

CHAPTER : FOUR

Violence in the Selected Plays of Vijay Tendulkar

CHAPTER - IV -VIOLENCE IN THE SELECTED PLAYS OF VIJAY TENDULKAR

The contemporary literature is a result of Freud, industrialization and existentialism. Literature is also influenced by the political social economic movements the world over in the sixties. Though man is basically aggressive and violent. Today, our society is much more violent than before. Today what is striking is the hatred, anger, the retribution and retaliation, the tremendous violence that is building up and the cracking up of the traditional relationships and the age old systems. It is only natural that literature the world over as well as in our country should reflect this trend. In drama the traditional, sentimental and emotional drama with its age-old relationships, crying and weeping and sentimental characters no more represents reality. The modern Marathi drama too in its evolution took a new turn in the second half of the century. Like the literatures the world over modern Marathi theatre too became bold enough to present life with its brutality, violence, cruelty and sexual excesses and perversions on the stage.

In the field of Marathi drama Vijay Tendulkar constantly tried to find new themes, new ways and new techniques. He deals with contemporary society and tackles contemporary themes. Thus violence is invariably reflected in most of the plays of the second phase of his career. Tendulkar's favourite theme is the lonely, helpless individual versus society and he presents this struggle in a very intense

manner. He reveals the hypocrisy and cruelty hidden under the garb of social norms, tradition, culture, morals and customs. In the introduction to Madhalya Bhinti he expressed his opinion. He believes that somebody must paint the ugly, the harsh and the revolting in human life. Though plays representing such ugliness, harshness and disgust may not be appreciated and seen again and again, Tendulkar felt that they must be enacted. He was always attracted by the hidden, inner yet lively and dramatic elements in the life of the common man, he tried to probe these. The dramatic elements in the struggle and tension between the alienated individual and the society is what Tendulkar observed and presented in his plays.

The three plays that I have selected for the study of violence of the plays of Vijay Tendulkar are Shantata: Court Chalue Ahe! (Silence, the Court is in Session), Gidhade (Vultures)) and Sakharam Binder .

C H A P T E R - I V - (A)

Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe! in 1968 is Tendulkar's first play showing the transformation from his earlier works where he dwelt sentimentally on the woes of the middle class with a degree of sympathy. Shantata brought Vijay Tendulkar recognition on a national scale. When Satyadev Dubey produced it in Hindi it won two prizes in the Drama Competition. In 1970 it was awarded the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay Award as " the play of the year ". In 1971 Vijay Tendulkar won the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Award for Playwriting. It was translated into several languages like Bengali and English. Satyadev Dubey turned the play into a film. The BBC broadcast it in English. With Shantata Tendulkar came to be regarded as a leading force in the national theatre movement. The experience of the play came from a life incident. Tendulkar was guiding an amateur group in Vile Parle to stage a mock trial. As he listened to their bits of conversation the outline of the play took shape in his mind.

Tendulkar usually concentrates his theme either on an individual character or a family. In Shantata it is a mob or a group. Mob psychology or group psychology is what Tendulkar is trying to probe. Here it is a group that has come together as a cultural amateur group that performs plays and not just a mob come together by chance. The dramatist by relating the group with cultural activities has achieved dramatic irony. The city bred

people who consider themselves civilized and cultured go to a village to present a play which is a mock trial in a court. When the play opens Miss Benare (who later becomes the victim of violence) enters the hall with the local chap Samant. She is a brisk, young and attractive school teacher with an impulsive nature and frank speech. Though her attitude seems liberal and open-minded she seems to be struggling under the tension of some fear. The conflict in her mind is detected when she is speaking freely with Samant on their arrival at the hall where their mock trial is to be held.

"पण माझं काय करणार ते? काय करणार? करून करून काय करतील?हू:।

चौकशी करताहेत ।माझ्या शिकवण्यात तर मी चोख आहे.प्राण ओतून मी शिकवते - रक्ताचं पाणी केलंय मी । या नोकरीत केवळ एक आरोप सिध्द झाला म्हणून काय करतील ते ? काढून टाकतील ? टाकू देत. मी कुणाचं वाईट नाही केलेलं, कुणाचंही नाही. मी केल असलं तर माझंच वाईट केलं आहे पण हा काय काढून टाकण्याचा आरोप आहे ? मी माझं काय करायच ते हे कोण ठरविणार? माझं आयुष्य हे माझं आहे - नोकरीसाठी विकलेलं नाही मी ते कुणाला.माझी मर्जी ही माझी आहे.- माझी इच्छा माझीच आहे. ती कुणी नाही मारू शकणार.कुणी नाही. माझं, माझ्या आयुष्याच मी काय हवं ते करीन । मी ठरवीन माझं - §अभावीतपणे§ ओटीपोटावर हात. अकदम अडून, सामंतवर नजर जावून गप्प होते.कमशः भानावर येते. सामंत आवघडलेला.

§अंक 1,पान6§

They have plenty of time to kill before the performance. As one of the members of the troupe is absent they decide to initiate the local chap named Samant into the intricacies of court procedure and later use him as a replacement for the evening show. When the troupe enters the room

we expect banter and cordiality as is usual in a small group working together. There is banter but not without a strong streak of meanness. The petty remarks passed by the various characters reveal that their theatre activity just affords an escape from their personal disappointments and suppressions. Benare reveals that in real life Sukhatme is a lawyer without a brief, but during the trial with Benare as the accused, he seems excited and thrilled to show off and exhibit his knowledge of the legal process. Sukhatme, in his turn makes fun of Karnik's knowledge of the "intimate" theatre. Supported by Babu Rokde he makes fun of the unfortunate Ponkshe who has failed his Inter Science Exam, but poses as an expert on scientific affairs during the game of the mock trial. Ponkshe makes fun of Rokde for his total dependence on the Kashikars. And Miss Benare and the group unit ... ridicule the Kashikars and their show of devotion to each other and also their childlessness. One of the group, Prof. Damle is absent, Benare describes him to Samant as an "Intellectual" who prides himself on his book learning, but hides his head and runs away when there is a real-life problem. The absence of Prof. Damle is an important thread in the play; and it hovers in the air, gives rise to some vague uneasiness.

