CHANGING PORTRAYAL OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIAN DRAMA IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

(With Reference to Vijay Tendulkar’s *Sakharam Binder*, Girish Karnad’s *Wedding Album* Mohan Rakesh’s *Half Way House*, and Manjula Padmanabhan’s *Harvest*)

1. **Introduction**

Indian drama in English has been treated as lone plant on the rocks. At the national and international levels it is always talked that drama in India could not flourish and reach the artistic heights which Indian poetry and fiction could do. Rabindranath Tagore brought the sole Nobel award for his poetry, not for dramatic works though he is a dramatist of a high order. Somehow, this genre of literature in English failed to get roots in the Indian soil, unlike other forms - poetry, fiction and prose. The want of living theatre, the problem of medium, poor literacy, the dramatists’ negligence of the rich tradition of the Classical Sanskrit drama and folk theatre and other numberless reasons are accountable for this poor fertility of this plant in India. The language problem, the playwrights’ cold response to the rich funds of the past, their preference for writing plays in the Western mode to native drama and the unactability of the plays caused the failure of Indian English drama to find roots in the Indian soil. Indian drama in English also lacked scope for the spectators’ participation, which merits the folk theatre and drama regional languages. These disadvantages of Indian English drama are the very strengths of the regional drama, distinguished by its outstanding features.

Nevertheless, the late sixties and the early seventies witnessed a positive streak of light for Indian drama in English. The credit of paving the bright future and paving the way goes to New dramatists who registered a remarkable growth and maturity through the their translations of Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, and Kannada plays in 1970s and onwards. Playwrights like Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad have changed the very course of drama with their experiment and innovations. Their contribution to Indian drama in English is not confined to their playwriting but it is their association with the theatre has helped a lot. Their substantial contribution has added new dimensions to Indian drama. The stalwart playwrights
like late Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar, Mohan Rakesh and Habeeb Tanvir and Girish Karnad, Mahasweta Devi, led the post-Independence Indian drama. At present, dramatic works of Vijay Tendulkar, Datta Bhagat, Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar, Habeeb Tanveer, Usha Ganguli and in their respective regional languages and their translations in English forms the significant corpus of Indian drama in English. The young dramatists like Mahesh, Dattani, Premanand Gazvi, Satish Alekar and Manjula Padmanabhan are the emerging stars. They have infused new life into this branch of writing.

For a long time, Indian drama in English remained the last choice with the academic researchers. But quite lately, Indian drama in English has begun to invite attention of the academic scholars. It is after the seventies that some research studies have been undertaken on Indian drama in English.