



# POLITICS HAS INTERDISCIPLINARY DISCOURSE IN LITERATURE

## CRITICAL STUDY ON POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

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**Abstract :** The paper considers what are the possibilities of connections between politics and literature? How have those possibilities developed? Why should students of politics turn to literature as a source of political understanding? Connections have traditionally been made in terms of literature. As illustration. Or Examples for politics. Or as a form of moral education. Other possibilities. Or a political sociology of literature Or Literature as a primary source. For political study Where can you? Work in the. United States suggests. Further exemptions. The case for politics and literature. Is also strengthened by Recent developments in political theories such as. The interest in identity Or narrative. Many students of politic Will have hard passing references to works of literature in lectures are noticed Those stakes in politics reading lists. The connection of politics and literature has a long history. From Plato to Hegel, Karl Marx, Arend But that tradition has been largely neglected. As a disciplinary Study this is because political science distinguished from. Political theory and both from philosophy and general education. And literary criticism. However. In recent times academics has shifted to an interdisciplinary studies And a connection between social sciences like politics, philosophy, sociology. How they have been Interrelated with Literature. Especially political theory and political philosophy. Is incorporated in literature. And this is a major reason for passing references Continued, but recently more developed connections have been made by and for students of politics. To the point where politics and literature can be regarded as an integral part of political study.

### INTRODUCTION

Politics is commonly viewed as the practice of power or the embodiment of collective wills and interests and the enactment of

collective ideas Now, such enactments or embodiments imply that you are taken into account as subjects sharing in a common world, making statements and not simply noise, discussing things located in common world and not in your own fantasy. What really deserves the name of politics is the cluster of perceptions and practises that shape this common world. Politics is first of all a way of framing, among sensory data, a specific sphere of experience. It is a partition of the sensible, of the visible and the say able, which allows (or does not allow) some specific data to appear; which allows or does not allow some specific subjects to designate them and speak about them. It is a specific intertwining of ways of being, ways of doing and ways of speaking The politics of literature thus means that literature as literature is involved in this partition of the visible and the say able, in this intertwining of being, doing and saying that frames a polemical common world. Now the point is: what is meant by "literature as literature"? Surprisingly, few among the political or social commentators of literature have paid attention to literature's own historicity. We know however, that classifying the art of writing under the notion of "literature" is not old. We can trace it back to approximately the beginning of the nineteenth century. But critics have not often deduced any consequence from this. Some of them have tried desperately to connect literature (taken as the a-historical name of the art of writing in general) with politics conceived as a historical set of forces, events and issues. Others have tried to give a specific content to the notion of literature. Unfortunately this was done on a very weak basis, by referring literature's modernity to the search for an intransitive language. On this basis, the connection was initially flawed. Either there was no way of binding together literary intransitivity and political action, with "art for art's sake" opposed to political commitment, or one had to assume a quite obscure relationship between literary intransitivity (conceived of as the materialistic primacy of the signifier) and the materialistic rationality of revolutionary politics. Sartre proposed a kind of gentleman's agreement, by opposing the intransitivity of poetry to the transitivity of prose writing. Poets, he assumed, used words as things, and had no commitment to the political use of communicative speech. Prose writers, by contrast, used words as tools of communication and were automatically committed to the framing of a common world. But the distinction proved to be inconsistent. After having attributed the opposition to the very distinction of two states of language, Sartre had to explain why prose writers like Flaubert used words in the same "intransitive" way as did poets. And he had to pursue endlessly the reason for this, both in the sad realities of class struggle in the 1850s and in the neurosis of the young Gustave Flaubert. In other words, he had to pursue outside of literature a political commitment of literature, which he had first purported to ground on its own linguistic specificity.

