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Defiance/Compliance Over-play in Mahesh Dattani's *Where there is a Will*



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Abstract :

Mahesh Dattani has been acknowledged as the most accomplished dramatist of independent India for his superb craftsmanship and delineation of a dark, neglected, and taboo milieu of the middle class India. Despite being a great disciple of the common man social tragedy writers of the twentieth-century like Ibsen, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams and Edward Albee, Dattani's canvas is filled with men and women from the economically empowered class. The distinguishing post-colonial features like resistance and protest on gender, generation and class lines against the age-old colonial power-structure characterize Dattani's works. His *Where there is a Will* centres around a middle-class business family and deals with the issues of lust for position and money, human transgressions and depravity, hypocrisy and plotting. The play celebrates the defiance of the individual as well as his love

for self and identity while the age-old parochial value-system signifying patriarchal hegemony stands denounced in a post-colonial India. The present paper proposes to critically analyse the constant overplay and restructuring of the dichotomy of defiance and compliance in the human relations in this world and beyond.

Keywords: defiance, compliance, patriarchal, power, will