The troupe has enacted its usual mock trial several times and is in no mood to practise it again. But as the local man Samant is to replace the fourth witness they

decide to introduce him to the court procedure by holding a mock trial against Benare who will be accused of infanticide. Benare's trial is nothing more than a harmless game. On the surface it is just an enactment of what is a rehearsal of sorts of nothing more than a mock trial to be staged later in the day. But before long the game begins to assume a grim aspect. The accusations against Benare are based partly on conjecture, partly on hearsay. But the darts start striking home. One by one as the characters in the troupe realize that Miss Benare really had an affair with Mr. Damle and that she is even pregnant by him they start torturing her. Once they realize the so called sinful behaviour of Miss Benare, they lose all sympathy, become boorish and cruel in their accusations and take delight in exposing the sin of the woman. They reveal how Benare has tried to seduce almost every male present and tried to lure him into marriage. Ironically enough, the local innocent and simpleton Samant delivers the final blow in his excitement of being the fourth witness. Being at a loss for words he reads out a passage from a popular novel. The details that he reads seem to fit Benare's case. Kashikar, Sukhatme, Karnik, Ponkshe, Rokde all start attacking Miss Benare violently as the mock trial proceeds. They seem to enjoy doing so through Benare has in no way hurt any of them personally. Yet under the pretext of killing time they make Benare their victim and the moment they realize that she is really guilty of the so

callec immoral behaviour, the game grips and excites them, they cruelly and violently pounce on their prey and enjoy her predicament. Benare who is on the offensive in the beginning, finds herself trapped at the close of the play. Benare tries to take a grip on herself and tries to taunt the judge and the lawyer in return. One by one the witnesses are summoned. When Rokde reveals seeing Benare in Damle's room, Kashikar the judge says it is not right to talk of personal things. But Sukhatme in his excitement of the trial insists on all details. Benare is angry but everybody reminds her that it's just a game after all. But all of them are curious to probe into her personal life. Samant fills in the gaps with lies. He is eager to be a witness and in his eagerness he just reads a passage of the meeting of two characters from Suryakant Faterfekar's novel and their dialogue, he tells the court that it is the dialogue he heard between Damle and Benare. In the dialogue from the book the woman is pregnant and the man is not ready to accept his responsibility. Samant's evidence makes Benare fly into a temper. She suspects conspiracy. She cries, goes in. But due to this the excited group becomes obsessed with carrying on the trial. Benare wants to escape but the latch which has hurt her finger and drawn her blood (as she entered the place) has long since fallen into place and shut the group in and, in fact, takes on the dimension of a barricade. In the claustrophobic atmosphere inside, the social masks are shed. Benare

is caught in the midst of a brutish, perverse and cruel crowd. What began as a game evolves into a hunt. Benare is the quarry who is forced and pushed into the box. She refuses to talk, whereupon Mrs.Kashikar is summoned as a witness. She says that Benare tried to seduce Rokde. Again Rokde is summoned, his words increase the violent excitement of the group. Ponkshe volunteers tell the group that Miss Benare always carries "Tik 20" in her purse and that once she had secretly met him at a restaurant. Benare is helpless. She pleads with Ponkshe not to reveal anything of their meeting to this crowd but the frenzied crowd is not ready to let her go. Ponkshe tells the house how Benare tried to persuade him to marry a friend of hers who was carrying and was jilted by her boyfriend. It was no friend of Benare's but Benare herself and the child she is carrying is Prof. Damle's is the information that causes a lot of sensation in the troupe. Benare feels wretched. Karnik comes forward to reveal that he knows Benare's cousin who told him that at the age of fifteen, Benare fell in love with her uncle and when she failed to win him she attempted suicide. At this Benare again tries to escape but Mrs.Kashikar cruelly pushes her into the box. After this Kashikar who is acting the judge in the game cannot contain himself and wants to give some evidence. He tells the court of having heard a conversation between Miss Benare and the chairman of the educational institution of her school. Miss Benare pleaded the chairman not to hold an inquiry about her. Later he also hear

the chairman Mr. Shinde phone and instruct to dismiss the teacher who is on the way to be an unmarried mother. That teacher is no one else but Miss Benare states Kashikar. This is the last straw, Benare's personal and private life is all laid bare to the cruel world. She tries to drink poison but Karnik does not let her do so. He snatches the bottle, Then Sukhatme gives his prosecutor's speech. He criticises Benare's decision to bring up a fatherless child by going against the established social norms. He tells the court to award her severe punishment for going against the social conventions and traditions of morality. Benare is asked to have her say, but by now she has become numb and dumb due to the unexpected "reversal" of the game. She wants to have her say. The whole stage is darkened with Benare in the spot light. Her inert frame stirs a little to communicate to us what she knows about men who profess love but, infact only hunger for the flesh. She asks for nothing else but to have a right to do what she wants with her own life. She wonders at the interference of the society. The innocent children in the school are her only diversion, even that is being snatched from her. She wants to bring up the child in her womb with self-respect but the society around won't let her do so. She is helpless, miserable and desperate at her plight. Her speech ends.

The mock trial continues. The sentence meted out to her is savage. The infant in her womb must be destroyed;

she must lose her teaching job, her only source of livelihood. Benare weeps helplessly. By this time the audience for the evening play starts arriving. The cruel and violent people in the troupe put on the masks of decency and tell Benare that it was all a mere game. Throughout the mock trial there is no mention of the "intellectual" who abandoned Benare and brought her to this plight. The righteous troupe passes no judgement on the absent Prof. Damle. The play ends with Mrs. Kashikar asking Benare to get up as the show must start on time and not to take anything to heart and that all that happened was untrue. Mr. Kashikar asks everybody to wash and dress up and get down to business. Ponkeshe asks Samant to arrange for some tea as the lady (Benare) needs some. All leave the stage, only Benare is left stirring feebly, then giving up the effort. From somewhere unseen, her own voice is heard singing softly a pitiable song. The climax of cruelty and violence is seen in the end when all the members of the troupe declare the happenings (hunt) as just a harmless game and go about their business. The violence in this play ascends and reaches its climax in the last act.

Under the name of justice and morality how the middle class man becomes cruel and violent is what we get to see in Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe! The pretentious middle class feels that it is the ideal representative of morality. It believes that it gives value systems to society and considers itself the unacknowledged legislators

of society. But the tragedy of the middle class is that it takes puritan role which it is not able to carry to the end. There men who consider themselves upholders of morality, cultured, civilized and decent become indecent, beastly and cruel while playing the game of holding a mock trial. The play reveals the ineffectual middle class types whose main tendency is hypocrisy. Historically it is a bitter truth that of all the classes in the Indian society the middle class is the most hypocritical. Hypocrisy requires a sort of intelligence that is usually possessed by the middle class people. This class usually keeps away from all kinds of violence, but this does not mean that they do not enjoy it or practice it at all. None of the middle class characters are bold enough, frank enough or capable enough to be genuinely violent like Tendulkar's Sakharam. But when they come together in a group they enjoy and take delight in cornering a woman like Miss Benare. Their duplicity or double values are seen in the fact that they blame the woman Miss Benare for her predicament and pass a harsh sentence on her while the 'intellectual' who is responsible for this plight and who abandons her is left scot free. The cruel and violent group hardly blames the absent Mr.Damle. Thus the violence in the play is typical of the middle class tendency.

Man being basically violent when the beastliness in man is aroused the veils of decency are torn apart, he forgets all humanness and he is nakedly exposed as

ugly and harsh. The smug, self-satisfied, self-centered man who lives under the garb of morality, decency and culture can become terribly savage, indecent and beastly. The violence and harshness in man can boil up and come to the surface and he can be utterly unjust and cruel under the name of justice. This is presented in a very impressive manner in "Shantata". The play cannot be considered as just something new and sensational. It is about the innate savagery in all of us. The cruelty and violence presented in this play becomes a social experience. Vijay Tendulkar tries to explore the tensions and struggle arising between the natural urges and instincts of man and the rigid social frame which tries to constrict these. Benare is caught in a trap by the cruel and harsh group that believes that it is fulfilling its duty. This trapping of Benare is a symbol of the helplessness of the individual amidst the fossilized society. Even though Benare expresses revolt against the society in these words...

