in general. Further, this transgression is punishable up to death when the community gets involved.<sup>17</sup> The antagonism, against inter-caste marriages in India, can be seen with the data available with the central government.<sup>18</sup> As on December 2012, India had a population of little over 123 crores. According to the available report with Central government, only 9,623 inter-caste marriages were reported.<sup>19</sup>

However, the impending marital alliance between Jyoti and Arun is devoid of any such stereotypical hurdles that we usually observe in any inter-caste alliance. On the contrary, Jyoti's father Nath is all excited and thrilled at the prospect. He in fact, defends Arun's behaviour in front of his wife. As a result, we do not see any conflict between Jyoti's filial and marital loyalties.<sup>20</sup> Further, Nath's *Kanyadaan* is not a usual *Kanyadaan*. On the contrary, it is a complete subversion of *Kanyadaan* prescribed in the brahmanical code of conduct available in Hindu mythology. As noted by Uma Chakravarti, concepts like *Kanyadaan* which were ultimately codified and got religious sanctions had the bigger project of maintaining caste endogamy. Caste endogamy ensures that a specific caste gets multiplied and caste solidarity between two families is ensured. Nath Devalikar, thus, sanctions a match which may *never* seal an alliance between two families and preserve caste distinctions. Besides, his decision creates a 'social rupture' in the hierarchy of caste formulations.

Nevertheless, Nath defends his subversion by invoking the nationalist-socialist reform agenda which is the main ideology that he and his wife proclaim to follow. In the initial part of the play, we see that neither Nath nor his family sees different castes as fundamentally different, till this hypocrisy is exposed by Jyoti during her confrontation with her father:

I grew up listening to such talk day in and day out. 'Hatred, not for the man, but for his tendencies. No man is fundamentally evil, he is good. He has certain propensities towards evil. They must transformed. Completely uprooted and destroyed. And then, the earth will become heaven. It is essential to awaken the good slumbering within man...' All false, vicious claptrap! The truth is, you knew very well that man and his inherent nature are never really two different things. Both are one and inseparable. (p. 67)

Here, it is interesting to note that earlier transformative potential (read agenda) now can not materialize because of the essential 'difference of nature'. What is the possible reason for this deadlock? Perhaps, there are no readymade answers. Nevertheless, one possible reason for

this deadlock can be seen in the contrasting ideology of M.K Gandhi and Dr. B.R Ambedkar, both of them have spoken at length on the issue of inter-caste marriage. The liberal Gandhian reformist agenda is represented in the play by Nath Devalikar to the core. Gandhi's portrait is present in the setting of the play throughout. Nath is a typical Gandhian who does not smoke or drink and had the intention to follow celibacy in his youth (pp. 3, 23).

Gandhi's view on caste also follows a certain trajectory. Initially he defended caste and its division of labour and labourers by giving his nod to *Varnasharmdharama*.<sup>21</sup> However, in due course of time, Gandhi, immensely under pressure from Ambedkar's staunch criticism of caste Hinduism, (slightly) changed his views on caste. In the twilight of his political career he decided to attend inter-caste marriage exclusively.<sup>22</sup> In her essay *The Doctor and the Saint*, Arundhati Roy makes a critique of this Gandhian standpoint:

From believing in the caste system in all its minutiae, he (Gandhi) moved to saying that the four thousand castes should 'fuse' themselves into the four Varnas. Toward the end of Gandhi's (when his views were just views and did not run the risk of translating into political action), he said that he no longer objected to inter-dining and intermarriage between castes.<sup>23</sup>

In order to understand Gandhi's view on caste and intermarriage, Ambedkar's discussion is inevitable. Gandhi wanted the annihilation of the term 'dalit' by bringing dalits into the upper caste Hindu fold, as is attempted by Nath Devalikar by marrying his daughter Jyoti to Arun. Ambedkar asked for the very abolition of caste as a norm per se. This is not to suggest that Ambedkar did not support intermarriage. In fact, he was probably the first philosopher to propose that 'The real remedy for breaking Caste is inter-marriage. Nothing else serves as the solvent of Caste'.<sup>24</sup> But he was not comfortable in accepting it as the only method to wipe out the caste from Indian society, which on the contrary is believed by Gandhi and his disciple Nath Devalikar in *Kanyadaan*. According to Ambedkar, caste can be eradicated if we attack its very foundations, which ultimately legitimize and sanction it:

