

Reflections of Socio-Psychological and Relationship Conflicts in Satish Alekar's Plays: *The Dead Departure, Begum Barve and The Terrorist*

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Abstract

*Marathi Drama and its translation into English have helped us to understand different problems that existed during those times. Several events were happening at the same time which had an impact on people, their careers, jobs, and surroundings. The impact of socio-psychological and relationship conflicts is reflected in the literature through modern drama. We meet people with varying perspectives, behavioral patterns, and attitudes that can be pleasing and interesting at times but also irritating and harmful to others. Interpersonal skills are essential for maintaining relationships today. Society influences in various ways and has an impact on human psychology, which has an impact on relationships. Conflict is a fundamental psychological aspect that can be observed in human relationships because it is inherent in different forms of conflicts such as social, psychological, economic, political, internal, and external conflicts Satish Alekar's Plays *The Dead Departure, Begum Barve, and The Terrorist* contain different social issues that affect them mentally and physically. Such issues have an impact on individual psychology and it is seen in their actions in society which either binds the people in society or harms the society. Relationship conflicts develop due to misunderstandings, miscommunications, behavior patterns, ego, jealousy, and the treatment given to others. The researcher attempts to explore the reflections of socio-psychological aspects that have an impact on different relationships which are depicted in the three translated dramas *The Dead Departure, Begum Barve, and The Terrorist* written by Satish Alekar.*

Keywords: *socio-psychology, relationship conflicts, marathi theater, musical drama, interpersonal skills*

Introduction

India is a large, diversified nation with a rich heritage of regional literature. A variety of literature might be intrinsically linked to a society's language and culture at the beginning of the 19th century. In Maharashtra, it flourished in the middle of the century the 1950s -60s. In the beginning, it was only expressed through genres like *Tamasha*, a type of folk dance, and *Sangeet Natak*, a musical drama. Marathi theatre has developed and become well-known in numerous ways. Not only in Maharashtra but all over the world, it is enjoyed by the Marathi people. In this era playwrights like Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad, and Mahesh Elkunchwar skillfully depicted social issues in their work. Along with them playwright-director and actor Satish Alekar is considered as the most influential and progressive in modern Marathi and Indian theatre. The reflections of social issues like socio-psychological conflicts and relationship conflicts are seen in his translated plays like *The Dead departure, Begum Barve and The Terrorist*. This helps us to understand the social structure and human psyche.

One of Satish Alekar's earliest plays *The Dread Departure* was released in 1974. It's a unique drama that explores the subject of death through an amusing mash-up of lyrical conversations and traditional Marathi kirtans performed in times of grieving. It talks about the social scenario and the way people react to it. Such incidents do have impact on psychology of all but some may behave practically which also creates a different feeling in the

minds of observers. It also demonstrates the ridiculousness of the customs surrounding one of life's worst realities by making fun of funeral rites and grieving responses on two different levels those done for oneself and those done for others to see. It is the attitude towards such rituals that changes their psychology and their relationships with the situation and the surroundings. It also reflects the impact of socio-psychology and their behaviour which creates a rift among people showing relationships conflicts. Bhaurao, a dead man who wishes to be cremated only in a specific crematorium, is the subject of the play. He has a deep impact on religion and all the rituals carried out in society. He remains a corpse until it is legalized for him to be burnt in the crematorium of his choice.

Bhaurao and Rama are presented as a typical middle-class couple having a happy life. But after the death of Bhaurao his wife Rama, who had endured a life of suppression due to him from the day of his death, feels relieved and her unmet expectations and aspirations lead her to seek out another guy wearing a "suit and shades." Rama's internal desire comes out after her husband's death which shows that they had external conflicts between them.