" विष मी पचवलं, त्यांना §मुलांना§ सौंदर्य शिकवलं माझं खाजगी चारित्र्य हा माझा प्रश्न आहे. माझ मी काय कराव हे मीच ठरवीन."

§ अंक ३, पान १२ §

She very well knows and has realized that the society will not accept it. That is why she says that life is a horrible thing and that it must be hanged. "जीवन ही एक महाभयंकर गोष्ट आहे. जीवनाला फाशी दिल पाहिजे. न जीवनम् जीवनमर्हति " § अंक ३, पान १२ §

Thought it sounds very sarcastic and violent there is poetic truth in it.

CHAPTER - IV - (B)

GIDHADE (VULTURES) 1971

" मोजक्या प्रयोगासाठी केवळ अंक "घाडस" म्हणून उमे केलेले हे नाटक"

This is how Tendulkar himself described the play in its introduction. Vijay Tendulkar is closely associated with what is considered "New Drama" in Marathi Literature and plays that are called "Experimental" । प्रायोगिक । Around 1970 there was a wave of "Experimental Theatre" in Marathi. Tendulkar was an active promoter of this theatre. The plays that he wrote around this period created a good deal of ^oupr_Lar. It was claimed that he did something new and revolutionary on the stage. Gidhade belongs to this phase.

In Gidhade the world of experience is different, it is no more limited to the lower middle class as in his earlier plays. The setting selected to present the cruel and violent incidents in the play is an upper middle class family somewhat liberal and westernised. The play is about a now 'poor' but once rich family. The attitude is feudal. The setting is Papa's bungalow with a garage. It's not a home, just a house, a house that has lost its homeliness. Ramakanth, Umakanth and Manik are the legitimate children of Papa; Rama is Ramakanth's wife. Rajninath the narrator is Papa's illegitimate son who lives in the garage. Except Rajninath and Rama all other characters in the play are corrupt, violent, greedy and lusty. Papa has made his brother penniless and he does

not in the least have love and affection for his sons. Neither do his children have any respect, regard or love for their father or for that matter for one another. They lack courage, honesty and confidence. Their living is rooted in deception.

When the play opens it is night time and Ramakant is seen packing a bag and his wife Rama is standing motionless, inert and frozen. He takes hold of her hand and leads her away. He locks the house, she follows him mechanically, hesitates near the garage but Ramakant leads her forward. They pass the passage, there is a strong wind, they disappear in the darkness. The harsh cry of vultures can be heard. There is light in the garage. Rajninath is writing. At the sound of footsteps he gives a start and looks up at the door, runs to the door, calls 'Rama'. She is gone. He goes back to his writing. The play opens violently with a sarcastic soliloquy of Rajninath. The atmosphere is gloomy and grim.

The soliloquy is all revealing. It reveals the background of the play, it throws light on the vulture like characters of papa and his children and also on Rama who is the helpless prey of the cruelty and violence of these vultures and Rajninath the helpless witness as well as a victim of the violent happenings.

Rajninath says that Rama has left him and followed her husband like a faithful diseased dog, frozen and cold

like a statue. Her life was unbearable. Rajninath is relieved that he would not have to be a passive spectator of her suffering and agony. After twenty two years of passive impotent life he feels relieved that the ugly and horrible nightmare is over.

The ghostly memory of the screams, the hisses, the sobs and the sighs haunts him. He remembers Ram^a's innocence, her love, her purity, her shy face, smiling one moment, weeping the other, sensitive and delicate like a flower, pleasant like a sweet morning dream. He remembers his brother's cruel joke that had embarrassed the bride and made her weep. He pleads the haunting memories of the past to leave him and go back to their graves and let his unfortunate soul live in oblivion.

He says that the people who lived in that house were like vultures living in a hole on a rotten branch. He remembers the day he had to go hungry to bed, disgusted and weeping, Rama had stealthily brought him some food. She made him promise not to let anybody know. He has been a dumb and passive spectator of the exploitation, torture, pain and agony that Rama suffered for 22 years. She had only one urge and that was to be a mother. But that too was denied her when a violent wave rooted out the tender and delicate hope. What remained was just a lifeless pulp, a cold statue with no feelings.

रमा गेली. भावना गोठून दगड बनलेला पुतळा.....सचेतन.....मुर्दाड
मालकामागून गेला.....भाकड जनावराच्या वातड इमानाने.....महारोग्याला
लूत भरलेल्या कुत्र्याची स्वाभिनिष्ठ सोबत, नरकाच्या मार्गावर.दोघांचा भविष्यकाळ
हरवला आहे..... आहे त्या जागी केवळ एक मरणनाक झडून
भोक उराव तसं..... ते देखील दुःसाध्य,दुराराध्य आहे.वेळ टळली तरी काळ
येत नाही, फरफट सरत नाही, जगण्यापेक्षा पाहणाराचे हाल..... ते टळत
नाहीत, यानंतर निदान दृष्टीआड सृष्टी.मेंदूतल्या नरकाला तेवढाच अज्ञाताचा
आडोसा.टाकायचा आहे सुटकेचा श्वास..... सुटकाच ही, केवढी सुटका...बावीस
वर्षाच्या अखंड षंढ जिण्यानंतर..... लांबच लांब, गलिच्छ, महाभयंकर दिवास्वप्ना-
नंतर,.....आता कुठं ते संपत आहे.....

आठवणीचे सापळे होतात जागे, स्वप्नांच्या कवट्या हसू लागतात, अवकाशानं
गिळलेल्या किंकाळ्या, फूत्कार, हुंदके, उसासे.....सा-या सा-यांना मिळतो
उःशाप आणि पहाता पहाता..... नाही ! पुन्हा नको ते सार नको !.....तरीही
ओढला जातः हरिणीसारखी अश्रूप.....घरणीसारखी प्रेमळ.....पावसाच्या
पहिल्या सरीइतकी..... तशी निर्मळ, लाजरीबुजरी.....क्षणात खळखळणारी
तर क्षणात खळबळणारी आणि तशीच. केवळ क्षणांत डबडबणारी.....हळवी,
नाजूक,.....अशी एक लोभस मुर्ती..... जणू फूल प्राजक्ताचं, किंवा साखरस्वप्न
.....पहाटेचं.....कधीच संपू नयेसं वाटणार बावीस वर्षे झाली
त्याला, नाही? फार वर्षे झाली.....अशी होती रमा.....रमावीहिनी.....