Indian National Movement was one of the biggest and popular mass movements in world history through which Indian people got formed into a nation. Hindu-Muslim relationships, education, the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, the promotion of khadi and the struggle against social evils like untouchability formed subjects in the nationalist movement. Compulsory primary education, the lowering of the taxation on the poor and middle classes, the reduction of the salt tax were some of the major reforms demanded by Indian National Movement. It mobilized the youth, women and men of different castes and classes into political action and brought a mighty colonial empire to its end. The country struggled to free itself from the shackles of colonialism. National leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Bannerji, Bal Ganghadar Tilak, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gopal Krishan Gokhale, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Mahatma Gandhi accepted that India was not fully structured nation and thus their objective was to promote the growing unity of the Indian people through a common struggle against colonialism. Thus the Indian National Movement was able to tap the diverse energies, talents and capacities of a large variety of people.

After Independence new political movements emerged due to conflicts between classes, castes and other units. Injustice and exploitations of women in the male dominated society continued, giving rise to new trends and conflicts. After Independence even in the democratic process sometimes state functionaries or power hungry leaders try to violate democratic norms or rights. Ethical and moral values have been replaced by money-values leading corruption on one side and providing opportunities to form new institutions with some sort of democratic human values for sustainability of the system itself. At the end of the British rule, India had a larger industrial sector, with a stronger element of indigenous enterprise, than most under developed countries in the world. In an orthodox society like India, women have been made to believe that gender roles are natural. Education, employment and political rights were naturally constructed and they were confined to domestic duties. They were considered as the territory to be conquered and represented. Man has always looked down upon her as the weaker section, as his property, servile to him. Many novels portray the postcolonial consciousness with strong and proper perspectives in our times, by her close analysis and enormous sensitivity that set right the national honour and self-respect.

The feminine standpoint is very important in Sahgal's novels but there are some other issues which are equally important. Sahgal emphasizes on some important events of the Indian nationalist struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi. In her novels like Rich Like Us, Mistaken Identity, Prison and Chocolate Cake, A Situation in New Delhi, She focuses on some significant events like Satyagraha movement, Gandhi's salt march, Lahore conspiracy case, hunger strikes, Non-cooperation movement, Mass arrests. She has focused on peasant movements held in Kheda and Surat (Gujarat) where peasants refused to pay their taxes and went hijarat to neighbouring Baroda territory to escape government repression in her novel Mistaken Identity. In other parts of the country the mobilization of peasants around the demands for security of tenure, abolition of feudal levies, reduction of taxes and debt relief, made major headway. The Civil Disobedience Movement was launched in the atmosphere of discontent in 1930, and in many parts of the country it took the shape of no-tax and no-rent campaign. She also portrays the emergency period (1975-1977) declared by Indira Gandhi and political corruption in her novel Rich Like Us.

Since the early twentieth century, theatre has been one of the most powerful mediums for commenting on social and political issues in different parts of the world. Some prominent examples include German playwright Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children (1939) written in response to the rise in Nazis in Germany and Arthur Miller's The Crucible (1952) an analogy for McCarthyism in America. Acclaimed playwright August Wilson's collection of ten plays addresses the different degrees of racism that America's African American population has experienced in past hundred years. In 2009 Rajiv Joseph wrote a play Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo, commented on the devastating situation taking place in Iraq because of American occupation. Similar plays have been written across the world. India also has long history of socio-political dramatic theatre. Theatre before the independence of India, even though it brought the Indian theatre in direct contact with the western theatre, was primarily a weapon to protest against the British reign. Some well known examples of Indian political theatre include the traditional theatre forms of Tamasha in Maharashtra, Bhavai in Gujarat as well as the street theatre companies such as Jana Natya Manch in Delhi. Before independence the Parsi theatre and the others were not only a mode of entertainment but also were reaching people and addressing their issues. And of course it was one of the main elements in changing the social and political ailments of independent India. Broadly speaking a number of playwrights have given a new turn in writing plays with social and political relevance. Prominent

dramatists in the post independence Indian theatre such as Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, Rakesh Mohan, Mahesh Dattani and many others have used themes related to the contemporary social scenario to bring about the need to renovate the present social structure and to generate a renewed and better social system. They present complex issues of the contemporary society to address important social ills and prejudices. The plays have prompted vital conversations that can be used to combat social problems. The theatre in a way liberates by giving voice to the suppressed classes of the society. The issues of communalism, casteism, racism, crime, inequality and many other such issues are very often addressed in the staged narratives.

