CHAPTER - IV
VIJAY TENDULKAR’S ART AND CONCERNS

The excellence of a work of art consists in the dexterous balance of art and ideas. The abstract realization of the various human experiences becomes concrete and alive only with the dynamics of artistic skills that can eliminate the difference of artistic experience and the real life experience. Vijay Tendulkar was one of those sensitive artists who made churning of the deep recesses of his mental reactions to search out the artistic equivalents appropriate to the experience and also the appropriateness of the requisites of the genre of drama. Tendulkar, a sensitive artist and versatile genius, with his penchant for freedom and the boldness of a journalist gave a new direction to his dramatic creed. For him writing was an expression of inward and impassioned sensibility and its vehemence positively subordinates to the considerations of literary traditions, conformity to artistic ideals, innovative vision and the burden of predetermined artistic norms. Being a journalist he was conscious that a writer had to play different roles with equal pleasure and identical sensibility. In this journalistic vision, the quest for freedom and the awareness of the reactions and responses of public are very significant. In two of his lectures delivered in the series Sri Ram Memorial Lecture, "The Play is the Thing" in 1997, Tendulkar underlined a comprehensive account of his artistic ideals, his mission as a writer and his consciousness for the chemistry of communication in theatre. At the very outset of the lecture, he reflects on the 'physical process of writing'. For him writing is a 'spontaneous overflow' but it is not an expression of the unbearable and tense mental state. For him writing is a luxury that brings relief and joy and therefore each and every occasion related to human experience can be the subject matter of writing. He avoids formalism and forced determination. He confesses, "Give me a piece of paper, any paper and pen and I shall write as naturally as a bird flies or a fish swims" (CP viii). For him creative
writing is a way to escape into the world of imagination beyond and above the cruelty that is a part of the reality of human existence. In the first lecture on dramatic art, he reiterates the following aspects:

* He accepts his responsibility as a writer, and his role as a playwright comes afterwards. The art of writing is a dynamic process and its pace can't be measured in terms of artistic canons.

* As a writer of plays, he wanted to play the role of 'actor-writer'. The script gets its liveliness in theatre with the realization of the effect of live performance.

* He accepted characters as the backbone of dramatic art. He wanted to present living human beings who had their separate life and expression.

* He wanted to achieve an objective view of play as a 'whole'.

* In terms of technique and dramatic structure, he wanted to learn this art by trial-and-error method without any formal training. It helps to internalize the details of human behaviour at different levels and in different circumstances.

* Tendulkar developed his insight into the art of theatre by watching the plays. It gives an insight into the internal organization of plays. He admits, "I learnt my theatre mainly by watching plays, more bad plays than good ones" (CP xxvi).

For Tendulkar, writing is an independent activity of mind adopted for aesthetic pleasure or for professional gains. It is a dynamic process and, therefore, the style, language and technique of writing shift according to the demands of 'roles'. Tendulkar developed a style of writing which varied from role to role on the stage. With these varying roles in the capacity of a writer, he was capable enough to internalize the inner psyche of different
characters and intricacies of different situations. For him there is dynamic relation between form and content. The texture, the rhythm, the choice of words, dialogues, the sentence, everything changes according to the need. In one-act plays he makes his characters select and use the language according to the role and the requirement of the characters. In the selection of language in one-act plays, he has to care for the background, environment and the professional status of characters. The success of the play depends on the 'objective' appearance of the writer. He says: "In essence, my personality very naturally broke itself into several personalities in the play and they were not types: they were living persons with their own separate, well-delineated existence" (CP x).

For Tendulkar, writing of drama is not an isolated activity and a dramatist is desired to unite the twin role of character-writer. The dramatic situations and personae are evolved with the realization of the presence of the characters on the stage. It is a distinction between the writing of fiction and the writing of drama. In drama, 'words' are not the words only but a total and spontaneous expression of the mind and the personality of the character which includes not only the words but also the eloquent pause in between the words. In dramatic representation broken sentences, spontaneous incompleteness, gestures, movements, gaping faces, and the shift in stress in articulation-all collectively contribute to the total composition of the scene. The dramatic communication is not a matter of words only but it also includes non-verbal parameters. Like Tendulkar, most of the modern theatre artists categorically have accepted the significance of communication through the process of performance.

Tendulkar in his vision of dramatic art lays a great emphasis on the structural aspect of the play that includes the organization of events as well as the appropriate application of language and visual aids to create the totality of the effect out of the live performance of a script. Influenced by several traditions of western models and the traditions of folk theatre, Tendulkar makes dynamic use of these mediums to make the abstract more
concrete and more suggestive. He makes an effective use of the variation of the 'pauses' to enhance the appeal and effect of drama. He admits, “Silence in the theatre can be as expressive as the dialogue or the words” (Vijay Tendulkar 48). The 'gaps' and the 'silence' can work to realize the purpose of drama. Tendulkar admits that the use of this device must be under the better control of the dramatist than being under the control of the director. The invisible terrain of the meaning integrated in the text can best be felt only by the writer. Following the track of dramatists of expressionistic school, Tendulkar accepts the power of visual elements in the theatre. To create the reality in theatre, it is essential to coordinate internal and external variables. He mentions:

Theatre is a visual medium though words play an important part in it. To forget this visual possibility while writing a play means to forego a vital device in the theatre. Theatre may not have the advantage of a close-up as in a film; but still a play is seen as much as it is heard. (CP xxx)

He accepts that the visual and verbal devices are required both in film and theatre. But dramatist requires a strong visual sense which resultantly increases the power of theatre. He categorically points out that a playwright has to be conscious of the strength of his medium in 'totality'. The coordination of the power of words and the power of visuals can do wonders in theatre. Simultaneously he also warns against the 'unnecessary' and 'unavoidable' use of visual elements like the stage, the set, the property, the actors, because excess of ornamentation obviously hampers the effect of the naturalness of verbal expressions. The exaggeration of stage properties makes the dramatic performance crude and obscure. The balance of words in dialogues and visual aids contribute to the balance in drama. For Tendulkar, the dramatic structure involves the idea of a 'total form'. He explains, "By structure I do not mean the plot or the story. Structure is not
either. It is the total form or the framework of the play. Even a play without a coherent plot or story has to have a structure" (CP xxxi).

In this respect Tendulkar appreciates Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Ionesco's *The Chairs*. Often disorganized structure with loose ends can hold a centre of the structure in drama. He does not accept Aristotle's concept of organic unity of the plot. In drama the external structure must be based on the internal structure or the inner context of drama. Since structure is also an inward process, its presence can be felt in the reaction of audience. The structure is not the story. Regarding the significance of structure, he opines:

A performing structure is not static. It flows. It has a fluent and steady movement. Its base is the undercurrent of the performance; in the case of our subject, it is the undercurrent or the sootra or the theme or the essence or the binding element of the play which makes it one piece and unique and unlike all other plays. (CP xxxii)

Tendulkar's plays from dramaturgical perspective reveal that he is a master craftsman of dramatic art. Audience's theatrical experience is enriched with his brilliant dramatic technique which is intertwined in the themes of his plays. The study examines the technique adopted by Tendulkar in his eight plays translated into English and tries to bring out its distinctive features with regard to his social concerns.

Tendulkar's plays demonstrate his dexterity that he is an outright realist in selecting his themes and the treatment of his characters. He uses a realistic, objective, yet socially aware and detailed method of artistic presentation in his plays which are essentially theatrical in the sense that they are written with an eye on the contemporary conditions. He employs a suitable dramatic technique as per the content of his play as well as the necessities of stage representation. Contemporary reality is very well
depicted in his plays and it cannot be classified into conventional tragedies or comedies. He is not interested in making the reader-audience laugh or weep, rather he wants to make the reader-audience conscious about life and its multifarious problems.

Tendulkar does not follow any particular trend of playwriting such as expressionism, absurdism, existentialism or naturalism. However, his style of writing appears to be closer to the naturalistic vein. Shanta Gokhale observes that naturalism appears to be the characteristic manner of expression in Tendulkar’s plays. She credits it to Tendulkar’s being an addicted observer of humankind. Naturalism is a style of writing that shows people, things and experiences as they are really without getting influenced by one’s emotions. It aims at presenting the slices of life. ‘The situations and people are very much like those in real life’. According to M.H. Abrams, “naturalism aims at presenting an accurate imitation of life as it is and prefers the average, the commonplace, and the everyday over the rarer aspects of the contemporary scene” (141). The characters are chosen from the middle class or the working class. A naturalistic play is realistic both in subject and manner. The literary figures such as Emile Zola, George Moore, Theodore Dreiser and Eugene O'Neill are connected with naturalism.