लग्नात..... सुपा-या खेळताना आमच्या बंधुराजानी लपवली सुपारी,
न सापडेल अशा जागी, आणि मग शेवटी तो उमगूनही न शोधता आल्यानं
संकोचल्या, बावरल्या मुद्रेवर पोरसवदा तिच्या ... रून आले होते पावसाळी
मेघ आणि धाक्या होत्या दुधडी धा-या डोक्यांवाटे, हळद माखल्या गालांच्या
उतरंडीवरून खाली. हातांत तोंड दडवून ओक्साबोक्शी रडणा-या त्या पोक्त
पोरीला पाहून पोरसवदा मीही हसलो होतो सर्वासारखा फिदी - फिदी... कसल्या
तरी गुदगुल्या होऊन.

॥ निग्रहाने ॥ जा बाबांनो, जा, आपापल्या धडग्यात परत जा, परत जा. आपापल्या विवरात पुन्हा पडून रहा. यानंतर तरी या अमागी प्राण्याला थोडा स्मृतिभ्रंश जगू द्या. विस्मरणाचं सुख. . . . ते थोडं घेऊ द्या. . . . स्मरणाची अज्ञावधी मरणं मेल्यानंतर तरी. ऐकदा तरी. ऐकदा तरी. नंतर आली ती माप ओलांडून घरी. अरे कशाला त्या आठवणी, निर्दय ! जखिणी, कशाला ?

पण घर कसलं. . . . घर कंसल, दोलीत मानवी गिधाड्यांच्या नाही तर मसणवटीत जिवंत पिशाच्यांच्या. घर कसलं ते, घर कसलं ? आणि ऐकदा भुकेला जेवण मिळालं नाही म्हणून मी चिडून, धुमसून आलो होतो रडकुंडीला आणि पडलो होतो डोकं खुपसून उशीत. सर्वांचे करावेत खून, पाडावीत खांडोळी, खिम्यासाठी, बोकडाची पाडतात तशी. असा विचार घोळवीत. तेव्हा येऊन तिनं फिरवला होता हात. या डोक्यावरून, या या केसातून. चाचरता तरी माया ओकू पहाणारा. मी पाहिलं दचकून, चमकून. चटका बसावा तसं, तशी जरा मागं होऊन, पदर सावरून, जमीन प्याहळत ती मला म्हणाली होती, " उसळ आणि चार पु-या आणल्या आहेत. कुणाच्या नकळत. सेंपाकघरातून. तुमच्यासाठी. खाता ना ? मात्र बोलू नका कुणाला. नाही तर गळ्याची शपथ घातली होती तिनं आवर्जून. मी ती पाळली, मी ती पाळली, बोललो नाही. कधीही नाही बोललो तोंड दाबून पहात राहिलो. असह्य झालं पहाणं तरी नाही चकार शब्द काढला. स्वप्नातदेखील नाही. तिची ती छळणूक, उपेक्षा, हेळणा, तगमग, तडफड, मुर्दाडासारखी पाहिली मी. दगडा सारखी पाहिली. किड्यासारखी पाहिली. पहात आलो बावीस वर्ष, सा-या अशा, अपेक्षा जागच्या जागी जात असता अशा जळून, कोळपून, तिनं एकच फक्त एकच इच्छा धरली होती कवटाळून. प्राणपणानं. देह मनाचा कण न कण एकवटून बंधन झुगारून प्रसंगी फळण्याची. मातेची कूस वागवणा-या मादीचा हक्क जन्मसिध्द. एखाद्या कुत्रीला सुद्धा लाभणारा. पण त्या आसुसत्या वेलीवर मात्र फळ नाही डोललं, फूल नाही

खेळल ... अक राक्षसी लाड, विचारीत आस्मानाची वाट, आली, शेवटचा कोवळा, दुबळा,कोंब हासडून, निपटून गेली. उरला थोडा कुस्करा..... थोडा चोळामोळा..... गोठल्या अश्रूंचा बनला ठार वेडा दगड संवेदनारहित, विकाररहित आणि पाच गिधाडं कुजल्या आशेच्या झुलल्या फंदीवर. पाच गिधाडं.....कुजल्या आशेच्या झुलल्या फंदीवर.....

॥ अंक १, पान २,३,४ ॥

The soliloquy is full of nauseating images concerning leprosy. The description is violent and the image of vultures signifies the central theme of the play. Vultures stand for lust, extreme lust for flesh, i.e. here the whole play is about lustful persons, their inhuman cruelty and violence. The all revealing soliloquy sets the tune of repulsive images and the disgustingly crude language as well. The first scene ends with the soliloquy.

The second scene is the introduction of Manik, the sister in the family. Manik enters with a repulsive and shabby appearance. Her behaviour reveals a 'hysteric' personality. Her smoking, drinking, violent language and repulsive behaviour as soon as she gets up from bed is quite contrary to an Indian female character. She is a complete contrast to her sister-in-law Rama who is the traditional Indian house wife. Manik leaves behind a repulsive anti-female impression. She is in a bad mood for not being woken up by Rama at 7 a.m. as instructed by her. Rama did call out to her but was unable to wake her up because her bedroom door was locked from inside. The way Manik reacts to this shows

the suspicious, strange and violent atmosphere in this abnormal family. Manik says :

मग काय उघडं ठेवु, या आणि दाबा माझा गळ म्णून ? इतका बंदोबस्त करते म्णून तर जिवंत आहे या घरात । काय माणसं रहातात इथे ? म्णणे दार बंद होतं। तो धेरडा जगन्नाथ माळी एक तसलाच। रोज सकाळी येवून पैसे मागत असतो. रम्याची न त्याची रोज हुज्जत. झोपमोड करतात मेले। इथं काय पैशाची झाड लाकल्यायत कुणी की खाण लागलेय पैशाची ? माजोरी मेले ।

॥ अंक । पान 6 ॥

When Rama reminds her that the poor gardner has not been paid for the last two months, she says,
इथं आम्हांलाच पुरत नाहीत पैसे। गेले दोन महिने मी हरिकलभकडची ती लेटेस्ट नेकलेस घ्यायची म्णते ती मेली जमत नाही घ्यायला. मागावं तेव्हा कुणाकड पैसे नाहीत। पपा येतात वस्कन अंगावर पैशांचा प्रश्न काढला की वाटण्या झाल्यापासून त्यांना लागलाय म्हातारचक. उम्या कटू, दमडीचोर, मवाली मेला. लाथ हवी का विचारतो पण एकुलती अंक बहीण म्णून कुणी करील म्णून बघत होते. पण इथ बहीण हवीय कुणाला वाटण्या झाल्यापासून इथं रहाते त्याचासुद्धा खर्च घेतो तुझा नवरा. तरी बरं रात्री सुरा दाखवून सगळंच घेत नाही माझ्या वाटयांच. घ्या काय याचं ।

॥ अंक । ला पान 7 ॥

Lust for material enjoyment and money is markedly presented through this female character. Money, material enjoyment, licentious life are the aims-of the life of Manik, Umakant, Ramakant and even Papa. These aims make all the people inhuman, selfish and cruel. When papa talks of his wife and children he says " वैरीण, तुम्हाला ठेवून गेली मरून "

and the son Ramkant retorts " आणि तुम्हाला पण साता भुईला भार and snatches the toast his father is eating. When his brother Umakant arrives he tells his wife not to give him his breakfast as he doesn't contribute to family income. He says. भाऊ झालेत पण साता जन्माचे वैरी झाले..... तिरडीवर नोटांची बंडलं पसरून त्यावर झोपून बेवारस जाणार अखेर हे, सोनापुरात. § अंक 1, पान 14 व 15 §

Rama turns to her father-in-law to intervene and put an end to the harshness between the brothers, at which he says," " राक्षस आहेत दोघेही भूडवे to which Umakant says " बाप म्हणून लूतभरलं कुत्रं चालत असतं तुमच्यापेक्षां § पान 15 § and Ramakanth supports him .

