



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A critical analysis of power dynamics in Vijay Tendulkar's theatrical tapestry

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Abstract

Drama stands out from other literary genres because of its immediate appeal, which offers a level of accessibility that poetry and fiction may not always provide. Drama gains great value from this. Theatrical performances have a rich and distinguished history worldwide. In India, they are well-recognized as a popular kind of folk entertainment. When drama is presented on stage, everyone, even the most uneducated person, can understand it and enjoy it. One of the biggest advantages of drama is this. Conversely, the production of Indian plays in English is a very recent development.

Dramatists like Asif Currimbhoy, Pratap Sharma, and Guru Charan Das have written plays that have garnered positive reviews in both the United States and England. These plays are among the English theatre's most notable successes to date. Indian English playwrights such as Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar, and Vijay Tendulkar are well-known nowadays. These four people stick out as being very significant. They have become well-known because of the cultural rebirth that has taken place in their respective regions as a consequence of translating and performing plays in languages other than their own.

Vijay Tendulkar is a well-known modern Marathi playwright because of his innovative and notable dramatizations. Though he provoked social controversy with his plays, particularly "*Sakharam Binder*" and "*Ghashiram Kotwal*," he won the highest praise for his dramatic performance in "*Silence! The Court is in Session*." (Agarwal, A. B. 2008). Tendulkar has contributed a great deal to writing, even outside of the theatre, with his many articles, short stories, and one-act dramas. While he often concentrates on the middle class, his thematic aims deal with the intricacies of human nature and lifestyle. His examination of man-woman relationships is notable because, without resorting to depravity or horror in his representations of these pairings, he reveals unconventional and peculiar aspects of them.

Keywords: Perverted, Target, *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Complexity, Power, etc.

Introduction

In their most fundamental form, Tendulkar's plays are works of representational art, which depict life in the manner in which he interprets and comprehends it critically. His worldview is so all-encompassing and comprehensive that it is shown by the remarkable range and variety of power relations that he presents in his plays. Because of his interest

in reality and his desire to acquire more knowledge about it, he is relentless in his pursuit to investigate and discover the factors and reasons that influence the beliefs and behaviors of others. He contends that the desire for power is the driving force behind practically all human relationships and behavior, which often results in conflict and even slaughter (Kaushal, J. N. 2003). However, his attention as a writer goes beyond just depicting power and dominance over women and analyzing the roots of these phenomena; he also dramatizes the many techniques that men and women employ in order to cope with this strong and pervasive component of human life.

In *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Vijay Tendulkar displays a high level of accomplishment while using the power element. Not only does the story of *Ghashiram Kotwal* chronicle the story of Ghashiram Savaldas' rise from obscurity to the Kotwalship of Poona, but it also narrates the story of his inevitable collapse and his tragic death. A performer and a pundit, the sutradhar is a combination of the two (Banerjee, A. 2003). Brahmins are males who describe themselves as priests, intellectuals, and clever individuals. In spite of the fact that they have vocations

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as priests and professors, the sutradhar discovers two Brahmins who are plotting to go to Gulabi's Bavannakhani. This demonstrates that they are adulterers inside their ranks. We witness Ghashiram Savaldas dance for the very first time as courtesan Gulabi accompanies him. Ghashiram extends his back to Nana in an effort to repair the injury to his foot that he sustained. After he was accused of taking Nana's jewelry reward one day, he was beaten up and thrown in a cell where he was meant to pick a Brahmin's pocket. On the other hand, he was supposed to pick a Brahmin's pocket (Dharan, N. S. 1999). When he is finally freed from prison, everyone looks down on him. Because of this, his sense of self-respect is severely belittled. He takes the Poonaites by fear and makes a solemn vow to torment them.:

I will come back to Poona. I will show my strength. It will cost you! Your good days are gone... There is no one to stop me now, to mock me, to make me bend, to cheat me. Now, I am a devil. You have made me an animal: I will be a devil inside... I will make this Poonakingdom of pigs. Then I will be Ghashiram again, the son of Savaldas once more. (GK377)

In order to satiate the sexual cravings of a sixty-year-old man, he gives a 16-year-old girl without giving ethical issues a second thought. Ghashiram ensnares Nana with his sexual urge; in return, Nana labels him the Kotwal of Poona due to his actions. Following the following conversation between the two of them, Ghashiram promises Nana that he will give her his daughter:

GHASHIRAM. This is the only way. Otherwise, lovely Gauri will not come to this palace again.