The real method of breaking up the caste system was not to bring about inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages but to destroy the religious notions on which Caste was founded... To agitate for and to organize inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages is like forced feeding brought about by artificial means. Make every man and woman free from the thralldom of the shastras, and he or she will inter-dine and inter-marry, without your telling him or her to do so.<sup>25</sup>

This position of Ambedkar brings us back to our earlier discussion of caste as practice and caste as consciousness. The problem with India's liberal reform agenda is that it failed to understand the fact that if caste consciousness is eradicated, caste practices will themselves cease to exist. It is clearly evident from the play that Tendulkar fails to accommodate the critique of caste consciousness suggested in *Kanyadaan*. To be precise, he accommodates Gandhi and leaves Ambedkar. Further, his criticism of Gandhian liberal reformist agenda

leads us nowhere. Gaurav Somwanshi argues in his article that this is much bigger failure of the play as compared to the 'failed' marriage of Jyoti and Arun.<sup>26</sup> Somwanshi's point is open for debate because in the end Jyoti decides to live with her husband, and thus, in practicality the marriage is saved. Tendulkar may have failed in making a critique of caste consciousness, but his critique of sexual and gendered violence attracts our attention through Jyoti's character in the play. The next segment of the paper seeks to unfold that criticism.

### **From Jyoti Yadunath Devalikar to Jyoti Athavale: Journey towards an embodiment of Gendered Violence and More**

A well known critic of Marathi theatre, G.P Deshpande calls Vijay Tendulkar as the philosopher of violence. According to him, he is first to initiate the 'Indian Theatre of Cruelty'. The propagation of violence is somewhat inherent in his writing. According to him:

We see Tendulkar moving towards a position that treated violence and cruelty as primordial. [ ] He presented the insatiable greed, almost vulture like, of the nouveau riche in a brutal manner. In many ways Tendulkar is the creator of the modern Indian theatre of cruelty.<sup>27</sup>

Tendulkar's inherent philosophy of violence comes to the fore in the way Jyoti gets treated in the course of the play. She is a victim of patriarchy, sexual violence and also the invisible ideological violence. After hurting her, Arun tries to console Jyoti by using undertones of sexual violence: *hasli re hasli, ek Bammaneen fasli!* – "It's a jolly game! Caught a brahmin dame" (p. 18). In the culminating parts of the play he depicts his masculinity and ideological victory by announcing that:

Our ancestors trudged around with a load of shit on their heads. It is my great good fortune which made a fair and lovely bird from a well-to-do, high class background, fall to my lot. (p. 56)

Further, the violence on Jyoti is recounted by Seva in her conversation with Nath:

The truth is that your dalit son-in-law, who can write such a wonderful autobiography, and many lovely poems, wants to remain an idle. 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 at generations of his ancestry by men of high caste. (p. 48)

Thus, one may argue that it is through Jyoti that Tendulkar narrates the conflict of gender and caste within the context of the play. Jyoti's sexuality becomes a playground where the battle

of caste and the agenda of caste reformation are played out. Her body becomes a sight through which Arun brings out his agony of caste discrimination. We see how multiple ideologies compete in the play to overpower each other, and Jyoti becomes a vehicle through which these power relations between contrasting ideologies are established or disrupted.

On the other hand, Jyoti's father is less concerned about the flesh and blood Jyoti but more about his illusionary political beliefs of reformation. When the relationship between Jyoti and Arun is at the verge of being broken, he is more concerned about his idealistic experiment, which must not fail as he tells his wife: "We must save this marriage. Not necessarily for our Jyoti's sake ... This is not a question for our Jyoti's sake... This is not a question of our daughter's life, Seva, this has... a far wider significance... this experiment is a very precious experiment" (p. 41).

Thus it becomes evident that Jyoti encounters different shades of violence both from her father and husband's side.

#### ***Kanyadaan* as a Breach of Peace: Towards Uneasy Conclusion(s)**

The reading and staging of *Kanyadaan* raises some serious questions for the Indian society. If at one occasion, it is a historical document of caste atrocities, on the other –a living embodiment of gendered violence. Further, the division of caste and gender becomes deadly political when it gets the coating of liberal reformation. *Kanyadaan* accounts for the tragic relationship of human beings when they are divided on caste and ideological lines. Such divisions threaten the very existence of humanity and create a breach of peace. The play is an open ended terrain of possibilities and suspicion. However, our conclusion will be wanting if we do not discuss Jyoti's predicament at the end of the play.