Father against children, brother against brother, brothers against sister, brothers and sister against father, all the family relationships become perverse in this play. All the three children Manik, Umakanth and Ramakanth plan and attack their father to extract money from him. They threaten to kill him and make him sign a cheque to withdraw money from his bank account. Papa is scared that his children may kill him, leaves the house and goes away. Rajninath his illegitimate son, the poet, narrator and commentator of the play sarcastically describes his departure in harsh and violent language.

" तीर्थरूप गिधाडाच्या इतिश्रीची ही कहाणी..... रमावीहिनीच्या यातनाकांडातला अंक सर्ग, घेरडं गिधाड, मुर्दाड वासनेचं वातड पिशाच्च..... लपवून धोबाड, खुरडवीत पंख..... गेलं ढोली सोडून..... घुळीत वैफल्याच्या रेघोटया ओढीत..... मरतमढया, हिडीस, लोंबल्या गात्रांनी..... पाच गिधाडांतल्या

धेरड्या गिधाडाची कहाणी अशी संपली. रमाविहिनीच्या यातना कांडातला सर्ग एक. § अंक १, पान ४। §

In Act II Ramakanth and Umakanth not only plan to break their sister Manik's leg but actually do so. (Act 2, scene 1) They want to blackmail her wealthy lover the Rajha of Hondur as they suspect Manik to be pregnant by him.

In the second scene of Act-II the exploited, tortured, desperate and helpless Rama turns to the only compassionate person around Rajninath. The sympathetic Rajninath is a passive witness of the excessive and fierce greed and the highly improper and licentious behaviour of the 'vultures'. When Rama cannot bear it any more she expresses her suppressed emotions to Rajninath in these words :

रोज नवं मरण. क्षणक्षणाला हजारो, लाखो मरणं. लाख सुया टोचल्यात कुणाच्या छातीला तशी एकेक यातना. वेदनेनं आंधळ बनवणारी...पेलवत नाही आणि दूरही नाही टाकता येत. संपता न संपणारं वै-यासारख वर्ष. अशी किती वर्षे काढली मी.....जन्म काढला.....मुक्या तोंडानं..... अक दिवशी जरासा ताबा गेलातर डोक्यांवाटे नुसत्या रक्ताच्या धाराच वहातील. गळ्यावाटे आतड्याच्या चिंध्या आणि काळजाचे चिटोरेच बाहेर पडतील....भावजी, माझं काय हो होईलखर सांगते, ही कूस निरोगी आहे. मी आई होण्यासाठीच जन्मले आहे. मातीला कस आहे. भावजी भूक आहे, पण बीज ठरत नाही हो. ते जर आहे दाख्या विषात भिजलेलं, अशक्त, दुबळं, निःसत्त्व, निर्जीव, तर त्यात मातीचा काय दोष?मातीची भूक चेतायची आणि तिला निर्जळी उपास घडायचा.

§ अंक २ रा, पान ५३ §

In this repulsive atmosphere the two beings who are human and sympathise with each other's plight are attracted to each other. They come together.

The third scene of Act-II is extremely violent. The two brothers who have decided to blackmail Manik's lover, the Rajha of Hondur come to know that he has died of heart attack. The thought of their misfired plan, and the realization that they cannot extract any money makes them violent and in their drunken haze they both picture their sister Manik going 'Sati' with her lover, sitting on top of the unborn child in her womb. They seem to enjoy this nauseating picture of their own sister. They decide to take revenge on the Rajha of Hondur for dying before falling a prey to their blackmail. Thus the brutes plan to kick their sister in the belly in which the aborted Manik shrieking with pain comes down with one leg already in plaster and white sari stained with blood. One wonders whether the play is surrealistic, in nature.

In the next scene of Act-II Rama who is unwell in pregnancy is lying in bed. She pleads with her husband to leave the 'haunted' house and says that nobody can ever be happy in such a house. The mysterious presence of Papa and Manik who have left the house seems to scare her. Ramakant wants Rama not to know of his financial muddle and their critical position. But Umakant who has an inkling of his brother's desperate financial position comes to Ramakant to get his share and settle the accounts. He suggests that Ramakant should give him possession of the mortgaged house and that he would buy it back. Ramakant refuses and wants Umakanth to help him pay

his debts. They have a violent quarrel. The house being closed to Umakant, he takes revenge on his brother by telling him that Rajninath and not he is the father of the child his wife is carrying. Ramakant in his drunken stupor broods on the disturbing thought put into his head by Umakant and decides to abort Rama of the child she is bearing and goes to the bedroom. The symbolic cry of the vultures can be heard.

The play ends with Rajninath's cynical soliloquy about human destiny. He tells us -

"Here ends the story of vultures.... of the accursed vultures in human form..... please show them mercy.... show them a way, give them a helping hand, send them to the bier where they can burn themselves and get rid of their existence; send them to death, relieve them.... because they have no other future....that is their destiny, they cannot be liberated. Nobody can be." (1)

The paradox of interpersonal violence is that it reaches its greatest intensity at two opposite extremes, in conditions of close intimacy and in cold impersonal, stranger to stranger situations. There is an organic correlation between intimacy and violence. People injure one another through greed and fear. Oppression of women is virtually universal. Alcohol too plays a role in accentuating recentualing aggression. Sudden outbursts of rage may be also related to sexual inadequacy. Violence is also used

as an instrument to obtain a desired goal. Violent behaviour is also resorted to satisfy, release or neutralize frustration. The feeling of powerlessness too prompts violence.

The violent characters in the play are now and again prompted by one or the other of these causes of violence, but none of these have been fully explored by the dramatist. Though the family is different from ordinary families around us, the violence in the play is family violence bred by the continual closeness and interdependence in the by now crumbling joint family system in our society.

We feel that the idea of depicting the ugliness of life has reached its climax in Gidhade and we wonder whether the violence depicted here is to give that type of sadistic pleasure which one gets from cruelty. or is Tendulkar like the French dramatist Artaud with his "Theatre of Cruelty" trying to make his spectators endure its cruelty and enable them to go beyond it. The play depicts one cruel and wicked picture after another and we wonder at the urges and impulses of such violence. The characters go to the extent of throttling one another. Cruelty seems to turn their heads and they go from one cruel act to a much more cruel one. They seem to be intoxicated with cruelty and get a perverse pleasure by practising it. Violence seems to be their basic element.