Here in the naturalistic form, a writer drives into the particulars of everyday life so that credible characters and situations are created. Tendulkar’s preoccupation with contemporary reality made naturalism a suitable form for the expression of his content. He chose his subjects from the world around him. His plays represent average human beings and their concerns. He stresses on visual concreteness of the settings in his plays. The use of everyday prose and elimination of soliloquies makes his plays life-like. Like other naturalistic writers, Tendulkar also believed that the everyday life of the middle and lower class people of his own time provided subjects worthy of serious literary treatment to be rendered without artificiality and with scrupulous care for accuracy of details.
Aspects of the naturalistic selection and management of materials and a brutal frankness of manner are apparent in the plays of Vijay Tendulkar. A.J. Sebastian and N.D.R. Chandra observe:

Naturalism in literature calls for an objective and empirical presentation of human beings...Naturalistic writers reject free will in man and believe that human behaviour is controlled by instinct, emotion, or social and economic factors. (157)

Tendulkar believes that man is merely a higher-order animal whose character and fortunes are decided by his heredity and environment. Some characters show strong animal drives such as greed, excessive lust and the tendency to be violent. They are subject to the social and economic forces of the milieu in which they are born. Tendulkar, in an interview given to Shailaja Wadikar, avers: "Whatever is there in my life or people's lives is reflected in my plays. There is very little fictitious in my plays" (A Pioneer Playwright 145). Thus Tendulkar has depicted his reactions to the contemporary situations in his plays.

What Tendulkar himself says about dramatic technique is of utmost importance. Playwriting is highly a technical medium and a playwright has to adjust to certain technical demands of the play's presentation on the stage and function within its limitations. While delivering the prestigious Shri Ram Memorial Lectures for Performing Arts in 1997 in New Delhi, Tendulkar has expressed his views on the technique in playwriting He has elaborated on the importance of a playwright possessing the basic and essential sense of structure or form of the play. According to Tendulkar, a play must have a strong structure or framework on which its plot rests. Just like architecture, a play's structure should have a base and an outer form which rests on it. Without this elementary requirement which every structure has, a play will not be successful as the lack of support of the outer form to its inner content may-result in the play's structure collapsing.
The performance of a play cannot entice the audience and effect it deeply if its structure is faulty. A strong and long lasting structure acts as the binding element of the play and allows it to endure through time. It allows the plot a fluent and steady movement. A play with a strong structure can grip and move us. Commenting upon the development of his dramatic technique, Tendulkar says, “the technique has to become a part of the playwright's subconscious mind and should function naturally like an extended entity just as his mind and body function together” (CP xxxiii). According to him:

A playwright needs to get complete mastery over his medium by working sincerely and devotedly for a long time. He needs to internalize the skills required for his medium. Unless the playwright is careful, the technique and the content may fall apart. There is also the danger of technique overshadowing the content which a playwright should guard against. A playwright should internalize the theatre with its do's and don'ts by working in the theatre. (CP xxxiv)

Tendulkar had learnt the skill of structuring his plays by persistently watching and analyzing performances of plays in the early days of his career. He used to watch the complete performances even if the plays were of an inferior quality. He says:

I must have seen more bad plays than good ones. But I think it helped me in internalizing the technique of playwriting - especially the structuring of play. Bad plays provoked me mentally to correct their structures in my own way which, I think, was an excellent exercise. (CP xxxiv)

In addition to watching performances of various plays, Tendulkar also used to spend a lot of time watching the rehearsals of his own plays.
He found the inner mechanism of his plays being laid bare and discussed in detail in the rehearsals.

Though writing a play is an individual activity, its performance is a collective effort by a team of people related to theatre. The director, the actors and the technicians work on the written play and the concept of the playwright may be modified in the process of the interpretation of his work by these people. A play with a sound structure can stand its ground, whereas, a weak play may get modified into an entirely different play at this stage. According to Tendulkar, a play written for stage is meant to be seen as well as heard. A playwright should be able to utilize the visual aspect of theatre property which helps in presenting the content of the play clearly. The use of the visual element, therefore, is an important and integral part of dramatic technique and the playwright should audaciously be conscious of it. Gowri Ramnarayan opines: “Tendulkar disliked tampering of the sense in his text of a play and tried to prevent directional interference by making his script quite tight” (91).

There are variations not only of themes but also of form in Tendulkar's eight plays under the present study. These plays are fine examples of Tendulkar's craftmanship as a playwright. According to Arundhati Banerjee, “it is the content of Tendulkar's plays that determines their form” (CP 582). Five of these plays - The Vultures, Sakharam Binder, A Friend's Story, Kamala and Kanyadaan follow the naturalistic model of playwriting. Silence! The Court is in Session and Encounter in Umbugland are allegorical in nature, whereas Ghashiram Kotwal is a blend of different folk forms. Tendulkar's casting of various themes into appropriate structures bears testimony to his multifaceted creative genius. He has given a new direction to contemporary Indian theatre by his innovative experimentation with the form and technique of drama.

Silence! The Court is in Session is a three-act play. The action takes place in a hall near a village. The setting remains the same throughout the play and there is not much lapse of time and scene divisions of the acts in
the play. Through the dialogues between Leela Benare, the protagonist of the play, Samant, a villager, Tendulkar provides the background information to the reader-audience. N.S. Dharan notes, “the style that Tendulkar uses in Silence! The Court is in Session is demotic and modeled on the language, rhythms, and associations of ordinary speech” (93). Through Benare's sarcastic and bitter remarks about the people she has to deal with in her professional and personal life, the playwright hints at the crisis in her life. Benare's attempt to flirt with Samant is brought out through her efforts to get close to Samant on a few occasions on flimsy pretexts. While asserting her will to live her life in accordance with her own wishes, Benare is described as placing her hand on her stomach unconsciously. Her action and words subtly hint at her unwed pregnancy. The playwright brings out Benare's experiences and her deep inner feelings through the four short poems which she recites during the play. The first of these poems, which appears in the first act, deals with Benare's adolescent love-affair with her own maternal uncle and her family's opposition to it. Tendulkar highlights Benare's unconventional behaviour through her words and actions. He also shows that her fellow actors who want to get even with her for her sarcastic remarks about them, unitedly decide to make her the accused in the mock-trial. Anju Bala Agarwal observes:

In this play (Silence' The Court is in Session), an actress (Benare) is turned upon by her fellow players turning a rehearsal into a mock trial where she is on the dock for infanticide and immorality. Her attackers are weaker than her and keep up the pretence of authority in order to condemn her. (197)

Benare has disregarded the customs of society. Her fellow actors gang up to discipline her in the garb of messiah of the society. The clash between Benare and her fellow actors stands for the battle between the
society which wants an individual to behave according to its customs and traditions and the individual who wants to follow his/her own wishes. The mock trial conducted against Benare symbolises society's oppression of an individual who breaks its conventions. Thus the symbolical meaning of the mock trial renders the play allegorical in nature.

The first act ends with everyone looking grave and Benare in a stunned condition with her being accused of the crime of infanticide. The second act begins with everybody in the same pose. It signifies the continuity of time during the action of the play. The somber atmosphere is lightened by Samant's arrival with betel-leaves and cigarettes. Benare's fellow actors engage themselves in small talk but she appears to be lost in a world of her own. When the mock trial resumes and her personal life is gradually exposed to humiliate her, Benare goes into a complete silence. When Samant objects to the false accusations being made at Benare, Karnik reminds him that Benare's crime itself is imaginary. Through Karnik's remark, Tendulkar appears to be reminding the audience of this fact. Samant testifies of having heard a woman appealing to Prof. Damle to accept the responsibility of her pregnancy. From Benare's tense reaction to Samant's speech and the vehemence with which she refutes the happening of any such incident, Tendulkar makes the fellow-actors as well as the audience suspect that the imaginary incident narrated by Samant may be close to reality. Benare looks agitated and her agony seems to excite everyone except Samant. The playwright makes the reader-audience aware of the true nature of Benare's fellow actors through their actions. When Benare goes to the inner room, they voice their suspicion about Benare's condition. The pretence of the mock trial falls away as Benare appears on the scene while they are discussing the possibility of Benare's having become pregnant as a result of her affair with Damle. Benare's attempt to leave the rehearsal and go out is thwarted because of the door having become locked from outside due to a faulty door-bolt. According to Arundhati Banerjee, the incident of the faulty door bolt is an
externalization of the ‘no escape’ plight in which Benare finds herself in real life (CP 573). Thus faulty door-bolt symbolises the helplessness of an individual in confrontation with the society.

Like the second act, the third act also begins with everybody in the same position as they were at the end of the second act. With a perverse excitement, Sukhatme, the prosecutor asks Benare to be summoned to the witness-box. Benare remains where she is. Mrs. Kashikar, the only other female member of the crew, starts pulling her forcibly. Tendulkar mentions that Benare's face reveals the terror of a trapped animal which suggests her victimisation by her fellow actors who behave like a pack of hunting animals. Tendulkar uses the device of telling about the incidents in Benare's life through the narrations of characters. As Ponkshe, Karnik and Kashikar recall certain incidents, the reader-audience is told about the poignant events in Benare's life. She sits like a block of stone, drained of colour and totally desolate while her private life is publicly dissected scandulously in a shameful manner. Though Benare knows that she cannot get out of the hall, she endeavours to go towards the door twice. The playwright points out her immense mental agony through this. Even Benare's attempt to drink poison does not deter her fellow actors from continuing the trial against her. Tendulkar contrasts Samant's sympathy for Benare's plight with the sadistic attitude of the rest of the group. When Benare replies to the charges made against her, the whole court freezes in the positions they are in at the moment. Benare's self-justification in a long speech is her innermost outburst. The light change at the end of her speech suggests that the court has not heard her. Benare's pitiable condition suggests that she has accepted her defeat. Tendulkar insinuates that Benare's fellow actors pretend as if nothing major had happened though they realise the amount of pain she has gone through due to their actions. They exhort her to get ready for their show. The toy-parrot that Samant places near an almost lifeless Benare probably symbolises that she will have to behave according to society's wishes from here on just like a parrot.
The castigation of Ms. Benare under the garb of a 'mock-trial' shows the society's ruthlessness incornering an individual and sacrificing him/her on the altar of conventions and high morals. But the irony is that the hangmen, who are the critics of Ms. Benare, are themselves equally guilty, but they go scot-free under the protection of society which they pretend to represent.