First, I have to take issue with the question "Should literature be political?" which has the fussiness of Granny about it. It suggests an anxiety about written literature, the notion that literary production is something precious and should be protected somehow from the unwashed hordes who are political animals because they foment revolutions and overturn thrones. Mark you, the unwashed hordes have created literature too, though it's been called folklore and folksongs. And now, woe, technology has opened the door to everyone calling him or herself a "writer".

Okay, the question has been asked so let's try to be serious about it, especially since it is asked in the context of literary festivals such as this one, which is celebrating the literature that is confined within the pages of a book. Let us start by defining what is meant by our use of "literature" here and – even more important – what we mean by "politics".

I will use literature here NOT in its broadest sense of embracing all literary production. I am using it in reference to works of the creative imagination – fiction, poetry, drama, in whatever form these are expressed since technology now opens up so many worlds beyond the artefact we normally call a book. So our concern here is with content.

We should treat works of the creative imagination as different from other forms of literary production. This distinction enables us to see and acknowledge that the writer who wants to make a statement has a wide choice of genres and that each genre has its place. Many writers like myself have engaged in a variety of these genres. But we must be clear in our own minds as to what we are doing. Non-creative literature operates according to a conscious mandate. Creative literature does not. Fabrication by a journalist is regarded as betrayal. Fabrication is what a fiction writer does.

Politics. Anxiety arises from our narrow use of the term. We tend to think of politics exclusively in terms of partisan politics, electoral politics, political leadership and so on, with strife and confrontation implied, so a lot of people will try to disengage by saying: "I am not concerned with politics." The bottom line is that the word "politics" conjures up partisanship, divisiveness and a low threshold of scoring dirty points against an opponent.

But politics in its very first definition relates to the art of government. We might refer to that as "Big P", because I want to make the case that Big P, the larger politics of the nation, inescapably shapes us in a trickle-down effect from the cradle to the grave. Politics determines the price of bread or the availability of guns or whether one lives in splendour or the squalor of a refugee camp. Closer to home, it might be a Caribbean mother having to choose between bread today and school fees tomorrow. Big P shapes the world into which we are born, our daily environment, and leads to what we might call "small p" politics; that is, all those decisions of personal governance that we are forced to make, both externally and unconsciously, every moment of our lives.

We are all enmeshed in politics because we are all citizens of somewhere – even writers – and we cannot escape being shaped by political decisions, big and small. So instead of asking the question "Should literature be political?", I would rephrase it as a

statement: Literature is political because we, the creators of literature, are political animals; it is part of accepting our responsibility of being human, of being citizens of the world.

Does this mean that I am advocating that literature as I have narrowly defined it should be in the service of Politics? Absolutely not. This is where creative writers must part company with those writers who operate out of a mandate that is overt and prescriptive. Consumers of each genre usually know what to expect. And "creative literature" works best if we do NOT know what to expect. Literature in this narrow sense is, above all, a product of imagination. The gift of the creative industries is to present the unexpected, to show the world in a different light.

Every author has a world view which reflects a political stance and shapes what we do, even unconsciously. For example, as a child, I grew up in a world where I never saw myself or the people around me visually portrayed in the children's books I read (though I took great pleasure in reading them). As a writer of children's books now, I would say that I am simply concerned with telling a story that a child anywhere in the world that might want to read. But, I have to confess, I am very much concerned that the illustrations should reflect and express a multicultural world, for that is what I live in. Is that political? Can any of us escape the political? I would say no. Even romantic literature plunges us into the realm of political economy: does the potential suitor have a job?