The characters in the play are foul mouthed. There is violent cursing and abusing. Words like 'loafer', 'Vagabond',

'rascal' seem to be everyday language of the characters. The brothers refer to their sister as a 'Buffalo' and to their father as "dog". Nauseating imagery concerning leprosy, words closely connected with death like 'cemetery' (स्मशान), 'skull' (कवटी) "twelfth day" (बारावा) "thirteenth day" (तेरावा) and 'bier' (तिरडी) add to the general violence of the play. Sex too is freely spoken of in this play. Violent and vulgar language about sex adds to the harshness of the play. Words, like 'fertility' 'lecherous', 'impotent', 'concubine' are freely bandied about. Even old papa speaks in a vulgar manner. It is difficult to say who is more violent, whether the sons, the daughter or their old father. The vulture like characters seem to live truly in the hollow of a tree, rather than a house.

There is excessive sordidness, excess of sexual element and sheer violence. The previous sentimentality of Tendulkar is seen only in the characters of Rama and Rajninath who can do nothing about the situation. They are helpless and just seem to hang around. The violence of the other characters seems to break out mechanically and the characters do not grow or come alive. They are not fully developed. They seem artificial.

Cruelty, brutality, inhumanity, lust for money, hunger for revenge, deceit, ingratitude, immorality, unbridled sex, plotting, extreme shamelessness and extreme by sinful behaviour of the characters have made this play one of the most violent plays in Marathi.

C H A P T E R - IV - (C)

SAKHARAM BINDER (1972)

Sakharam Binder is the most controversial and violent play by Vijay Tendulkar. The play created a good deal uproar and caused considerable sensation. Some people protested against the depiction of violence in the play. In this play violence is not merely verbal and mental as in Shantata Court Chalu Ahe, or mental, verbal and physical as in Gidhade. Here the violence is verbal, mental, physical and sexual. In the history of the stage so far there was hardly a Marathi play as violent as this. The theatre-goers were stunned at the expression of violence in the play. The violence in the play is piercing, at times repulsive to us the middle class spectators who usually form the audience of drama. The harsh language grates on the ears.

Tendulkar's plays are usually built around an individual. The individual's struggles and conflicts with his surroundings, with himself, his violence, his tensions, attract him. Tendulkar through his characters seems to react against the established middle class norms sometimes sacrastically, sometimes ironically and sometimes with harsh exaggeration. In the interview published in Sahityatun Satyakade Shirish Pai and Priya Tendulkar asked about his intention in writing Sakharam. He said Sakharam Binder took shape out of the dramatic character of Sakharam. The man fascinated him, a man who followed his own life style and had his

own philosophy. He just could not resist the strong appeal of the character. He spoke to many persons this character and as he was describing, the character became more and more alive. He started exploring the world of people like Sakharam, their lives, their relationships, their tensions and the play began to take shape.

In the history of Marathi theatre Sakharam Binder gave a shock to the traditional dramatic ethos. Tendulkar was criticized for slandering and demeaning the Marathi stage with a play like Sakharam. In an interview during the controversy Tendulkar had said that for fear that the Marathi theatre will be mocked, slandered and made impure he was not prepared to keep the life of man out of the theatre. He considered man and his life more important than the Marathi theatre. The contemporary raw life with all its nakedness was exhibited by him most truthfully and meaningfully. He also maintained that by presenting life truthfully from various angles, the theatre was not made impure as it is thought to be but is actually enriched.

The play begins with a violent attack on the middle class family system as Sakharam has revolted against established values of family life. The play is, as is obvious from the title is about a man working as a binder in a press. To this day hardly had any Marathi writer turned an ordinary book binder into the protagonist of a play. Sakharam is a strident foul-mouthed person who challenges the world. The binder's reckless life is the

subject of the play.

Sakharam as a child never experienced the love and affection of parents, so he speaks violently and bitterly about his father and about family system. Once as he lay ailing and suffering in the Miraj Hospital, a lonely patient with no one to care for him, he realized that there is no humanity and compassion in man. After this experience Sakharam changed. Once a good and moral man, he was filled with hatred and disgust against the world. He was filled with contempt for the institution of marriage. Being lonely, he decided upon a new way of life with instinct and desire as his guiding principle. His sexual passion added to his cruelty and violence, resulted in his down fall.

The entry of Sakharam in the play is full of boasts and. The crude and rough binder makes it a practice openly to bring home a homeless woman, either one who has been abandoned by her husband or one who has abandoned her husband. He keeps her without marrying her. He does this not out of compassion. He brings her home and gives her shelter on the condition that she keeps his house, is at his beck and call and satisfies his lust. He gives her complete idea of what he expects of her and tells her that her living with him is a sort of contract which will give her safety, security and satisfy her minimum needs. He also tells her that the day he or she feels like cancelling the contract, he or she is free to do so.

When the woman leaves him he sends her to her relatives with a parting present of dress ' साडीचोळी ' Sakharam is in his own house the sovereign ruler, a house in which only his own existence is permanent. He fully knows that outside his house he is of little worth. He frankly admits to all his vices, is not ashamed of what he does or how he lives. Falsity, hypocrisy, middle class idea of morality disgust him. He has practised every kind of immorality but never practised hypocrisy which is the strength of his character. He neither cares for nor is afraid of the society around him. He shamelessly describes himself and his way of life in violent and abusive language at the opening of the play and explains his wishes and desires to Laxmi, the seventh woman in his life. He is very candid. He depicts his violent character in his own words-

He says that he is the king and master of his house and tolerates no nonsense. He is hot tempered and abusive. People talk bad of him. But the woman who lives with him need not worry about food and clothing. No complaint and carelessness will be tolerated. Discipline, punctuality and order must be maintained. Home should be like a proper home. He tells the woman not to go out without any reason, no stranger should be entertained. Although he is poor, is a drunkard and an addict, he must be given due respect in his house. The woman must live like a wife. He warns her that he is full of vices, dislikes hypocrisy and hides nothing, is not afraid of anybody.

He left home at the age of eleven, did not marry and get tied to anybody. He tells the woman that when they tire of each other they are free to separate. The woman who enters his threshold becomes his possession and when she leaves their relations are cut off. When she leaves she can carry her belongings with her and will be sent to her destination with due respect and formalities.

हे सखाराम बाइंडरचं घर आहे सब घोडे बारा टक्के मामला इथे खपणार नाही. डोकं गरम आहे आपलं ? भडकलो तर मारतो बेदम. तोंड शिवराळ आहे. तोंडात बिडी नि शिवी कायम. सगळ गाव म्हणतं असं. परिस्थिती जेमतेम. पण दोन वेळा खायला नक्की मिळेल, दोन पातळ सुरवातीला, मग वर्षाला एक, ते पण भारी नव्हे. मग तक्रार चालणार नाही. घरात सगळ शिस्तशीर आणि बिनचूक करावं लागेल. गलथानपणा घडायला लागला तर बाहेरची वाट. गय होणार नाही. नंतर दोष येता कामा नये. आपल्या घरात आपण राजे असतो. गावात जोडयाशी उभे न का करेनात. घर कसं घरासारखं हव आपल्याला. काय?..