NANA: No! Send her. I will make you Kotwal. When will you send her?

GHASHIRAM: After I have the order sealed, signed, and sealed in my hand,

NANA: Bastard. You have got me in an arrow pass.

GHASHIRAM: Yes, the narrow pass of my only daughter. (GK 384)

In this passage, Tendulkar draws attention to the fact that men possess all rights over women in order to use them for their purposes.

He is about to go on a road that is not of the Brahmanical kind, which demands him to have immoral characteristics and to engage in bad activities. When granted control, Ghashiram acts in a repulsive way. "*Ghashiram Kotwal* began to rule personally" (Babu, M. S. 1997). the author writes. Assaulted each person he encountered in public life. Folks who are currently being held, folks who have been whipped. Sought permission from the individuals. In the drama *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Sutradhar observes that "people who are sued and those who are imprisoned" (GK 387) describe the characters.

In order to get authority, the character *Ghashiram Kotwal* engages in sexual activity. The power struggle that he is engaged in involves his taking advantage of his daughter

and manipulating her. In order to satisfy his desire for power, Ghashiram sells Gauri's virginity without consideration for the moral implications of his actions (Khan, S., & Johri, M. 2024). Because he is so determined to continue abusing his position of control, he even gives his consent to her death. As a result of adhering to the notion of "using a thorn to remove a thorn," the character of Nana tolerates Ghashiram's behaviors until they suit his aims. At this point, she gets rid of him. Both Ghashiram and Nana are considered to be the ancestors of individuals who want power, regardless of the period or place in which they were born. Tendulkar is more concerned with explaining how power operates across society than he is with exploring the origins of power or the ramifications of power.

Tendulkar intends to create a situation in which a Brahmin who is not guilty of stealing is subjected to an unjust punishment. Ghashiram is forced to go through the agony of carrying a red ball iron in his hands as a result of his callous actions in rejecting the answer to the explanation. A Brahmin who is poor and innocent has been abused, and he is in a state of sorrow, groaning, and complaining (Roy, S. 2021). You will not be able to do it without children! You are going to endure a greater amount of misery than I will. It is GK 397. The statements made by the innocent Brahmin provided a signal that Ghashiram's death was imminent. As a result of his sin, he is obligated to pay the price, as shown by the fact that Gauri was killed by the midwife and forced to have an abortion (Dharwadker, A. B. (Ed.). 2018). Ghashiram is a place where civilization may transform an average person into a monstrous creature. In addition to being responsible for his transformation into the devil, the culture is also to blame for his execution by stoning.

When Ghashiram says, "I danced on your chest, but I wasted the life of my little daughter..." he is conscious of the fact that he has sinned. Defeat me, please... Please remove my hands and feet. I beg you, please break my skull. The (GK 415).

As a consequence of this, Ghashiram passes away with his transgressions forgiven, much like a traditional tragic hero. He is well aware that despite the fact that he would rise to popularity, he will eventually go back to the place where he started. (JAIN, N. 2007). By doing so, the play illustrates the power relations that exist in contemporary society.

Within the context of the play *Encounter in Umbugland*, Vijay Tendulkar manipulates the issue of power very sophisticatedly. Political maneuverings are shown in a way that is both brilliant and hilarious in this drama, which is divided into three acts. Everything that takes place in the play is done thus in order to get power (Chhillar, M. 2019). The most significant feature of the play is the manner in which Princess Vijaya first evolves from a kid who is self-centered, naughty, and fun to a monarch who aspires to be like her role model. Not only is it a political drama, but it is also an investigation of the essence of people. The 61st anniversary

of King Vichitravirya's coronation is being celebrated, and he would like to give a cordial welcome to everyone present at the ceremonies. Two penbearers who are standing on the platform then provide the monarch with a long life and thank them for their accomplishments. Pannarayan's remarks provoke Vijaya to contemplate, and she develops a strong desire for autonomy as a result. It is with him that she shares her feelings of confinement. It is with him that she confides that she is experiencing feelings of confinement in the castle and that her father does not have time for her (Wadikar, S. B. 2008). On this significant occasion, Prannarayan earnestly requests that she extend a kind welcome to her father.