Bhaurao's son Nana has somehow stuck in a dilemma leading to internal conflict as he feels that the corpse of his father will start to decay so cremate it as early as possible. But the soul of Bhaurao does not allow him to carry out his deceased body to be cremated at the non-electric crematorium. Nana used his father's insurance money to offer a bribe to the watchman to allow him to burn his father's dead body in an old crematorium. Only because of his father's wishes he continues to work at various levels. The drama *The Dread Departure* explores the ceremonial, psychological, and societal aspects of coping with someone's death. Even after death he wants to maintain relationship with his father which shows through his actions. Relationship conflicts are also observed in the play as we see the neighbors leave, leaving Nana and Bhaurao at the crematorium gate as the old crematorium is shut down "without prior notice." Though they have good relationships as neighbours still they give importance to their house chores and become practical. This creates a lot of indifference leading to relationship conflict.

Bhaurao requests Nana the go-ahead to break the ropes holding him captive and release him. Nana is seeing his deceased father for the first time. He is shocked, but bizarrely, he treats this very normal and even utters the words, "*You are not living, Bhau. If you continue in this manner, you'll terrify others*". Interestingly, he did not feel afraid. Bhaurao demands to be cremated in the old crematorium, which has now closed, and Nana is in dilemma. Nana compares his father's legacy to a set of jockey shorts after his passing. Following the passing of his father, he must adhere to the customs. He continues to feed the crows even though he is aware that his father is technically still alive because his body hasn't been cremated. The two men at the crematorium are arguing over a crow that flew away without pecking their rice balls. The drama emphasizes the ridiculousness of such rituals, which were observed after the father's death depicting the weird behaviour of people. The two men are arguing at the cremation; both of them recently lost their fathers. How mechanical people have become that they don't even care for the relationships. They constantly converse, argue, and argue irrelevantly about everything. Man even claims that he made a crow-fooling pledge to build a school in his deceased father's honor, but the crow never showed up. This illustrates the insane lengths people will go to follow social mores.

In this way *The Dread Departure* is one of the very few Indian plays in the Absurd Drama genre as absurdity gave birth to different types of conflicts. Situations and conversations in the play are extremely absurd and reflecting the situational conflicts when characters such as the two men in the new crematorium, Rama, and the watchman of the old crematorium see Bhaurao and even hear him talk, but take it normally when Nana handles the situation and then they even talk to the dead Bhaurao. The horrific and tragic images of death and the dead, the hopeless situation of all three major characters - Bhaurao, Nana, and Rama, the repetitive actions and dialogues included in the play that are full of cliché and nonsense, extremely expansive and cyclical plot and dismissal of the realism, flexible sense of the limits of the stage, and illusionary aspects are all common parts of an absurd play that are completely well portrayed in the play, showing conflicts at every stage.

Another play by Satish Alekar in which he explores, classic is more than just a piece of fiction in which you discover new things. It is a piece of work that pushes you to discover new things about yourself. According to this definition, "*Begum Barve*" is unquestionably a classic of Indian Theatre. He is a male character given the feminine title "Begum" as title itself conflicted by gender identity. In the same way we have seen different aspects in single personality which created different types of conflict in the play. In Act One, he is seen selling incense sticks. Later, he assumes the identity of a woman, Nalawadebai, and marries a man, Jawdekar. He even declares his pregnancy. Not only had that, but Jawdekar, the husband, accepted it as well. However, Shyamrao, Barve's boss, announces that Barve was carrying the boss's child before (s)he married Jawdekar. Finally, Barve is revealed to be Shyamrao's 'Begum.'

Social condition impacted on the character as they exploited by their fellow roommate or colleague which causes to increase internal as well as external conflicts in them. Barve shares a home beneath the staircase of the local overlord's townhouse with a foul-mouthed, drunkard named Shyamrao. Barve is a terrible character. Barve is a failure on stage because, in the past, only males were allowed on the stage and they dressed up as females and lived the roles. Barve fascinated by this and behaved like woman as Shymarao also treated him as his Begum.