Tendulkar's *Encounter in Umbugland*, a political satire, has the usual three acts with multiple scene structure. While dealing with Princess Vijaya's development into an astute politician from an inexperienced girl, Tendulkar highlights the changes that the sense of power brings about in an individual in this play. There is no scene division in the first act whereas; the second and third acts are divided into five and four scenes respectively. The first act depicts Vijaya as a complete novice in the field of politics surrounded by her ministers who are veteran statesmen. The whole of the first act seems like an introduction for the encounter that takes place between Vijaya and her ministers afterwards. The second act depicts Vijaya as a crafty politician and brings out her own awareness of the changes that have taken place in her life as a result of her contact with the treacherous world of politics. The third act portrays Vijaya's complete victory over her polemically situated ministers. The situation at the end of the first act is reversed here and Vijaya is shown as controlling her polemic ministers just like a ringmaster controls the wild animals in his charge. Thus the plot of the play is well knitted which renders a dynamic fusion of mode and motive.

The play begins with the death of King Vichitravirya the ruler of Umbugland. As Vijaya, his daughter, is novice in politics, Vichitravirya's ministers vie with one another to usurp the throne of Umbugland. This situation appears identical to the one that was created in Indian politics after the death of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the then Prime Minister in 1960s. M. Sarat Babu holds, “Princess Vijaya stands for Indira Gandhi and Tendulkar draws parallels between the rule of Vijaya and that of Indira
Gandhi in this play” (109). Thus the play is allegorical in nature. According to Vijaya Mardhekar, the choice of Princess Vijaya as the compromise candidate by the ministers refers to the choice of Indira Gandhi, by the senior politicians of the Congress Party in those times. Like those politicians, the ministers in the play choose King Vichitravirya's daughter so that they can rule by proxy (Madge 107). Vijaya's victory over her ministers refers to Indira Gandhi's coming out of the shadow of the senior Congress ministers and establishing an indomitable position in the country's political arena.

While allegorising the political events in India in the 1960s, Tendulkar employs the devices such as the Sutradhar (narrator) and the chorus in this play. Prannarayan, the eunuch attendant of Princess Vijaya, acts as the Sutradhar of the play. He introduces the play and comments on the actions throughout the play. The chorus of the play consists of two masked men who bear very large pens in their hands and wield them like scepters symbolising the great influence of press in politics. They report and comment on the various incidents taking place in the state. Arundhati Banerjee notes, “the chorus of two masked pen-bearers is used by Tendulkar to satirise the misleading of the people by press” (CP 574). The pen-bearers indulge in double talk. On one hand, they are lavish in their elaborate praise of the government and thus act as its advertising agency, on the other hand, they flaunt news in a sensational manner with a view to accelerating their paper's circulation.

*Encounter in Umhugland* begins with Prannarayan, the narrator, welcoming the reader-audience on the occasion of the celebration of the sixtieth year of King Vichitravirya's coronation. His remarks achieve the distancing effect by reminding the reader-audience about their becoming a witness to a performance. Then two masked pen-bearers appear on the stage to report about the recent happenings in Umbugland which echoes the headlines of newspapers. The banging of giant-sized pens also catches the attention of the audience. From the conversation between Vijaya and
Prannarayan, the reader-audience comes to know about her lack of interest in politics and her adolescent desire to get away from the place. Tendulkar lambasts at the evil practices of selfish politicians through the conversation among five ministers in which they expose, through mudslinging, each other's follies. As the first act is not divided into scenes, the passing of time between different incidents is indicated through the changes in lighting.

In second act, Queen Vijaya seems to have well synchronized with her duties and responsibilities as a ruler. The playwright underlines the visible changes that have transpired in her personality. She looks and acts very confidently. When Queen Vijaya tells Prannarayan about her plan for the upliftment of the tribal people in Umbugland, he explains to her that the motive of improving her political stature is hidden behind that plan. The playwright points out the change that wielding power has brought about in Vijaya's personality through Pranarayan's remark. Anju Bala Agarwal aptly comments: “Tendulkar's *Encounter in Umbugland* is a concrete embodiment of the transformation that the sense of power brings about in an individual” (203).

The confrontation between Vijaya and her ministers as a result of their opposition to Vijaya's plan is portrayed in the third act of the play. As Vijaya is determined to implement her plan, she initiates to weed out all the difficulties placed in her path by her ministers and comes out victorious in the political encounter. The crafty and calculative side of Vijaya's nature is shown through her successfully turning Bhagadanta, one of the ministers, to her side. Queen Vijaya's shooting darts at a demonic face on the wall while talking with Bhagadanta is suggestive of her scheming against other ministers. At another occasion, she is seen knitting some threads while talking to the ministers. It embodies her concocting and weaving a web around them. The ministers incite their followers to attack the palace in order to dethrone her. Vijaya dares to go out of the palace to placate the angry mob. Vijaya's encounter with the angry mob is reported through her own narration. Vijaya handles the mob's sentiments tactfully and turns their
fury against the ministers. To save their lives from the angry mob, the ministers accept their defeat to Queen Vijaya. On the whole, *Encounter in Umbugland* is a well-structured political allegory and is a remarkable study of human nature with the effective use of demagogic and polemic strategies.

The verbal play in the title *Encounter in Umbugland* suggests its satirical nature. The original Marathi version is titled *Dambdwipacha Mukabala*. The word 'Dambdwip' means an island of hypocrisy. It has been translated into English as "Umbugland". And it is because of its closeness to the word “humbug” the original meaning is preserved. After realising the sycophancy, selfishness and hypocrisy of her ministers, Vijaya observes that Prannarayan, inspite of being a eunuch, is manlier than those men. This is a telling comment on the wicked politicians who, more often than not, try to capture power and administrative control through crooked means.

Tendulkar has indicated the passing of time between various incidents through the changes in lighting in the first act. This device capacitates him to free him from the necessity of dividing the act into different scenes. The playwright has donned masked characters, a device from the masques of Elizabethan times. The masked pen-bearers symbolise the opportunistic journalists who conceal and guise their true character from the public.

Tendulkar's *The Vultures* is a two-act play with a well-knitted plot. The first act consists of six scenes and the second act comprises of eight scenes. Tendulkar suitably favours the technique of flashback while portraying the degeneration of Pitale family in *The Vultures*. The use of this technique enables the playwright to present the events which have occurred in the past twenty-two years in a cohesive manner. It also helps the audience to ponder over the causes of the human sufferings which have been convincingly depicted in the play. It begins with Ramakant and Rama running away from the house in order to escape their creditors. This sight
evokes the memories of the past twenty-two years in the mind of Rajaninath, the narrator of the play. There are no elements of surprise and suspense in the play as the end has been adumbrated at the beginning itself. Through the narrations of Rajaninath, the playwright achieves the distancing effect by reminding the audience that they are watching the events that have occurred in the past. Thus the playwright succeeds in avoiding the identification of the characters and events in the play.

Tendulkar depicts the dark side of human nature through the interactions of the members of Pitale family. Pappa (Mr. Pitale), his sons, Ramakant and Umakant, and his daughter, Manik, display the savagery of a vulture through their cruel words and actions. Amidst these human vultures, there are two sensitive and kind-hearted individuals- Rajaninath, Pappa's illegitimate son and Rama, Ramakant's wife. The plight of sensitive and tender-hearted people surrounded by those of a vulturine nature comes out through the excruciating experiences of Rama and Rajaninath. The cruel actions of Pappa, Ramakant, Umakant and Manik stand in sharp contrast to those of Rama and Rajaninath. N.S. Dharan aptly expounds, “Vijay Tendulkar's *The Vultures* is a play built on contrasting situations in which there is a gruesome portrayal of man's greed on the one hand and a tender portrayal of man's love and sympathy on the other hand” (73).

Tendulkar portrays the shocking consequences of greed through the words and deeds of the members of Pitale family such as Pappa, Ramakant, Umakant and Manik. The first act depicts the destruction of the older generation of the family. From a conversation between Ramakant and Umakant, the reader-audience comes to understand Pappa's act of driving away his brother, Sakharam, from the house. Though Sakharam was an equal partner in the family business, Pappa had grabbed his share of business treacherously. As Pappa has handed over his business to his elder son, Ramakant, he is shown as leading a life of dependence on his children. No one except Rama, his daughter-in-law, has any regard for him. So
Pappa is always cursing his children for their ill-treatment being meted out to him. After snatching the last penny that Pappa had, Ramakant drives him away from the house.