घराबाहेर कामाशिवाय गेलेलं खपणारं नाही आपल्याला. घरी कुणी आलं, वर मान करून बोलायचं नाही. अनोळखी असला तर पदर तोंडावर घेऊन मोजकी बात करायची. मी भंगड, गांजाकस, रंडीबाज, दरिद्री कसाही असेन. नव्हे आहेच. दारु पितो. पण आपली कदम राहिली पाहिजे. आपल्या घरात. या घराचा मालक मी आहे., लग्नाच्या बायकोप्रमाणं रहावं लागेल. हा सखाराम बाइंडर काळ लागून राहिलाय सगळ्यांचा. परमेश्वराच्या बापाला नाही भीत ! आपण सगळे केलं पण एक खोटेपणा नाही केला. गावात साले एकजात सगळे लपवाछपवीत झक मारतात. . . अरे हिमंत असेल तर करा काय ते खुल्लम खुल्ला. . . . सालं हे शरीर आहे. हे वासनेचं आगर. हे कुणी निर्माण केलं ? त्यानंच मग त्याला काय ठाऊक नाही ? बाप राहिलाय लागून बाप तुमचा - आमचा.

ब्राम्हणघरी जन्माला येऊन आम्ही म्हारडे..... अकराव्या वर्षी पळालो घरातून. बापाहातचा मार खाऊन कंटाळलो. बरं झाल यारं, आपण कुणाचा नवरा झालो नाही. आहे हे मस्त आहे. सर्व कांही मिळतं, पुन्हा बांधलेले नाही. कंटाळा आला, तिला आला, आपल्याला आला, खुली वाट, खतम खेळ. सली मगजमारी नाही. तिला अस-यापरी आसरा, पुन्हा आपल्याला घरचं अन्न, स्वस्तात सगळ्या भुका भागतात. या घराचा उंबरठा ओलांडून एकदा आत आलं की ते माणूस इथलं, पुन्हा बाहेर गेलं की संबंध संपला. तकलीफ नाही पाहिजे. पण बाहेर पाठवताना सुद्धा रीतसर साडीचोळी आणि पन्नास रुपये देऊन मग पाठवतो आपण. वर तिकिट, जायचं असेल तिकडलं. शिवाय इथं मिळतं ते बरोबर नेण्याची मोकळीक. म्हणजे कपडे, वहाणा, बांगड्या बिंगड्या. रीतीत कमी नही होणार. माणुसकी सोडायला हा सखाराम बाइंडर काय कुणाचा नवरा नव्हे.....

His approach is practical and has no trace of sentimental involvement. His hatred towards men who marry and dominate over their wives, illtreat and exploit them is clearly expressed in his violent language. But at the same time in his own house he wants everything to be perfect as he commands, and he wants the woman to be submissive and obedient.

Though the name of the play is Sakharam Binder it is not Sakharam's alone. There are two women Laxmi the seventh one and Champa the eighth woman in Sakharam's life who are finally responsible for the downfall of this violent character. Laxmi is abandoned by her husband for being childless. This has affected her mental condition. There is a strange mixture of desire and affection in her which is seen in her conversation with a big black ant and a crow who are her friends. She, being deeply

religious, has deep faith in God, is orthodox and traditional by nature. She endures all that comes her way as a part of her fate and with a firm belief in God.

The coming together of Sakharam and Laxmi is thus a meeting between two contradictory values of life. Laxmi with some success tries to awaken the dormant traditional values in Sakharam. He is startled by her fasting and irritated by her soft and sentimental talk with the an^t and the crow. Under Laxmi's religious sentiments and her faith, he changes a little but Laxmi never fully succeeds in changing Sakharam's attitude to life or in gaining control of his ego. Everyday after bath, he starts performing 'Puja'. Because of her, he brings home the idol of Ganpati. He cuts down his drinking. On 'Sankashti' and in 'Chaturmas' he keeps away from drink. Sakharam becomes very uneasy and feels irritated at the change in him. He feels like revolting against her influence. His original, rebellious and egoistic nature, his hatred for traditional values of middle class morality, Laxmi's over enthusiasm and her wife like devotion constrict the wanton way of his living. Finally one day all his pent up feelings erupt and make him terribly violent. His ego is hurt and his pride aroused when Laxmi's orthodox and rigid views do not allow Sakharam's muslim friend Daud from holding the 'arti' tray of sacred lamp during the Ganpati 'Puja'. He whips her for insisting on having her way in 'his' house. She writhes in pain and agony. Sakharam becomes

terribly violent at Laxmi's defiance. He drinks, becomes sexually perverse and wants the whipped Laxmi to laugh as she laughed with her friend, the big black ant and satisfy his lust even in her agony.

सखाराम : हस, हसतेस का नाही..... हस पहिली

When she protests in pain he says -

.....या धरात माझी आज्ञा पाळलीच पाहिजे. मी म्हणेन ते झाल पाहिजे. हसतेस का काढू घराबाहेर आताच ? काढू ? चल - ऊठ..... मर, पण हसत मर -- हस आधी - अस - पिरगाळू हात ? पिरगाळू ? पट्टा आणू सकाळचा ? हस - तशी हस अगोदर - काय म्हणतो मी --

॥ अंक १, दृश्य ८ ॥

For the shelter that he offers, he wants his women to be meek and submissive. Laxmi has had enough of Sakharam's violent nature, his perversity and cruelty.

Laxmi... सरळ प्रेमाचा एक शब्द नाही. सारखं हिडीस फिडीस. शिव्या.बाहेर काढण्याचे दरसे. लाथा - बुक्या. पट्ट्याच्या मारान अंग सोलून निघालं तरी म्हणजे हस. हस. अजून हस. मरणाच्या कळा लागलेल्या असतात आणि वर हस । नरक बरा त्यापेक्षा

॥ अंक १, दृश्य ९ ॥

Sakharam becomes violent because his ego is hurt by Laxmi's adamant attitude. At the root of this quarrel is the difference in the attitudes, of Laxmi and Sakharam. Laxmi respects God more than Sakharam does. Sakharam only believes in the body given by God. Sakharam is of the view that all things are liable to destruction so why get mentally attached to anything. Laxmi believes

in fate so that - whatever comes her way becomes her's so she must give herself fully up to it. Sakharam does not like to be bound to anything, he wants to lead a free life, free of convention, traditional morality and custom. Laxmi is unwilling to cross the bounds of tradition, which for her amounts to sinning. Sakharam is basically a violent and strong willed character. The tension between Sakharam and Laxmi is not a tension between two individuals- Rather. It is between two will powers, two positively different life values and the natural result is the inevitable parting of the two who had come together by chance. Though Sakharam is violent and cruel to Laxmi both get influenced by each other. When Daud speaks of Laxmi as ' लफड़े ' Sakharam does not like it, when she leaves him he tells his friend ' इतक्या आल्या पण हिन जाताना जरासा चटका लावला. ' This is a clear sign of Laxmi's influence and the change in Sakharam which he resisted and which made him drive her away.