Despite the fact that they are opposed to his authoritarian leadership, they are powerless to prevent him from doing so. On top of that, the people who live in his domain are completely behind the king. Not even the ministers are able to reach a consensus on anything for the simple reason that everyone wants to take over after the king goes away (Bhattacharyya, J. 2013). "Power seems more important to you than duty," the cunning king Vichitravirya says to the ministers, accusing them of ignoring their responsibilities. A focus on one's interests has taken the place of service.

Additionally, he cautions them that power is a crown that is full of thorns. Responsibility is the essence of power, and power is a sword that hangs over them. The bread that they are willing to consume at the stake is power. By means of Prannarayan's remark, the playwright draws attention to the alteration that Vijaya's personality has experienced as a consequence of her attainment of power. Tendulkar's Encounter in Umbugland is a concrete picture of the transformation that a sense of power instills in a person, as Anju Bala Agarwal notes properly (203). This shift results in a person being more powerful.

Having power comes with a number of problems and tricky decisions. The headache caused by power is unlike any other. Vijaya has the impression that her father is "Decrepit old," but the king refers to her as "Childish and half-witted." In the future, a painter will try to create a portrait of the monarch. You are requesting that the monarch stay still. Once the painter has completed his work, he finds the king lying on his throne, having passed away. Who is the person who will succeed Vichitravirya as king? Due to the fact that this is the most imperative topic, every ministry is keeping a close watch on the throne (SEM-III, M. E. 2022). A political void has been formed as a result of the unexpected death of the king, which has resulted in a crisis that has been proclaimed by the two pen-bearers and published by the media of Umbugland. As a result, it is difficult for any of the ministers to achieve authority since the public is divided across the board. A "serious crisis" has been announced by the pen carriers about this situation. Vratyasom reveals to them that Princess Vijaya is His Majesty's heir and that she is their compromise. He also tells them that she is their compromise. He tells Pistakeshi, "This one in front, five of us behind, she will be the rule, we

will be the rulers," and he is referring to the rulers. The cabinet minister devised the scheme to employ Queen Vijaya as a puppet monarch, with them governing the country in her place. This plot was brought to light by the cabinet minister. In spite of this, it turns out that Queen Vijaya is a powerful dictator who exerts her authority over all of the officials who supported her candidacy for the throne. Vratyasom is quoted as saying, "This little brat has given us blow after blow" (EC 332). When Indira Gandhi was installed as queen by the ministers, she was confronted with a situation that was quite similar to this one (Chandal, P. 2014). The second act of the play depicts Princess Vijaya as the queen of Umbugland. Shortly after assuming power, Vijaya devised a strategy for the progress of the Kadamba tribe; however, the ministers did not agree with the plan being proposed.

They devise a plan to subvert her authority and revolt against her. Vijaya, on the other hand, obtains knowledge of their strategy. They are throwing stones at her, and she fearlessly approaches the angry throng that is around her. It is she who makes announcements on the removal of taxes and measures pertaining to public welfare. The general public would not be delighted with this. They were relieved to see that she had finally committed to prosecute the corrupt ministers. Therefore, they started supporting the opposition. Her instructions to the older ministers are that they should address her as "Her Majesty." This is against their will, yet they obey her. The play demonstrates how power may be used via treachery, greed, and selfishness, thanks to this particular aspect.

For the most part, the play Sakharam Binder depicts power in its characters. Sakharam Binder, who was born into a Brahmin home and was tortured by both of his parents, decided to run away when he was eleven years old. He managed to subsist on his own and finally found work in the press organization. As a result of his lack of faith in marriage, he brings home women whom he has rejected, and he does not remain with them for an extended period. At the beginning of the play, he is shown bringing the seventh lady, Laxmi, who is a normal Indian woman, to his house after the sixth woman has left. Sakharam Binder's temperament is aggressive. His portrayal of himself is consistent with the idea that he is a self-made man who does not even respect gods. In the conversation that Sakharam had with his friend Dawood Miyan, we find out that Dawood Miyan is acquainted with the kind of life that Sakharam leads. Curiously, despite the fact that he has the aesthete inside him, this same person is capable of treating his women with a level of harshness that is beyond comprehension.