The second act of *The Vultures* portrays the relational working of the second generation of Pitale family - Ramakant, Umakant and Manik. Ramakant and Umakant maim their sister, Manik, so that they can blackmail her lover, the Prince of Hondur. As their plan fails due to the sudden demise of the Prince of Hondur, Ramakant vents out his fury on the foetus in Manik's womb. He disdainfully aborts Manik by kicking her and then drives her out of the house. Umakant is also driven out of the house by Ramakant as he does not wish to give Umakant his share in their mother's jewellery. Rama's life has been full of suffering since her arrival as a daughter-in-law in the family twenty-two years ago. After remaining silent for many years, Rama's grief at her remaining childless is expressed through her long monologue in the second scene of the second act. She wails: “Everyday a new mystic, a Swami, an astrologer, a doctor .......rubbing your head at the feet of every lump of stone he tells you to stretching out a begging hand to them.” Referring to her barreness she says:

It’s not the fault of doctors, of learned men, of saints and sages! It’s not even my fault! This womb’s healthy and Sound, I swear it! I was born to become a mother. This soil is rich, it’s hungry. But the seed won’t take root. If the seed’s soaked in poison, if it’s weak, feeble, lifeless, devoid of virtue – then why blame the soil? And if still the soil should cherish that seed – should with god as its... (Act II Scene II)

Through the two soliloquies of Ramakant in the fifth and seventh scene of the second act, Tendulkar brings out his frustration as a result of his inability to live a rich lifestyle.
Apart from the poems recited by Rajaninath in Act I, Scene I and IV and Act II, Scene VIII, where the chronological movement of the action is suspended, the play appears to be naturalistic and austere. The events in the play are spanned across a few months. However, Rajaninath’s poems include events that are spread across a gaposis of twenty-two years. Arundhati Banerjee opines: “Tendulkar's deep empathy for the victims of human viciousness flows like an undercurrent throughout this play and finds its expression through the three poems recited by Rajaninath, its narrator” (CP 576). Rajaninath's agony of being an illegitimate child comes out through his bitter and sarcastic remarks about his father and step-brothers.

Tendulkar has made an extensive use of the literary devices of contrast and imagery for bringing out inhuman actions of the vulturish characters and offsetting them against the human actions of Rama and Rajaninath. Rama's ability to give birth to children and Rajaninath's ability to create poetry appears to suggest that these two characters stand for the creative instinct of human beings. On the other hand Ramakant and Umakant are impotent and venom out their frustration and anger on people around them. They seem to stand for the destructive instinct of mankind. The playwright has used lucid images such as mangy dogs, a rotting hole left after the decomposition of a person's nose, skulls and skeletons, corpses, preying birds, repulsive insects, ghosts, evil spirits, goblins and rites of black magic in this play. Anju Bala Agarwal cryptically substantiates that these images aggravate “the abominating and awesome evil in the play” (202).

Likewise, Tendulkar has also made use of certain dramatic symbols in the play. The house of the Pitale family is described as being worn-out and resembling a hole in a tree just like the den of vultures. According to A.P. Dani, “the murky, dilapidated, den-like house in which the Pitale family lives, stands for their corrupt values” (Dani 116). The title 'The Vultures' signifies the abundance of baser instincts in the devilish members
of the Pitale family. The ringing telephone brings in complaints from Ramakant’s clients about his goods and suggests his disharmony with the outside world. The places associated with positivity such as the garage where Rajaninath lives and the tulsi-vrindavan (an alter of sacred basil) where Rama prays daily, are surrounded by green, the colour of growth. The rooms of the house where the cruel characters live are grey-black, the colours suggesting decay and death.

The playwright creates a proper theatrical effect for the evil actions of the cruel characters through the recurrent screeching sound of the vultures. Tendulkar has employed the wild screeching of vultures as a backdrop against various evil actions in the play such as Pappa's children plotting to rob him of his remaining money, Pappa's flight from the house as a result of the cruelty of his children towards him, and the physical assault on Manik by her brothers. Samik Bandyopadhyay clarifies that the screeching of vultures offers sound resonance for the human acts which have lost their significance altogether. Tendulkar has employed an appropriate linguistic mode for the cruel as well as tender characters. The decent language in which Rama and Rajaninath speak is in sharp contrast with the lewd, ribald and obnoxious language used by the vulturish members of their family.

Tendulkar's Sakharam Binder is a three-act play with a concise plot with an extensive use of irony and almost perfect stage direction. There are twelve scenes in the first act of the play, some of which are quite short. The third scene of the first act has no dialogues and only stage instructions regarding the visual images to be presented. Thus the cinematographic technique renders a literary flavour to this scene. The playwright has portrayed Sakharam’s relationships with Lakshmi and Champa in an authentic manner. Sakharam does not believe in the institution of marriage and prefers to have a contractual co-habitation with his partners. There is a wonderful symmetry in the play's structure. The first act begins with the arrival of Lakshmi, Sakharam's seventh mistress in his house. Unable to
adjust with Sakharam's hot temper and excessive demands, Lakshmi leaves Sakharam's house at the end of the first act. Though Lakshmi's life is full of misery during her stay at Sakharam's, she manages to soften the rough edges of his personality and domesticates him to some extent. The second act which deals with Sakharam's relationship with Champa, a sensuous and unconventional woman, depicts Sakharam's transformation into a lewd drunkard as a result of his association with Champa. Circumstances compel Lakshmi to return to Sakharam at the end of the second act. In the third act, Tendulkar tends to probe the complex psychological effect on Sakharam due to the simultaneous presence of Lakshmi and Champa in his life. Arundhati Banerjee justly opines: “the presence of Lakshmi and Champa at the same time appears to bring the two different strands in Sakharam's character into direct confrontation which causes a psychological turmoil in him and results in his becoming impotent” (578).

Sakharam blames Lakshmi for his physical disability and orders her eviction from his house. Lakshmi discloses Champa's affair with Dawood to Sakharam so that she can abate to live with him. Sakharam, however, murders Champa in his rage. The end of the play is ironic as Sakharam who used to find himself for the openness of his behaviour is forced to conceal Champa's corpse so that lie can escape punishment.

Tendulkar is highly realistic in the delineation of the characters as well as setting in this play. Sakharam's ordinary house in the middle class locality of a small town is described in deft details. Tendulkar throws light on the unconventional lifestyle and thinking of Sakharam through his words as well as actions in the opening scene of the play. He describes Sakharam’s personality as coarse which is in consonance with his inner nature. The way Lakshmi appears terrified when Sakharam scolds the children playing in his courtyard suggests the timidness of her nature. Her deeply religious nature is suggested through her enquiring Sakharam about the photo frames of Gods. Lakshmi’s folding her hands on listening to the temple-bell is suggestive of her god-fearing nature. From the conversation
between Sakharam and Dawood, his bosom friend, the reader-audience acquainted that there had been six mistresses in Sakharam's life before Lakshmi. Sakharam's contemptuous attitude towards society and religion comes out through his words quite clearly, “This Sakharam Binder-he’s a terror…He’s not scared of God or of God’s father” (126).

In Act I, Scene IV, Sakharam comes back from work and hears Lakshmi talking to someone which arouses his suspicion. His temper cools down when he finds out that Lakshmi was talking to an ant. Through Lakshmi’s habit of conversing with ants, Tendulkar points to her compassionate nature. This kind of experience alludes to Anton Chekhov’s narrative in “Grief” where Patrov in order to unburden his agony, mumbles his loss to his horse. According to Shanta Gokhale, “Tendulkar succeeds in portraying Lakshmi as a tender and caring human being who deserves the reader-audience's affection and sympathy” (205). Lakshmi's benevolent nature is contrasted with Sakharam's unsympathetic nature when he shows no concern for Lakshmi's suffering as, by chance, she spills burning coals on her feet. The room is kept in total darkness in Act I, scene V, in which Sakharam forces Lakshmi to satisfy his lust in spite of her burnt feet. The audience can hear only the voices of the characters. Thus Tendulkar guides the director in presenting the scenes which otherwise cannot be shown directly on the stage. The same technique has been used in Act I, scene VI, when Sakharam beats Lakshmi with a belt for objecting to Dawood's participation in the prayer of Lord Ganesha. The audience can only hear the agonised moans of Lakshmi.