Then comes Champa the eighth woman in Sakharam's life. She is one of Tendulkar's stronger characters. With her arrival comes more of physical and sexual violence. She is a complete contrast to Laxmi. She is violent like Sakharam. She is tough, rebellious practical, not at all sentimental like Laxmi. She is straight forward and needs no social, traditional or moral values. She uses abusive and violent language which becomes more so when she talks of her perverse husband. She was like any other

girl innocent and emotional. She was bought by her husband when she had not come of age. He married her and violated and ill-treated and abused her before she was physically mature woman. He killed all her feelings and sentiments by torturing her at a very tender age. She describes all the agony she suffered at his hands in very violent language.

मला डागायचा मुडदा, सुया लावायचा काळीज राहिलं कुठ मला ? हा-
हा- यानं लचके तोडले त्याचे । माझया रक्त प्यायला हा

॥ अंक 2, दृश्य 2 ॥

So Champa left her husband and came to Sakharam, Champa's suffering did not unnerve her. She became tough and practical. Even Sakharam's ego and arrogance becomes ineffectual for a time when confronted by Champa's rashness and violent language. When her husband pursues her and comes to plead again and again, she gives him a sound beating which scares even a violent man like Sakharam. When he tries to approach her she says, ' कुत्रयावानी करु नकोस मला त्रास देऊ नकोस. at this the dictator in his own house goes out meekly and mutely. This weakening and softening of the violent and arrogant Sakharam is most dramatic, through not convincing.

Champa drinks heavily and only under the influence of alcohol gives herself to Sakharam's unquenchable lust. They pursue their drinking, their passion day and night. Sakharam neglects his job and starts staying at home. Thus we see cruelty and sexual perversity in Sakharam,

Champa and her husband. Though physically Sakharam becomes Champa's victim, he cannot completely get over Laxmi's influence. This is seen in his intolerance at Champa getting drunk in the morning on an auspicious day like "dasara". He asks her not to touch him as he wants to perform 'Puja'.

When Laxmi's nephew drives her out she comes back to Sakharam. His first reaction is not that of anger, He thinks he is dreaming. But then the thought of Champa arouses his desire and he drives Laxmi away and goes back to Champa. Laxmi has nowhere to go, she sits outside the house the whole night and the next morning enters the house when Sakharam goes out. Champa takes her in When Sakharam sees her his rage boils up. She talks sentimentally about wanting to die with her head on his lap and that she considers him her God. Laxmi tries to entice him and his egoistic self rebels against it. He turns violent and gives her a good beating calling her shameless and obstinate. Physically he is violent to her but internally the very values that he challenges and remains indifferent to, try, to entice him through the person of Laxmi. This realization makes him much more, violent.

The practical Champa, takes in the submissive Laxmi to relieve herself of all the household chores. Champa tells her that she will look after Sakharam's physical needs. But the very arrival of Laxmi weakens Sakharam is afraid of Laxmi. Champa and Laxmi are poles apart

in their strength and limitations. Sakharam is pulled in opposite directions and from here the drama becomes much more violent. The ant-traditional, anti-conventional, free man Sakharam who wants to lead a licentious life, immersed in sex with Champa feels uneasy and changes in the presence of Laxmi. When in Champa's company he feels disturbed by even a slight sound from the kitchen where Laxmi sleeps. This disturbance caused by the indirect influence of Laxmi's trust in Sakharam makes him incapable of satisfying Champa's passion. The passionate Champa starts seeking Daud's Company in the absence of Sakharam. Laxmi who is suspicious about it follows Champa to make sure. She is shocked by the faithlessness of Champa. She prays to God not to forgive the sinful and wicked Champa.

The night Champa refuses to submit to Sakharam's desire he becomes violent. Champa in very obscene, violent and nauseating in her language and tells Sakharam that since the arrival of Laxmi he is no more a man.

अरे चंपे काय चंपे - ती आल्यापासून तू मर्द राहिला नाहीस, पुरता पावनेआठ केला तिनं तुला. हा तिला डरतोस तू - हिंमत नाही तिच्यासमोर मला घ्यायची तुझयात - मढ होतं तुझं मढं-किडा होतोस तू ---

and when he threatens her, she sarcastically remarks that even a dog wouldn't be afraid of him now. This turns Sakharam violent and he compels Laxmi to leave the house instantly. But before going she tells him about Daud and Champa. At this Sakharam gives a terrible hiding to Laxmi. Sakharam can go to any limits of physical violence

even when, not drunk. His violence is connected with his sexual passion. Whenever he cannot attain that sexual passion too he is much more violent. In his fit of violence he holds Champa's throat and murders her. After the murder of Champa the frightened Sakham is turned into a frozen statue. Life seems to drain out of him leaving behind just a pulp.

It is the weak Laxmi who persuades the helpless and numb Sakham to dig a ditch in the house to bury and hide Champa's dead body. She assures him that what he did is not wrong as the sinful Champa has been rightly punished for her sins. Laxmi's idea of religiousity and faith, her idea of justice makes her so cruel as to believe the murder of Champa as a proper and fit punishment for her sins. In this excited state when the weak and submissive Laxmi finds Sakham motionless and benumbed. She starts digging on her own to bury Champa. Thus the play ends on the note of the complex relationship of violence, sex, cruelty and religiosity. Sakham's physical and mental outburst, his churning, his downfall, his withering is all very dramatic. His rebellious, noisy, violent, puzzled and miserable states evolve and end in a pitiable tragic state.

Sakham appeases his sexual desire with women and by playing upon the 'Mridanga' his sentimental need. To forget the society around him and the emotional ties he drinks alcohol and smokes hemp. In spite of all this

he gets involved in Laxmi's faith and Daud's friendship. Laxmi's influence makes him frigid even in the company of passionate Champa. The realization of Dawood's intimacy with Champa makes him murder Champa. In spite of Sakharam's bold and care-a-hang attitude he is a man who thirsts for social, family and emotional attachment to which he has never really been indifferent. The satisfaction got through desire, instinct and addiction, through violence and cruelty is a sort of revenge on the family and emotional relationship. When Champa in her adolescence needed love and emotional support she had to accept perverse and violent sex. Laxmi being childless was denied the opportunity of showering her love and affection. Sakharam was denied the love and affection of parents during his childhood. All the sexual perversity in these characters is due to want of love and affection in their lives. Though psychologically the cruelty, violence and perversity in the characters is understandable, it is not so aesthetically. The play concentrates our attention on cruelty, violence and sexual perversity.

Notes

1. Kumar Ketkar, Tendulkar's Human Zoo in the Illustrated Weekly of India, (November 20, 1983) p.23