On the very first night, Sakharam tells Laxmi that she needs to break her fast because, in order to serve him, she would need to summon all of her strength. In spite of the fact that she was first terrified, Laxmi rapidly found that she was able to adapt to her new environment. Because Sakharam is in a relationship with Dawood, a little problem presents itself

in the house. Laxmi forbids Sakharam from having Dawood perform the "aarti" for Lord Ganapathi. Laxmi angrily asserts her Hindu religious convictions and bans Sakharam from doing so. She does not give in despite the fact that she is being physically abused. Sakharam has determined that she should reside in Amalner with her nephew (Sam, V. I. 2024). With Laxmi's reluctant departure, Sakharam's life goes through a rather remarkable reversal. Throughout this time, he has been the leader of the home, and the woman has been required to follow his direction.

As soon as the next woman, Champa, comes, she completely changes the course of events for him. Compared to Laxmi, she is younger, has a somewhat more sensuous body, and has a leaner physique. Currently, she is the spouse of a Chimkhada police officer who was just terminated for driving recklessly while under the influence of alcohol. Sakharam is confronted by Fouzdar Shinde, Champa's husband, who arrives at her residence under the influence of alcohol and asks her to kill him. The savage thrashing that Champa inflicted on Sakharam has caught him by surprise. After being compelled to leave her nephew's home, Laxmi returns to Sakharam's. When Champa disappears without a trace in the afternoons, Laxmi begins to suspect that something is wrong. After following Champa, she discovers that he has been having an affair with Dawood, which comes as a complete surprise to her.

The fifth scene of Act III is when the tension between Champs and Sakharam reaches its highest point. Champa is adamant about not sharing his bed. Infuriated, Sakharam coerces her into cooperating with him. It is then that they engage in a heated verbal altercation with one another. She reveals to Sakharam that Champa has a secret relationship with Dawood, which causes him to become very angry. The blows that he throws at Laxmi are followed by him driving her away. In a fit of rage, he takes a lunge forward. Champa is suffocated to death as he quickly makes his way back to the victim. As Sakharam considers the possibility of having slain Champa, he recoils in horror. He is completely depleted of his strength. As soon as Laxmi took control, she instructed him to bury Champa in the kitchen. When she finds out that Sakharam is too astonished to dig the grave, she musters up all of her strength and begins digging. As a result, Vijay Tendulkar serves as a substitute for Sakharam's control and harshness against his wife.

There is no one else like Vijay Tendulkar! In the time that it is in session, the Court is the entity that has the element of power. Because Benare is such a devoted instructor, he has earned the admiration and respect of each one of his students. Her participation with "The Sonar Moti Tenement (Bombay) Progressive Association," an amateur theatre group, is something that she is a part of. The Kashikars, Balu Rokde, Sukhatme, Ponkshe, Karnik, professor Damle, and Rawte are the other members of the group. All of these

individuals are from the urban middle class in Bombay. Both Benare and a local by the name of Samant have arrived at the village hall, which is the location of the "Mock Law Court" that the Bombay artists are holding. Samant describes her career as a teacher, during which she observes that her pupils are "so much better than adults." Having the knowledge that the administration is investigating her "just because of one bit of slander" causes him to feel depressed and embarrassed (Kumar, N. 2023).

A "mock trial" is now being prepared. At Sukhatme's suggestion, they have all come to an agreement that Benare would be presented as "the accused" during the simulation. We have completed the arrangement of the furnishings. When Ponkshe tells Benare that she has been taken to jail and brought before the bar of the Court on suspicion of committing a very severe criminal, Benare is taken aback by the news. "Prisoner Miss Benare, according to section No. 302 of the Indian penal code, you are accused of the crime of infanticide," Kashikar, the judge of the "Mock Law Court," asks the prisoner. To provide himself with some support as he rises, Benare clings to the chair. Through the use of a few questions, Sukhatme examines Ponkshe's moral conduct and provides her with feedback. As an additional point of interest, Rokde is successful in persuading Karnik, the later witness, to agree that he has seen Benare in "a compromising situation." He shared with Sukhatme that he had seen hell.