There is parallelism as well as contrast in Act II, Scene I, in which Sakharam explains the rules of their co-habitation to his next mistress in the same manner as he had done to Lakshmi. Lakshmi had listened to all his instructions carefully, Champa does not pay any heed to them. Thus Champa's behaviour is in total contrast to that of Lakshmi's. Sakharam is unable to remain at his usual dominating self in Champa's company. Whenever he looks into her eyes, he loses himself in the lure of her
pudentic charms. Tendulkar brings out the effect of Champa's beauty on men through the behaviour of Dawood who is unable to keep his eyes off her and is eager to do errands for her. Tendulkar mentions that Sakharam feels a twinge of jealousy when Champa appreciates Dawood's pliant behaviour. Champa's unconventional way of living is highlighted through her act of changing the clothes in the presence of Sakharam. She is unmindful of the fact that Dawood is glancing at her stealthily. Champa's being unfaithful to Sakharam and getting physically involved with Dawood results in her tragic murder at the hands of Sakharam at the end of the play. The seeds of that incident are sown here. Champa’s unconventionality is further highlighted through her beating of Shinde, her husband. Tendulkar says insinuatingly that Sakharam and Dawood watch in a shocked silence while Champa rains kicks and blows on Shinde like a possessed being. Thus the playwright ingenuously brings out the effect of the spectacle of the aggression in Champa's nature on Sakharam through his body language. The disruption of Sakharam's routine life due to his infatuation with Champa is suggested through his lying in a drunken stupor on the day of Dussehra festival.

Through the conversation between Champa and Lakshmi in Act III, Scene I, Tendulkar throws light on the difference in their attitude to life. Lakshmi appears in contrast with Champa's disregard to God and religion. Sakharam is furious at Lakshmi's return and starts beating her. Tendulkar mentions that Champa is not affected at all by Lakshmi's misery and makes it abundantly clear that Champa does not have genuine sympathy for Lakshmi and allows her to stay in the house as she is useful for doing the household chores. The effect of Champa's affair on Lakshmi is described skillfully by Tendulkar through her frenzied actions and her address to God about Champa's viciousness. After murdering Champa in a fit of rage, Sakharam appears to be terribly scared. Tendulkar describes Lakshmi's actions and her body-language to show how Lakshmi gathers her strength and courage from her indomitable staunch faith in God which seems to
clear her mind and she begins to dig a grave in a determined manner to conceal Champa's corpse. Perhaps Lakshmi appears to have taken control of Sakharam's life at the end of the play.

Tendulkar's *Ghashiram Kotwal* is a two-act play with a feast of songs, dances and music in which there is an aesthetic presentation of history. The playwright draws parallels between the contemporary society and the Maharashtrian society in the eighteenth century in this play. Tendulkar realised the tremendous potential for dramatic expression in Maharashtrian folk forms such as the Dashavtar Khel, Tamasha and Kirtan. Dashavtar Khel is a folk dance drama from the Konkan region which narrates the stories of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Kirtan is a form of storytelling through songs, presented in temples. The stories taken from Indian mythology are illustrated in it. Tamasha is a dramatic form of entertainment comprising of a dancer, a comedian, a main actor and a chorus. Tendulkar has chosen some of the elements of these folk forms in this play. Arundhati Banerjee keenly observes that *Ghashiram Kotwal* can be regarded as “a landmark in Indian theatre due to its totally novel and experimental form” (580). These Maharashtrian folk forms had been completely neglected by the modern Marathi playwrights who were turning to the works of the western playwrights such as Shaw, Ibsen and Moliere for afflatus. According to Veena N. Dass:

Tendulkar showed how the indigenous folk forms could be pressed into the service of the modem Marathi theatre by recreating the form as well as the spirit of folk theatre in his play *Ghashiram Kotwal* without diluting its contemporary appeal. (65)

The play *Ghashiram kotwal* deals with the rise of Ghashiram, a north Indian Brahmin, to the post of Kotwal (Chief Inspector) of Poona and eventually his death at the hands of mob due to his cruel and unjust
oppression of the people. By portraying Vijaya's development into an astute and cunning politician in *Encounter in Umbagland*, Tendulkar had illustrated the positive influence of power by depicting the deterioration in Ghashiram’s character after coming to power. The first Act portrays the journey of Ghashiram from being a dancer in a prostitute's hall to becoming the Kotwal of Poona. The second Act depicts Ghashiram's inhuman torture of innocent people under the intoxication of power and its resultant violent reaction by people in which he is stoned to death. The play unfolds with the convention of paying homage to Lord Ganpati through a song and dance sequence which is performed by twelve Poona Brahmins standing in an array. These twelve men seem to form a sort of human curtain or human wall which is basically a singing and dancing chorus and adumbrate the actions. The revealing and hiding possibilities of the human curtain freed Tendulkar from the need of maneuvering finesse regarding entries and exits of the characters. After the prayer, the Sutradhar (narrator) appears on the scene and accosts different Brahmins and skilfully exhorts them to disclose that they are going to Bavannakhani, the redlight area to watch the dances of the prostitutes. Through these incidents, Tendulkar highlights the unbrahmanical ways of the Poona Brahmins. While the Sutradhar comments on the loose morals and turpitude of these people, the human curtain turns its back to the audience which suggests that it has ceased to exist for the moment. After the Sutradhar's narration, the human curtain is transformed into a group of people sitting in Gulabi's hall in Bavannakhani and enjoying a dance performed by her. Thus Tendulkar has used the human curtain for presenting different situations in the play in a very skillful and assimilative manner.

The moral degradation of Poona community is presented through the visual of a Brahmin lady embracing her lover while the men are enjoying the dances of the prostitutes in Bavannakhani. There is an ironic juxtaposition of the chanting of a devotional song ‘Radhakrishna Hari, Govinda Murali’ with the adulterous conduct of the Brahmin lady. While
she is meeting her lover behind the human curtain, the devotional song is being recited in front of the curtain. The combination of the device of human curtain, music and actions of the characters produces a spectacular effect in this scene. It reminds us of the last scene of Tennessee William's play *The Glass Menagerie* in which Amanda is seen comforting Laura, her daughter, after Tom, her son, decides to leave the family. Like Tennessee Williams, Tendulkar has also used the technique of silent scene in a movie. While appreciating Tendulkar's detailed instructions for movements, gestures, sounds and music in *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Shanta Gokhale aptly avers: “the playwright must indeed have staged the entire play in his mind as he wrote it (206).

The reader-audience gets its first glimpse of Ghashiram when he is shown as dancing with Gulabi as her foil. Nana Fadnavis, the Chief Minister of the Peshwa, enters Gulabi's hall with a silver-handled walking stick. Nana's sensual nature is highlighted by his having a garland of flowers tied on his wrist and his dancing with the girls. According to Shanta Gokhale, “the cane in Nana's hand indicates riches and power, the garland of flowers, sensuality, and the dancing, a surrender to the pursuit of pleasure” (*CP* 589). Nana sprains his ankle while dancing and begins to hobble on one foot. Ghashiram perceives a chance to flatter Nana in order to win his favour. He puts Nana's injured foot on his own back and continues to hold it even after Nana offers him a pearl necklace as a reward. The playwright brings out Ghashiram's sycophancy through his Machiavellian actions here. Ghashiram's background is made known to the reader-audience through Gulabi's remarks about him to Nana. Nana leaves Gulabi's hand in a palanquin which is borne by a few men from the human curtain. Tendulkar, through the incident, renders an impetus to the particular experience which gets emulated to the universal. Ghashiram's joy of having received a costly gift is short-lived as Gulabi claims the necklace from him. Ghashiram's humiliation by Gulabi and her servants is shown through the visual of Gulabi blocking Ghashiram's way, demanding the
necklace and getting him beaten by her servants on his refusal to part with it. There is even more affront in store for Ghashiram as he goes to the ceremony of giving off royal gifts to the Brahmins at the Peshwa's palace. He is arrested by the soldiers on suspicion of stealing, beaten severely and put behind the bars. While Ghashiram is lamenting his misfortune in the prison, the Sutradhar appears as a fellow-prisoner and tries to pacify him. Through the Sutradhar's comments, the playwright pictures the nexus between the police and the thieves. Then the soldiers come and pick Ghashiram away and throw him in the middle of the audience. Ghashiram is warned not to set his foot on the soil of Poona again. The pain and anger of humiliation is too much to bear for Ghashiram and his irascibility explodes like a volcano. Tendulkar writes that Ghashiram takes off his sash and throws it on the ground. It suggests that he is renouncing his religion. Ghashiram condemns the behaviour of the Poonaites and vows to take revenge on them. Ghashiram’s banging his fist in the dust and dancing violently to the beats of drum suggests the intensity of his lividity.

The scene shifts to a programme being held at Nana's mansion. The Sutradhar now becomes a ‘Kirtankar’, a teller of sacred stories. The human curtain becomes his audience. Some women are also seen listening to his discourse. Nana comes and occupies a high seat. He ogles and leers at the women making his lecherous nature clear. His gaze rests on a pretty girl whom Nana tries to enfold after the departure of everyone. The girl runs away and Nana mistakenly grabs a servant instead. It is Ghashiram in a servant's dress, hiding his face with the turban. He offers to bring the girl back to Nana. After delivering the girl to Nana on the next day, Ghashiram walks into the audience, looks at Nana dancing with the girl on the stage and exclaims loudly that he has enthralled and captured Nana into his web by giving his daughter to him. Thus Ghashiram’s plan of taking revenge on the Poona community is made known to the reader-audience. In the next scene, Nana appears to be helpless and repeatedly requests Ghashiram to bring the girl back to him at least once. Ghashiram desirously bargains to
be made the Kotwal in exchange for the girl. Nana accepts his proposal and the first act ends with Ghashiram becoming the Kotwal of Poona.