In a bitter sense of epiphany and resistance towards her father's hollow sense of idealism, Jyoti confronts her father. She tells him: "I am not Jyoti Yadunath Devalikar 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. Don't touch me. Fly from my shadow, otherwise my fire will scorch your comfortable values". (p. 70)

Here, her utterance is a bitter criticism of the reformist ideals which were naturalized in her, particularly, by her father Nath Devalikar. The futility of these shallow ideals, according to her can only be exposed by becoming one with the dalits. Her shrugging of the word harijan should also be noted. Perhaps, it also indicates her enlightenment towards the consciousness of caste and the celebration of dalit difference. A difference, which Nath fails to understand when he gets polluted by Arun: "I can't believe it. Seva, he... his visit has polluted this drawing room, this house, and this day...it stinks. Seva- you know-you see-I feel like taking a bath, like cleaning myself! Clean everything! This furniture, this floor...all this...he has made them filthy, dirty, polluted! Why did I have to come into contact with a man like this? A man like this ...why?" (p. 57).

In the beginning of the essay, we have argued that untouchability has almost vanished from the urban space. Well, Nath has proved us wrong! Where do we go from here is a looming question for us.

**Note:** This article is a reprint of an earlier one, published elsewhere, under a different title and with slight variations.

### Notes

1. I have used the word authorised because Vijay Tendulkar himself meticulously supervised the final version of *Kanyadaan's* translation. See Translator's Acknowledgements, Vijay Tendulkar, *Kanyadaan*, trans. Gowri Ramnarayan (2005). All quotations in the article are from this edition. *Kanyadaan* literary means 'a daughter gifted away'. I am not too comfortable with this translation. In academic discourses, however, it is termed as 'the gift of a virgin'.
2. If we take the example of Marathi literature, one may look at the large corpus of writing on Devadasi issues, especially after the late eighties. Almost all of these writings remain within the confines of Marathi vernacular because no attempts have been made to translate these novels and autobiographies. To have the representative glimpse and fragmented translations of such writings, see Nilekha Salunke (2013).
3. For a comprehensive survey of this intellectual confusion, see Ania Loomba (2013).
4. Instituted in 1991 by K.K Birla foundation is an award given annually for an outstanding contribution in prose or poetry. The winner is selected from any Indian language, listed in the schedule VIII of Indian constitution.
5. Saraswati Samman can be given from the writings belongings to last Ten years. Hence, it should not be confused with the composition of play which was done in 1983.
6. Tendulkar 2005, Afterword.
7. Loomba 2013, 101-102.
8. The phrase is used by Arundhati Roy in her essay *The Doctor and the Saint* in order to contextualize B.R Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste*, see B.R Ambedkar (2014).
9. Arjun Dangle 2009, Introduction, 1-36.
10. Andre Beteille (2012)
11. M.N Srinivas 1996, Introduction, IX-XXXVIII.
12. Ranajit Guha (2005), Vol. V
13. Gayatri Spivak argues critically regarding this symbiotic relationship between history and fiction in her impassioned essay *A Literary Representation of the Subaltern* with reference to Mahasweta Devi's *Satanadayini* (The Breast Giver). For this full length essay, see Guha (1987), 91-134.

14. Tendulkar 2005, Afterword
15. The term, made popular by Indian sociologist M.N Srinivas in 1950s, denotes the process by which castes, placed lower, in the caste hierarchy seek upward mobility by emulating the rituals and practices of the upper or dominant castes.
16. Cited in Loomba 2013, 102
17. Of late, it has been reported and documented how couples who have married across different castes are subjected to violence, even to the scale of death by applying the norm of 'Honour Killings'. For a comprehensive history and analysis of such cases, see Prem Chowdhry (2007), 139-172.
18. See, "Steady Rise in Inter-Caste Marriages Involving Dalits", *The Times of India*, 19 September 2013. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Steady-rise-in-inter-caste-marriages-involving-dalits/articleshow/22728944.cms>. Accessed on 19 April 2014.
19. Ibid.
20. Cited in Loomba 2013, 102.
21. Referred in Hindu mythology, especially in the Vedas, It divides the society primarily in four groups namely Brahmana (Intelligentia), Kshatriya (Administrators), Vaishya (Traders), and Shudras (Proletariat).
22. Ambedkar (2014), Introduction, 17-179.
23. Ibid.
24. Cited in Loomba 2013, 103
25. Ibid.
26. See, <http://nirmukta.com/2014/03/27/play-and-prejudice-inter-caste-marriages-and-vijay-tendulkars-kanyadaan/>. Accessed on 19 April 2014.
27. G.P Deshpande 2008, 20.

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