Benare had been making fun of Rokde by shouting, "Speak, Balu, speak A-B-C." throughout the whole conversation till now. According to the information that he provided to Sukhatme, he saw Benare in Professor Damle's dormitory room. Consequently, she finds herself in a predicament, much to the enjoyment of those who torment her. Within the context of their nasty game, it is clear that Sukhatme, Ponkshe, Karnik, and Rokde have made Benare their target. "It is clear that you have all conspired against me on purpose!" she yells at them. You intended to do me damage, did you? The story that Ponkshe tells him is about how she told him about Damle's choice not to get married despite the fact that she had gotten pregnant. Kashikar observes that Benare is just one step away from becoming completely evil in relation to the immoral deeds that he has committed.

During her speech, Benare refers to all men as "hypocrites," stating that their entire care is for her body rather than her shattered heart or her troubled mind. She admits that she took use of her hero worship and fell in love with Damle when she was an older lady. Damle was able to have his way by taking advantage of her feelings. "He was not a god, was a man," she breathes. "He was a man." From whom everything was a part of the body, the body itself was once again the body. Due to the fact that she breached traditional conventions as well as the sacredness of marriage and motherhood, Kashikar has decided that she is not worthy of empathy whatsoever.

Furthermore, she has not been married and has a child that was not intended for her, which is a really horrible model for other teachers to follow. As a consequence of this, he has given her the order to murder the unborn child that is now inside of her. As a result of the hard choice that was made, she was so saddened that she suddenly broke down in tears and slumped on the table. At that time, there was complete Silence in the room. With this approach, the playwright conveys the idea that males are superior to women and that they are aggressive toward them.

The play Kamala has a number of recurring themes, one of which is power, throughout its whole. The flesh trade is the primary focus of the play, and Jai Singh Jadhav is motivated to make a profit from it without taking into account the people who are the victims of this disgusting trade. There is a connection between the English daily magazine owned by Sheth Singhnia and the journalist Jaisingh. The woman who is his wife, Sarita, is a girl from the countryside. They live in a little house in a clean area in Delhi, which is located in India. The name of the housekeeper is Kamalabai. In addition to being the editor of a vernacular daily, Sarita's uncle, Kakasaheb, adheres to Gandhian principles. Due to the fact that Jaisingh is often absent from his residence, Sarita and her uncle find it annoying to remain in contact with him.

On the other hand, Sarita is required to keep a record of each call that is received, as well as the identity of the caller. In the event that she does not carry out these actions, Jaisingh will be dissatisfied, which will lead to conflict within the family. The local woman, whose name is Kamala, is purchased from Bihar by him for 250 rupees, and he eventually takes her back to his house. He intends to use her as an example to illustrate how widespread the trade in human flesh is in the most remote regions of India. Through the presentation of the proof of the meat trade, Jaisingh is anxious to demonstrate to the press that he has been successful in achieving his objective. The fact that Kakasaheb and his friend Jain have nothing but pleasant things to say about him is despite the fact that they have a high opinion of him as a journalist. Finally, Jaishingh is fired from his post by the editor, which is the culmination of the power struggle that has been going on.

Conclusion

The battle for power, persecution, tyranny, miseries, apathy, and subjection has been a constant process from the beginning of man's existence. It has continued to survive even in a civilized society. People are either held hostage by other people or captivated by other people in this power game. This connection, which is based around power, or power game, functions on several levels, including the home, the social, and the political. As a result of the cutthroat fight for power, fame, fortune, dignity, and status, man uses his fellow creatures, and women in particular, as pawns in order to accomplish his goals.

It is also possible to refer to Tendulkar's plays as documentation of the inherent cruelty that exists within man, in which man takes advantage of women and also his fellow humans in order to satisfy his need for power. Tendulkar draws attention to the corrupt activities that are prevalent in the fields of media, the court system, the home environment, and politics. The plays that Tendulkar has written are a forceful depiction of human frailties; nonetheless, he does not want to upset or annoy people; rather, he seeks to educate and improve them.

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