The second act begins with the Sutradhar's narration of the events after Ghashiram's becoming the Kotwal. Ghashiram has been trying to satisfy his thirst for revenge by inflicting inhuman tortures on the guilty and the innocent people alike. Through Ghashiram, the playwright makes it clear that Ghashiram derives sadistic pleasures, by excruciating people; Ghashiram's torture of an innocent Brahmin who is unjustly charged of stealing is shown through his forcing the Brahmin to undergo an ordeal to prove his innocence. He also orders to place a red-hot steel ball on the man's hand. The miming technique has been used for the representation of this scene. While the Brahmin is groaning with pain, the human curtain begins to chant the names of gods and saints loudly. Samik Bandyopadhyay, in this connection, observes “the chant of the names of gods and saints drowning the innocent man's screams suggests the complacence or consolation cast over the yawning horror of corruption and tyranny” (CP 4).

Ghashiram becomes even more tyrannical after the death of Gauri, during the child-birth. Ghashiram looks at the blood on his hands after beating people and gets an immense malicious joy out of it. Once a few poor Brahmins from the South visit Poona and eat some fruits from Ghashiram's garden without permission. They invite Ghashiram’s wrath and subsequent imprisonment. The shortage of space in prison cell results in their death by suffocation which allegedly leads to a revolt by Poona Brahmins against Ghashiram. The tortures of Ghashiram by the furious mob are reported through the Sutradhar's narration. Finally, Ghashiram is stoned to death and Nana declares festivities for three days to mark the occasion. The play ends with Nana, accompanied by his seven wives, dancing to the music of cymbals. While replying to Samik Bandyopadhyay's query regarding his use of the musical form for his play, Tendulkar clarifies:
Ghashiram started with a theme, then came the specific 'story' or incident which was historical and then the search for the form began. I knew that the usual naturalistic treatment was out of the question. By a series of accidents I discovered the present form which is a combination of a variety of ingredients from different folk forms of Maharashtra. (590)

Thus the playwright had used the form which he thought was adequately suited for the depiction of his subject.

Tendulkar's *A Friend's Story* is a three-act play. Instead of the usual division of the acts into scenes, this play consists of narrations and incidents. There are ten narrations and ten incidents in the first act, eleven narrations and ten incidents in the second act and twelve narrations interspersed with twelve incidents in the final act of the play. Tendulkar depicts the tragedy of Mitra (Sumitra Dev), a lesbian, through the eyes of Bapu, her friend and narrator of the play. Bapu is the confidant in whom Mitra divulges her innermost thoughts and feelings. Like his earlier plays, *The Vultures* and *Encounter in Umbugland*, Tendulkar has used the technique of representation in which one of the characters telling the story to the audience. The form of the play is slightly unusual. There is a presentation of Bapu's memories which are enacted on the stage, interspersed with Bapu's narrations of his thoughts and feelings about the events that happen. Dealing with the theme of lesbianism on the stage was a rare thing in the early 1980s when Tendulkar wrote this play. According to Tendulkar, “staging a play on a same-sex relationship was nearly impossible but the play got written by him out of some inner compulsion which had no logic” (CP xvi). Tendulkar's ingenious handling of this unconventional topic gives the audience a unique dramatic experience by opening their eyes to the plight of a person suffering from a latent physical deformity. This theme finds echoes in Mahesh Dattani’s play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* in which he insinuates to castigate the societal tenets. The
tragedy of Mitra's life makes the reader-audience introspective. Through the story of Mitra, the playwright shows the reaction of the society towards an abnormal person.

The play begins with Bapu addressing the audience and telling them about his first meeting with Mitra. Bapu says that he had found a photograph of Mitra lying on the ground and mustered courage to talk to Mitra so that he could return the snap to her. At this moment, the narration merges into action in an effortless manner as if Bapu's memories suddenly come alive and the reader-audience watches Mitra who halts while walking and turns around as Bapu called her. Tendulkar brings out Bapu's nervousness through his incoherent remarks. It is quite natural as Bapu is not used to conversing with girls. The discordant nature of Mitra is highlighted through her inviting Bapu to the restaurant for a cup of tea by looking askance to tell him about her childhood memories and her mother's perception of her boyishness. She breaks into an uproarious laughter after making a little fun of Bapu.

After some days, Mitra invites Bapu to meet her on the college ground without giving the inkling of the motive behind the invite. She, in his presence, seems to have forgotten the existence of Bapu. Tendulkar brings out Mitra's troubled state of mind through her actions as well as words. Her eyes keep swaying here and there and she presses Bapu's hand with great force to see the reaction of her touch on him. She begins to talk about human nature but her words do not make any sense to Bapu as he is unaware of the context in which they are uttered. It is obvious that she was facing some problem; she abruptly ends the meeting and leaves without telling anything to Bapu about her problem. In the narration that follows, the playwright dwells upon Bapu's bafflement at Mitra's unusual behaviour. Then the reader-audience is introduced to Pande, Bapu's room-partner who advises Bapu to stay away from girls as Bapu, being a simple guy, won't be able to handle them. Bapu clarifies to the audience that he
felt repulsed by Pande's comments as he did not want to share his affinity with Mitra.

The reader-audience is also acquainted with Mitra’s attempt to commit suicide through the conversation between Pande and Bapu. After some days Mitra comes back to college and begins to meet Bapu as usual. Bapu pries to know the reason of her wish to end her life. The playwright suggests that it is extremely difficult for Mitra to talk about her problem while Bapu is glancing into her eyes. She makes Bapu turn his face in another direction while she narrates her experiences. Through Mitra’s long narration, the playwright categorically brings out how she was biologically different from other girls and how she realised this fact in course of time. Mitra's puffing a cigarette and clutching Bapu's hand while telling him about her unsuccessful attempt of having an intercourse brings out her sense of shock and shame about her physical deformity. Tendulkar mentions that a turbulent storm racks her within. She makes fun of Bapu and tries to laugh in order to hide her inner pain. And this agony troubles and excruciates her perpetually.

In the next narration, Bapu gives vent to the feeling of repulsion in his mind about Mitra's abnormality. The first act ends with Mitra confessing to Bapu that she has fallen in love with Nama. She prevails upon Bapu to make his room available to her for a private meeting with Nama. A new side of Mitra's personality is revealed as she threatens Bapu to break their friendship if he doesn't oblige her. Despite her feminine infirmities, she vehemently prevails upon his emotional self.

The second act depicts the struggle between Mitra and Dalvi, Nama's boyfriend, for Nama's affections. It also portrays the troubles of Bapu as he is caught in the middle of the ‘Mitra-Nama-Dalvi’ triangular relationship. Bapu's affection for Mitra makes him help her in her affair with Nama though he is conscious of its bizarreness. Mitra's forging Bapu's handwriting to write anonymous letters to Nama's family results in Bapu getting beaten by Dalvi. Though Mitra is a lesbian, she appears desirable to
men who don't know about her real nature. This fact is brought out by Tendulkar through the effect of Mitra's sight on Pande when she visits his room to meet Bapu. The playwright argues that Pande is charged, spellbound and goes on watching Mitra without even blinking his eyes. The second act ends with Mitra going out of Bapu's life after his refusal to help her in carrying on her relationship with Nama.

The third act portrays the fluctuations in Bapu's attitude towards Mitra. He informs the reader-audience that Mitra's plan of keeping Nama under her thumb by blackmailing her arouses revulsion in his mind, whereas, Mitra's oppression by the society after Dalvi's public disclosure about her abnormality arouses sympathy for Mitra. Tendulkar hints at Bapu’s genuine concern for Mitra by showing in the middle of the ‘Mitra-Nama-Dalvi’ triangular relationship.

Through a scene that takes place at the army club, Tendulkar brings out the effect of Bapu's breaking his ties with Mitra completely on her and his own realisation of his action having quickened the pace of Mitra's downfall. Bapu becomes extremely restless to see that Mitra has taken to prostitution. The increasing pace of the symphony music being played in the background as Bapu watches Mitra’s shameless behaviour in the company of her escorts highlights his inner turbulence.

Toward the end of the play, Bapu comes to know about Mitra's suicide from Dalvi. Tendulkar mentions that Bapu keeps moving to and fro in the room and switches the radio on. The radio shrieks terrifyingly and it appears to suggest that life has become unbearable for Bapu due to his grief over Mitra's death.

Tendulkar's *Kamala* is a compact two-act play with no scene divisions in the acts and the setting of the play is the drawing room in Jaisingh Jadhav, a reputed journalist's bungalow in the fashionable New Delhi neighbourhood of Neeti Bagh. The prominent position of Jaisingh in the field of journalism is suggested through the constantly ringing telephone in his house. Through the conversation between Kakasaheb and
Sarita, the playwright provides the necessary background information to the reader-audience. The slavish status of Sarita in Jaisingh's house is suggested through her docile behaviour like a personal secretary to Jaisingh and making note of all the incoming phone calls for his reference. It also suggests the thoughtful and submissive nature of Sarita who makes every effort to please her husband to avoid domestic discord. Sarita's use of the word 'Ma-Saheb' (mother) points out her aristocratic lineage. The fact that Sarita has to deal with the complaints of the housemaid while managing all the other activities connected with running a household, renders a naturalistic touch to the play. The playwright, through the frequency of phone calls, points out the risk associated with investigative journalism. Sarita informs Kakasaheb that she is imbecile and dare not change Jaisingh's habits. Even her threat of leaving him and going back to her native place does not yield any positive results. Thus the playwright points out that Jaisingh is a selfish and cruel husband who is insensitive to the feelings of his wife.