The raw material of writers is the entire world that we live in; a world that continuously shapes us as we in turn shape it, through our poetry or fiction. The writer is someone who has no choice but to be engaged with society, which means political engagement. Nothing escapes the snare of the political, big P or small p – it is about the price of bread, the paycheck you bring home, how you interact with neighbours or whom you choose to romance. You can rebel against the latter or hew your own path, but your choice will be shaped by political concerns, and those have always included religion, race or ethnicity, sex and gender. Today, perhaps, more than ever.

So what makes literature different then from the other arts of writing – journalism, history, political science, advertising or party propaganda? To me, that is the crux of the matter. The difference lies not in what we write but in the how. It is the difference between a journalist writing a story about, say, the shortage of public housing and the novelist inventing a character and a credible situation to demonstrate the impact of that situation perhaps down several generations, or how it leads ultimately to a revolution, or a suicide. It is taking the facts of the matter and then stitching them into a plot or a poem that illuminates it beyond the everyday experience.

The good thing is that in doing so, the creative writer has enormous resources that the fact-based writer has not. Literature is an art. It is about transformation. It is about taking one thing and making something else of it, changed but recognisable. So, politics might be the subject matter, but only as raw material. Literature does not need to employ polemics or confrontation. Nor is it about telling readers what they already know, but enabling them to contemplate what they didn't know they knew. It is not a question of avoiding issues but of being crafty in portraying them.

Literature is above all, storytelling. And, as Chinua Achebe has said, storytelling is a threat. Storytellers, poets, writers, have always found ways of confronting tyranny, especially in spaces where such actions are dangerous and deadly. Throughout the ages, writers have developed and employed myriad literary devices and explored the fullest limits of language through satire, magical realism,

fantasy, fable and so on. Writers over the ages have found ways of talking about issues – like politics – without seeming to talk about them. The function is not to present the world as it is, but to present it in a new light through the narrative power of art. Literature does not ask "What is it about?" It asks "How do we tell it to make it real?"

So, since I have to answer the question: "Should literature be political?" I will say, yes, but not in an explicit way. The purpose of literature is not to represent but to re-present, to hold up that mirror in a light that enables us to see reality both reflected and refracted. And that applies to politics or any subject that we choose, or in the best case scenario, in the subject that chooses us. As writers we live lives that are not navel-gazing but conscious, fully engaged with the world.

My favourite quotation is Gauguin's statement: "Art is either plagiarism or revolution." So let me end by taking issue with the title of this debate, especially with the prescriptive should. Should the subject matter of literature be prescribed by anyone? I say no. So let's end by revolting against those who would apply the word "should" to art. Even in a question. To young writers I say, ignore prescriptions. Don't be left behind. Write on!

## **Literature Review**

### **UNTOUCHABILITY AS A THEME OF MULK RAJ ANAND'S NOVEL UNTOUCHABLE AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY.**

Untouchable, is not only a novel but a work of social relevance. And when a novel has its social relevance that means it's a social novel. A social novel, sometimes also referred as social problem novel. It may be a work of fiction in which a prevailing social problem such as of gender, race, or class prejudice, is dramatized through its effect on the characters of a novel. But if the social problem discussed in the novel or any literary work is still prevailing in the society then the relevance of that particular work is still sought. Untouchable is a novel in which the burning issue of its time has been dramatized. As name suggests, untouchability remained the central issue in the novel. Mulk Raj Anand rose to the fame after the publication of Untouchable in 1935. Its social relevance can be measured by the fact that apart from a writer Mulk Raj Anand is also accredited as a social reformer. Most of his literary work remained attributed to the social cause especially to point out the social evil rooted in the society. Whether it is Untouchable, Coolie, Two Leaves and a Bud, Across the Black Waters, or The Sword and the Sickle all were dedicated to the downtrodden, deprived, socially and economically backward people of labour class, of lower strata of the society or the people of lower and abandoned caste and class. The author showed his personal sympathy to these sects of society. Indian society is a caste ridden society where caste based discrimination is an age old problem. From the ancient time to the modern, casteism remained a sensitive issue. The hero of the novel Untouchable, Bakha is an untouchable, around whom whole of the plot revolves. He is introduced to us on the very first page of the novel, as a young man of 18, who is in the profession of manual scavenging, cleaning the public latrines and considered as untouchable in the Hindu society. The one who cleans the dirt of the society is considered as unclean and untouchable and is treated inhumanely. In Indian society, the presence of caste based discrimination cannot be denied even today.