Barve's only possession is a tattered shawl, a costume worn on stage by the famous actor Narayanrao, Barve's idol. Narayanrao is one of the best actors playing feminine roles on stage, and Barve inspires others to follow in his footsteps. But, due to the external conflicts with Shyamrao and unfulfilled inner desire of working on stage unable to live up to reality, he flees and lives in his own imaginary world. Barve creates a complex and flimsy alter ego. In the process, he draws the two office clerks, Jawdekar and Bawdekar, into his fantasy world. He even infiltrates the two men's lives as the coy widow, Nalawadebai. The strange part is that in her fantasy world, the two men become involved, and Jawdekar becomes the lover, while Bawdekar takes on the role of a loyal brother to her. Shyamrao, the opportunistic, manipulates everyone's fantasies. Rather than striking out and destroying everything, he plays his cards well. He stages a scene in which one of the two men is forced to resign from his position as clerk in their office. This causes a rift in their relationship, and Bawdekar loses patience and optimism. He blames the couple and is even willing to end his long-standing friendship with Jawdekar. All of this is the result of Shyamrao's deft manipulation. Finally, Shyamrao plays his final card by announcing at the seventh month dinner that Barve cannot be a wife or mother. As the situation unfolds, Barve is left penniless, homeless, and friendless displaying the harsh absurdity and ambiguity of life in general

Satish Alekar's *The Terrorist* is an entirely socio-psychological conflicts play, as it does contain different types of elements of conflicts. Songs, monologues, repetition, non-contextual changes in topic, the characters, and their introduction, as well as a sudden change in their behavior due to the changed situation, and absurd conversations provide a hint of different types of conflicts like socio-psychological and relationship conflicts. The play's theme - the creation of a terrorist - reflects the conflict between society and individuals and also spread a powerful message to society. The introduction to the topic of terrorism and Bapurao's desire to send his only son up north to become a terrorist because he is useless in the perception of the Bapurao is showing the internal conflict of the Bapurao, as he does not have the trust in his son's capability.

The monologues of Bapurao also reflect his disturbed mind and worries about his son's future. Bapurao and Babu's conversations are repetitive, non-sensical, and even out of context, making them strange and reflecting their unstable mind which is a symbol of internal conflicts. Babu uses absurd symbolism and examples to talk about himself. Babu went to the completion of his training as a terrorist his father Bapurao has undergone drastic transformations. Due to that relationship conflicts take place between different characters. He addresses his boss with authority and insults him when he does not arrive on time for his tiffin. Also, when he learns that the boss has returned with a marriage proposal, his attitude shifts once more. The questions he poses are strange. Instead of the usual marriage-related questions, he inquires as to whether she has ever heard of an AK-47 or a Czech revolver. His lengthy monologues are completely ridiculous. Manda fantasizes about how she will react when Babu returns, which is another aspect of the relationship conflicts. Because the groom is not present, the sudden wedding decision taking place is strange. As soon as Babu returns, the marriage takes place.

When Babu receives his first order to kill someone, Malvika is seen as pregnant. As soon as Babu completed his first target to kill Gadkari, Malvika lost their child. This situation increases the internal conflicts in his mind of Bapu. It makes him leave the path of terrorism and accept the life of the common man.

Conclusion:

In the end, the result is out of our control and no matter how hard we try to plan and programmed our lives, we are merely puppets. With a single pull of the string, all of our arrangements collapse. We have seen different types of conflicts in each and every relationship. These conflicts sometimes gives us negative result but sometimes we get positive output from it As the dead Bhaurao in *The Dread Departure* still wishes to live and be with his wife, we will all die suddenly, and everything we thought was important or necessary will be left unattended. We are lost in our world, like Barve in *Begum Barve* only to be jolted back to life by an unexpected and generally unpleasant situation. This research Paper shows that always conflicts do not create negative result but sometimes it helps you to take proper decision in your life like Bapu in *The Terrorist*. It also helps you to face the bitter situation in your life like Barve in *Begum Barve*. It also helps you to complete your desire after death like Bhaurao in *Dead Departure*.

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