Tendulkar highlights Jaisingh's impatient nature in his first entry on the stage through his act of ringing the doorbell repeatedly. His neglect of Sarita is brought out by his going through the phone messages in her notebook instead of enquiring about her well-being. While returning from his business trip, Jaisingh has brought Kamala, a tribal woman, with him. Kamala's timidity and backwardness is indicated through her sitting on the haunches with her face veiled by the end of her dirty sari. Jaisingh does not tell Kakasaheb the real reason for having brought Kamala with him. He, however, shares information with Sarita after a lot of reluctance. He expresses his distrust of Sarita by saying that he is not sure whether she will keep the information secret. According to Mrs. Pramila Devi, "Jaisingh insults Sarita by expressing his lack of confidence in her" (115). Though Jaisingh has bought Kamala from a rural flesh-market to expose the flesh-trade, he is not actually concerned with the eradication of this social malady. The playwright censures Jaisingh's lack of concern for
Kamala's plight and his contemptuous attitude towards her through his asking Kamala whether she would like to live in his house for the rest of her life. Actually Jaisingh has already made up his mind to send Kamala to an orphanage after the press conference.

When Jain, a journalist friend of Jaisingh, comes to visit him, Jaisingh makes every effort to conceal Kamala’s presence from him. His desire to keep the matter secret before the press conference comes out through his actions. The stage is darkened and lighted again after a few seconds. It indicates the lapse of time from morning to evening. Jaisingh's anxiety about the press conference he has arranged is indicated through his pacing the room in an excited manner. He does not allow Kamala to take bath or change her torn clothes as a dirty and pitiable looking victim of flesh trade will suit his purpose better. Thus the playwright throws light on the callous nature of Jaisingh, and at the end of the first act Jaisingh leaves with Kamala for the press conference. After his departure, Sarita is seen to be engrossed in deep thoughts as Jaisingh's inhuman attitude towards Kamala has made her introspective.

At the beginning of the second act, the scene shifts to the night. Jaisingh who was in a tense and excited state of mind since morning now looks happy and relaxed. The reader-audience comes to know about the happenings of the press conference through the conversation between Jaisingh and Jain. The way Jain calls the press conference as a ‘Tamasha' suggests the indifferent attitude of the journalists towards the work that they do. Kakasaheb and Sarita are shocked to know about the indecent questions put to Kamala by the journalists. Jaisingh and Jain appear to have enjoyed the plight of Kamala during the whole show. The playwright highlights the disturbing effect of her husband's vile behaviour on Sarita as she refuses to share his bed that night. Tendulkar categorically mentions in the stage instructions that Jaisingh's touch causes a heartfelt aversion in Sarita's mind and she throws him aside with a single shove. Once again the stage darkens and then lights indicate the passage of time. Kamala comes
and there is a conversation between them; Kamala is under the impression that Sarita has also been bought by Jaisingh and innocently wants to know the price which Jaisingh has paid for her. Sarita who has become fully conscious of her husband's exploitation of her as if she were a bonded labourer does not correct Kamala's misconception. Thus Vijay Tendulkar exposes Sarita's frustration with the state of things in her life through her utterances.

Sarita begins to assert herself and oppose Jaisingh's velleity. Jaisingh, however, does not care a fig for her. So Sarita refuses to accompany him to a party that evening. When Kakasaheb questions her about her changed behaviour, she expresses her wish to hold a press conference and tell the world about Jaisingh's slave-like treatment to his wife. Through Sarita's long replies to Kakasaheb's queries, Tendulkar brings out her realisation of her monopolised exploitation by her husband. Sarita's uncontrollable sobs and the twisting of her body in pain point to her great mental agony which she is undergoing after the disillusionment.

Though Sarita feels wronged by Jaisingh, Tendulkar shows that she does not forsake her sympathy for him completely. It typifies an Indian wife who is presumed to behoove in an obsequious manner. When Jain informs her about Jaisingh's dismissal from his job, she becomes tense which decisively exemplifies her concern for him. When Jaisingh returns, she tries to calm his nerves by offering him food and drinks and being casual about his dismissal from the job. As Jaisingh is extremely agitated, he begins shouting at her and even shoves her away. But Sarita does not mind it as she comprehends his pitiable condition. Jaisingh's collapsing on the sofa in a listless condition reiterates the fact that there is a quiet determination in Sarita's voice as she confides in Kakasaheb that she is not going to allow Jaisingh to exploit her any more though she has given up the thought of rebellion presently due to Jaisingh's bad condition. Arundhati Banerjee concurs that Tendulkar makes it clear through the stage directions at the end of the play that “Sarita cannot unlearn what she has come to
realise and there is a hope of her attaining independence sometime in the future” (CP 581-82). The play ends with Sarita looking ahead with a calm gaze that suggests her hopefulness about the freedom from slavery to her husband for the future.

Vijay Tendulkar's Kanyadaan is a compact and gripping two-act play with the usual division into acts into scenes. The first act consists of two scenes and the second act comprises three scenes. The play revolves round the theme of marriage as indicated by the title. The word 'Kanyadaan' refers to the giving away of a bride to the bridegroom by her parents. There are only seven characters in this play. The action takes place in the drawing room of Nath Devlalikar, the protagonist's apartment in an old building in a middle class colony. Nath, a legislator, is an energetic old man while his wife, Seva is a social activist. The other members of Devlalikar family are Jyoti and Jayaprakash, their young children. The play begins with a commonplace incident. Nath is trying to know the timing of a bus telephonically but fails to get a proper reply from the in-charge of the bus service. Jyoti tries to pacify her father by telling him that there is nothing unusual about such mismanagement of the bus service. But Nath refuses to take reality into account and keeps harping on the duties of the controller and his evasive and negligent posture towards them. Nath wants his children to understand his point of view and complains that the dreams that his generation had conceived about ‘post-independence’ India have yet not materialised. His statement foreshadows the failure of his dream regarding his daughter's inter-caste marriage. From the conversation between Nath and his children, the reader-audience comes to know that Nath and Seva have very little time to spare for their children. Jayaprakash's repairing a household appliance in the spare time, Jyoti's packing of her father's luggage for his political trip, and Jayaprakash's rushing out to bring his mother's luggage in the house on her return from a women's rally, advocate Tendulkar's use of the naturalistic mode of playwriting.
The playwright points out the genial and tension-free atmosphere in the Devlalikar household through the cordial conversations and mutual leg-pulling by the members of the family. The democratic working in the house is suggested through the freedom every member has to voice his opinion on the issues. Jyoti declares that she has decided to marry Arun Athawale, a poet belonging to the backward community. The incident of Arun's proposing to Jyoti and her accepting it is presented through a short narration by Jyoti. Seva does not like her proposal at all. She starts giving one excuse after another to change her daughter's mind. Nath, on the other hand, is happy about his daughter's decision as it gives him a chance of setting an example of casteless social fabric. Tendulkar makes the traits of his characters clear in the first scene of the play. Nath appears to be idealistic, over-enthusiastic and a sincere critic of his own actions. Jyoti seems to be an obedient daughter and a sympathetic person who agrees to marry Arun though she realises that she is not in love with him. She was mesmerized by Arun's autobiography in which he has described the harsh experiences of his life. She agrees to marry him as she is keen to make him happy. Seva and Jayaprakash appear to be reasonable and practical persons from the way they react to Jyoti's decision to marry Arun. Both realise the hastiness and immaturity in Jyoti's decision and candidly tell her so. Seva, in particular, appears to be greatly concerned about Jyoti's future as she thinks that the difference between the culture and lifestyles of Jyoti and Arun may prove to be harmful and consequently impede their consummation.

In Act One, Scene Two, Jyoti brings Arun home to introduce him to her parents. The playwright brings out Arun's consciousness of his low origins through his expression of discomfort on finding himself in an affluent upper class atmosphere. It also adumbrates a kind of life Jyoti is venturing into by marrying Arun. Arun's articulation is rough and even obscene at times. As Jyoti is not used to hearing such scurrilous language, she covers her face with her hands to hide tears that start gathering in her
eyes. He asks Jyoti bluntly whether she is prepared to eat stinking bread with spoiled lentils in his father's hut. Jyoti makes a little fun of Arun when he hints that he may prove to be a wife-beater. Arun grabs her arm and twists it in order to prove the truth of his words. And Tendulkar brandishes the shock that Arun’s action gives her. This is the only instance of physical violence being shown on the stage in this play. After their marriage, Arun beats Jyoti several times and even kicks her in the stomach when she is in her sixth month of pregnancy. However, all these incidents of domestic violence are made known to the reader-audience through the dialogues between the characters of the play.