Search says that :

- -About 27 % of the Indian households still practice untouchability.
- -52 % of Brahmins still practice untouchability.
- -Only 5.34% of Indian marriages are inter-caste.
- -About 15% of scheduled caste and 22% of schedule tribe admitted to the practice.
- -It is most widespread in Madhya Pradesh with 53% practicing untouchability, Followed by Himachal Pradesh with 50%. At third position there comes Chhattisgarh with 48%, Rajasthan and Bihar with 47%, U.P. with 43% and Uttarakhand with 40%.
- -Almost every third Hindu practices untouchability.
- -More than 160 million people in India are considered as untouchables.
- -Statistics compiled by India's National Crime Record Bureau indicate that in the year 2000, about 25,455 crimes were committed against Dalits.
- -Every hour two Dalits are assaulted; everyday two Dalits are murdered, and two Dalit homes are torched.

### **Mahesh Dattani's Final Solutions: A Summary**

India is a country of cultural and traditional diversities. Such society has established and institutionalized the ways of living to justify power and authority which some enjoyed over the rest. The existence in such diverse society demands understanding among the people to rejoice the diversities around them, particularly the variances in religion. The conflicts arising out of these diversities have found unique resonance and which have assumed special significance in post-independence Indian theatre. Such path-breaking play from contemporary Indian theatre is *Final Solutions* (1992) by Mahesh Dattani (1958) which is a critically acclaimed and thought-provoking play which brings out important and representative features of the fragmented modern Indian life and poses varied questions of communal disharmony. The ways in which the modern Indian plays are studied have undergone a considerable change. The paper here aims not only to critique but also to explore the deeper insights of the thematic concerns of the play and to put a range of evaluation and interpretation on the basis of empirical evidences. It analyzes the textual narrative of the play which has a considerable significance and important role in highlighting the issue of communalism. It attempts to discover the inappropriate and inhuman behavioral patterns in the society based on conventional stereotyping and established prejudices. Also, communalism has always been one of the major concerns for India. The nation struggles to resolve this social issue, so by analyzing this play, the paper will try to surface out the playwright's perspective about the socio-historical context linked to culture and politics. Thus, the paper aims to spawn a literary analytical study of the play *Final Solutions* by Mahesh Dattani.

### **Mother of 1084 - Mahasweta Devi - A study**

In this age of hyper-active awareness, there are some chances for an issue to be lost in the limelight of some highly discussed issues but being an important and stubborn torch bearer in the pan-Indian literary world, Mahasweta Devi does not allow any of the ideas that she observes in the society to be highlighted to lose it in the obscurity, merely because it is not much discussed by the majority of the writers. Mahasweta Devi in her play *Mother of 1084*, takes a view on a complex issue, conflict in human heart whether to go

with intense human feelings or to go with much trodden path of pragmatic wisdom which kills human feelings in the name of discipline, peace and order. Mahasweta Devi aptly presents the picture of dilemma way of life and basic human kindness. Mahasweta Devi, a social activist, is one of the most noted Bengali writers of this century. Her works often contain what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls “Problematic representations of our society.” Her writings are concerned with many grass roots level social movements around the question of bonded labor, persisting feudalism in rural polity, state negligence etc. *Mother of 1084* is a dramatization of Mahasweta’s Bangla novel *Hajar Chaurashir Ma*, in which she provides a documentation of the Naxalite movement of the seventies. The Naxalites raised their voice against the established order, and fought for the cause of the poor, exploited by the landlords, industrialists and bureaucrats. In the battle between Naxalites and establishment many young people are killed and thus leaving their mothers, wives and sisters destitute.