The first Act ends with a green signal being given to Jyoti’s marriage with Arun and the Devlalikar family as well as the reader-audience eagerly await the consequences of this marriage. Tendulkar mentions in the stage instructions that darkness descends on the stage at the end of Nath's speech. According to Nutan Gosavi, “the darkness betokens not only the confused state of the Devlalikar household but also adumbrates the future storm in which the family is going to be engulfed after this marriage” (Madge 160)

The action in Act Two, Scene One takes place after a gap of few months. It is mentioned in the stage directions that Jyoti appears slander and looks as if she had suddenly aged. From the dialogue between Seva and Jyoti, the reader-audience is acquainted with the atmosphere in Devlalikar household which has greatly changed after Jyoti’s marriage. Nath keeps brooding all the time because of his concern for Jyoti’s happiness. Nath notices a mark on Jyoti’s shoulder and asks her about it. Jyoti starts crying at this query and retorts that she has been beaten by Arun. Nath suggests that Arun should also live with them and asks Jyoti’s opinion about it. She is forced to disclose that she has left Arun for good after their last quarrel and everybody is stunned to hear this.

Arun comes to apologise to Jyoti as he seems to be compunctions of his behaviour and blames himself in an abusive and accusive language. He
even offers to amputate his hands for having beaten Jyoti. Nath and Seva become tense at seeing knife in his hand but Jayaprakash remains unmoved. Thus the playwright suggests Jayaprakash's realisation of Arun's fake remorse; Jayaprakash's perception is correct as Arun does not oppose him when he takes the knife away from his hand. The distress being caused to her family due to Arun's behaviour makes Jyoti declare that she is going to live with Arun. Nath realises his folly in allowing Jyoti to marry Arun completely in the second scene of the second act. Reading about Arun's sad experiences through his autobiography arouses his sympathy for him. Seva informs him that Jyoti has been hospitalized after having got an internal wound in the stomach due to Arun's kicking her. Jayaprakash suggests to Nath that Arun is taking revenge of the atrocities committed on the lower caste people by the higher class people through his inhuman cruelties upon Jyoti.

In the concluding scene of the play, Nath comes home after giving a hypocritical speech about Arun's autobiography. After some time, Jyoti comes and wishes to have a talk with Nath in private. She speaks in an extremely hostile manner which suggests her anger. She blames Nath for giving a diplomatic speech. She disowns her father for having failed in his duties towards her and leaves his house never to return. Tendulkar uses a subtle device to suggest the total defeat of Nath’s idealism. With the spotlight on Nath's face, the audience can hear sounds of huge buildings hurtling down and the sound gets louder and louder till Nath breaks down and falls on the sofa in a listless manner.

Tendulkar manifests the actions and gestures of his characters in the stage directions in a way that accurately capture their motive. Through his minute attention, he raises the level of audience sensitivity to the cardinal issues and other relevant aspects of the play. His instructions for movement, gestures and sound cannot be ignored as they are an integral part of the story. The instructions he inserts in brackets help to decipher his context properly. The meanings emerge not only through what is said but
through what is shown on the stage. The description of the body and paralanguage of characters helps us to visualize the working of their minds. Tendulkar chisels a dynamic premise and espouses that it is not singularly important what is said but ‘how’ that what is communicated through verbal and non-verbal modes.

Vijay Tendulkar makes an excellent use of satirical vein in his plays. According to M.H. Abrams, in an indirect satire, the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous by what they think, say, and do (155). Such indirect satire is found in all the plays of Tendulkar. *In Silence!*, Tendulkar has satirised the hypocrisy of the urban middle class people through the characters such as Mr. Kashikar, Mrs. Kashikar, Sukhatme, Ponkshe, Kamik, and Rokde. All these characters are failures in their respective professions and as such, envious of Benare who is a successful career woman. During the mock-trial, they excruciate Benare in an inhuman manner; they pretend to conduct Benare's trial on the basis of a fictitious charge even after realising that they are hurting her feelings greatly. *In Encounter in Umbagland*, Tendulkar satirises the unscrupulous politicians through his portrayal of the ministers- Vratyasom, Bhagadanta, Karkashirsha, Pishtakeshi and Aranyaketu. Through their words and actions, the playwright escalates the fact that these ministers have no interest in public welfare and misuse their positions for personal benefits. In the play *The Vultures*, Tendulkar ironically berates the people who pose as cultured beings but stoop to the level of beasts to satisfy their avarice. When Umakant suggests Ramakant to kill Sakharam, Ramakant refuses citing their bond of blood. However, Ramakant maims Manik, his sister, when he needs to detain her in the house in order to blackmail her lover. The eponymous character of Tendulkar's play *Sakharam Binder* excoriates people for beating their wives. His own conduct resembles them when he beats Lakshmi and Champa, his deserted mistresses. In *Ghashiram Kotwal*, the playwright satirises the intoxicating effect of power on human beings. Ghashiram seeks revenge on the people
of Poona for persecuting him in spite of his innocence. After becoming the Kotwal, Ghashiram begins to get sadistic pleasure in torturing people and persecutes innocent people as well. Similarly in *A Friend’s story*, Tendulkar, through the character of Dalvi, satirically ridicules the people who punish others for doing things which they themselves do. In addition to Dalvi’s having coquetish affairs with Nama, the playwright hints at his various other affairs as well. But Dalvi exposes Mitra’s abnormality before the society for having an affair with Nama and thus ruins her life. In *Kamala* Tendulkar unleashes the butts of satire at the institution of marriage through Jaisingh’s total indifference to his wife Sarita’s feelings. In *Kanyadaan*, the playwright caricatures human tendency to inflict pain upon others as a revenge of the injustice caused in the past through the character of Arun. Arun bears the scars of casteism and the atrocities committed upon his forefathers by the high caste people. After marrying Jyoti, a Brahmin girl, he vituperatively tortures her as he is always conscious of her upper caste origin. N.S. Dharan aptly remarks that Tendulkar does not launch any frontal attack on the subjects he ridicules but resorts to the employment of the device of indirect satire (58). Tendulkar evokes scorn and contempt in the minds of the reader-audience for immoral and inhuman actions of his characters, and by doing so; he exhorts to ignite the mind of the readers for the amelioration of social problems.

Tendulkar does not wish that the audience should forget the existence of the theatre as soon as the curtain has risen. He wishes to instill a critical attitude towards the characters and situations in the minds of the reader-audience instead of identifying themselves with them. Tendulkar achieves this objective by bringing about the distancing effects in his plays. The term 'distancing effect' comes from the German 'verfremdungseffekt', an epic theory propounded by Bertold Brecht, the German dramatist. According to Sebastian and Chandra, the audience is encouraged to keep a distance from the dramatic action by reminding them of the artificial nature
of drama through the use of the device of distancing effect (Sebastian 21). Tendulkar uses various devices in order to establish the reader-audience's detachment from the characters and situations in his plays so that they can experience the play in isolation from their personal concerns. *In Silence! The Court is in Session*, Benare's fellow actors keep reminding her that the trial which is being conducted against her is fictitious. When Benare is accused of the crime of infanticide, she appears to be stunned. It makes the reader-audience think about the reason of such behaviour of Benare. In *Encounter in Umbugland, The Vultures* and *A Friend's Story*, Tendulkar uses the remarks made by the narrators of these plays to remind the audience that they are watching a play. The human curtain in *Ghashiram Kotwal* also performs the same function. Thus Tendulkar makes the reader-audience feel the distinction between the self and the work of art through the creation of distancing effects. R.N. Ray like Bertold Brecht, believes:

> The purpose of drama is not to produce catharsis in the minds of the reader-audience but to encourage, stimulate and provoke them to think over the issues affecting the normal and balanced growth of human society. (73)

By preventing the reader-audience's identification with the situations in his plays, the playwright makes them think about the factors responsible for the emergence of various social problems.

In his plays such as *Encounter in Umbugland, The Vultures, Ghashiram Kotwal* and *A Friend's Story*, Tendulkar has embedded the technique of making one of the characters the as a Sutradhar (narrator) to narrate briefly the gist of the story to the reader-audience. The narrator is usually a character outside the action of a play. But Tendulkar makes his narrators such as Prannarayan in *Encounter in Umbugland*, Rajaninath in *The Vultures*, Sutradhar in *Ghashiram Kotwal* and Bapu in *A Friend's Story*, participate in the actions of the plays as well. The playwright
provides the necessary information to the reader-audience and creates the scene and atmosphere through the utterances of the narrators. Tendulkar's narrators speak directly to the reader-audience and comment on the action of the play. Tendulkar has used this device to present large and complex issues in his plays.

Tendulkar does not get stuck with a particular style of writing but continues to experiment with the form in his plays. He uses the medium of theatre to its fullest by employing the visual elements skillfully. He successfully experiments various types of sound, gestures, facial expressions, mimes, songs and dances in an intelligent manner. He gives greater importance to the subject of a play and employs any form or style that produces the desired effect. He chose different forms of presentation in his plays on the basis of their compatibility at suitability to deliver his message to the reader-audience effectively. In his play it is not only important what is said but also how that ‘what’ is said is of paramount importance. In nut shell, it can be discerned that mode and motive go hand in hand in his plays.
WORKS CITED