### **Langston Hughes (1902-1967) - As I Grew Older: Summary**

Langston Hughes (1902-1967) was a famous African-American poet, social activist, novelist, and playwright and was recognized as an important literary figure who lived during the time of worldwide racial oppression and discrimination against blacks. He was born on the 1st of February, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. Langston was involved in the Civil Rights Movement and also wrote protest poetry. He believed that poetry and art could bring about changes and equality in society. He was also a part of the Harlem Renaissance as one of the first poets to promote African-American cultures, such as jazz music, known for its free flow and expression. Langston Hughes was very much concerned about creating African-American poetry as an independent genre in the world of literature. *As I Grew Older* begins with a dream that the poet had a long time ago. The poet says his dream, bright as the sun, was right in front of him until a wall rose between him and his dream. The poet is an older man now, and he is thinking about his dream, which he dreamt of a long time ago. He thinks he has almost forgotten his dream. He remembers that his dream was not fulfilled as a strong barrier was created by his fellow white people who will not let his dream come true. The wall seems to grow forever and ever, and it has become so taller that it ‘rose until it touched the sky.’ The dream, which was as bright as the sun, has now turned dark. The wall has become a long dark shadow and has been blocking his dream. The dream being replaced by a shadow, the poet has become black.

### **“Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid**

The *New Yorker* published Kincaid’s short story “Girl” in 1978, her first piece of fiction. The story has since appeared in Kincaid’s short-story anthology *At the Bottom of the River* and numerous other anthologies. The story is so popular in part because it speaks to so many audiences, including young people, African Americans, and women. Much of Kincaid’s work deals with ramifications of Antigua’s history as a colony of Great Britain. The British controlled Antigua from 1632 until 1967, shortly before Kincaid left for New York. By 1967, the island had become self-governing, but it did not achieve independence within the British Commonwealth until 1981. The British imported many Africans to Antigua during the early colonial years to labor as slaves in the sugarcane fields. Despite independence, many of the descendents of these slaves still live in poverty there. Kincaid appreciated the education she received in the Antiguan school system but learned to hate almost everything about the British occupiers. Many themes in her stories—especially those of oppression and powerlessness—stem from her experiences in Antigua. Kincaid visited her homeland in 1985, four years after independence. The rampant poverty shocked her so much that she felt compelled to write



about it, describing the conditions in a nonfiction book called *A Small Place* (1988). She disliked colonialism but felt that Antiguans had squandered the opportunities that independence offered by relying too heavily on tourism. In her work, she also seeks to combat the negative effects of discrimination, detrimental environmental policies, and spread of AIDS, which killed her brother in 1996. The short story "Girl," like many of Kincaid's books, deals with the experience of being young and female in a poor country. Kincaid's complicated relationship with her mother comes out in the mother-daughter dynamic in the story. She describes her mother as a literate woman who struggled against her poor circumstances, eventually feeling bitterness toward her children because of all her problems. Kincaid also wrote the book *Autobiography of My Mother* (1996), which explores the life of a woman stuck in poverty and resentful of her children. She has also said that her mother's anger toward her seemed to get worse when Kincaid became a teenager. Just as the voice of the mother in "Girl" resents and worries about her daughter becoming a woman, Kincaid's mother seemed to become more oppressive and bitter toward Kincaid as she grew older.

### **Gender equality is your issue to-Emma Watson**

Emma Watson has spent her entire career inspiring women. From the intelligence and resourcefulness of Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter series to the rebel spirit of Sam in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, every role the actor takes on portrays a complex, meaningful female perspective. Off screen, Watson takes an even more active role in the fight for gender equality. She has been a Goodwill Ambassador for U.N. Women since 2014, the same year she gave a powerful speech on feminism at the U.N. headquarters. The address launched the HeForShe campaign, a movement which was meant to educate men and women on gender equality and how it benefits everyone. In the years since the speech, Watson has continued to spread wisdom about feminism. "Feminism is about giving women choice," Watson told the outlet. "Feminism is not a stick with which to beat other women with. It's about freedom. It's about liberation. It's about equality. I really don't know what my t\*ts have to do with it."

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