Chapter-3
Dynamics of Violence

Throughout the history of mankind violence, in one form or the other, has always been a pervasive phenomenon. Large scale aggressive conflicts among nations, ethnic groups and individuals have always been a reality. Besides the political level, violence is perceived to be on the increase in our everyday social life as well. Violence, in fact, seems to be so much a part of the existence today that the language and metaphor of combat are encountered in a wide variety of activities including the enterprise of literature and social science. Literary writers, especially writers of tragic drama, have tried to depict and dissect the very core of violence that besets man in varying situations. Greek epics, Roman tragedies and the medieval myths and legends have always been an important source of knowledge about violence in literature. From the earliest Greek writers to the contemporary playwrights, violence has enthralled both the author and the audience. Though human aggression has been a timeless phenomenon, it rarely had the intensity and complexity it has acquired in the modern nuclear age. Incidents of violence lacerating social fabric are an everyday report now and therefore, contemporary literature reflects these tendencies.

In many respects, literature right from the early years of the twentieth century has defined itself by reflecting the prevalent violence of modern society – from the destruction of large scale warfare to individual crimes of murder, rape and abuse. Critics of modern literature have generally attributed this trend to both the sensational appeal of violent behavior and its potential to shock readers by shaking their beliefs and complacency. Others have emphasized the historical significance of violence in the period following World War II, during which writers expressed the anxieties of a world that seemed incapable of long term peace, and in which human aggression threatened to bring about global destruction. Thus, violence has become a subject of concern for most modern writers who wish to convey the historical, psychological and artistic landscape of the modern world.

Tendulkar, like other writers, is also preoccupied with the phenomenon of violence which, he believes, “needs good expression in literature, the films, the arts; it simply reflects the larger patterns of violence in society.”

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A study of Tendulkar’s plays shows that the world he has portrayed is full of violence, conflicts and tension of various kinds. But Tendulkar’s main concern is not the mere dramatization of violence in the form of bloodshed and physical cruelty; he probes deeper into the causes responsible for it. What distinguishes his treatment of violence is that he explores the dynamics of this phenomenon in the life of the individual and society and unfolds the historical, cultural and psychological dimensions of the violent reality of life.

The term dynamics refers to “the motivating or driving forces, physical or moral.”

Hence the term dynamics of violence as it is used in this study will signify an investigation into the various motivating forces that operate to generate the instinctive violence and the way these forces shift or change in relation to one another and act interactively as driving forces. In the clinical and in-depth study of dynamics of violence, not merely all the motives, reasons and pressures but even the objective sequence of events have to be taken into account.

Initially, the theoretical framework, which can help one to understand the origin of violence, is here dealt with in some detail which may provide a background to the understanding of violence in terms which support Tendulkar’s portrayal of life and characters. This brings into focus the instincts and impulses, aims and motives which influence the perception, decisions and actions of his men and women.

Though the concept of violence can be studied from theological point of view too, historical and psychological perspectives enable to cover both time and space and the complexity and intensity of this human instinct. Historically, violence has been more or less a gender specific phenomenon. It was rooted in material power and therefore had political connotations. Historically, causes of violence among males have been the defense of territory and proving their dominance to other males as well as females. Alexander the Great and other ancient leaders are examples in history of how violence was used to acquire different assets important to the alpha male. From the socio-psychological perspective the theoretical debate on violence falls into two broad categories of nature vs nurture.

Among the oldest and most controversial theories of violence is the one that regards violence as a genetically-rooted instinct which is an innate part of human nature. Sigmund Freud in his early writings held that all human behavior stems either directly or indirectly from “Eros—the life instinct”—whose energy, or libido, “drives the person towards pleasure seeking and wish fulfillment.” In this framework, violence was viewed simply as a “reaction to the blocking or
the thwarting of libidinal impulses.”4 After witnessing destruction in World War I, Freud gradually came to adopt a gloomier position regarding the nature of human violence. He proposed the existence of a second major instinct—“Thanatos, the death force - the energy of which is directed towards the destruction or the termination of life.”5 He came to believe that all “human behavior stems from the complex interplay of Thanatos and Eros and the constant tension between them.”6 The death instinct, if unrestrained, results in self-destruction. Freud hypothesized that through other mechanism “such as displacement, the energy of Thanatos is redirected outward”7 so that it serves as the basis for violence against others. The concept of Thanatos has not been widely accepted, even among psychoanalysts who found the idea too mystical and untestable for their liking. Neo-Freudians tended to conceptualize violent impulses as part of the ego, or the reality-oriented psychic structure, and as a consequence, they portray violence in less destructive terms.

Another theory has been proposed by ethologists. The Nobel-Prize winner Konrad Lorenz developed his ideas about human violence mainly from the study of animal behavior. He assumes that the “organism continuously builds up aggressive energy.”8 But, differing from Freud’s concept, Lorenz states that violent behavior will not occur unless it is triggered by external cues. Unlike Freud, who saw violence as destructive and disruptive, Lorenz views aggression as adaptive and essential for the survival of a species. Like Freud, Lorenz regards aggression as “inevitable, and, at times, spontaneous.”9 However, he assigns greater significance to the possibility of releasing violent energy in a socially acceptable way and its displaced expression into channels which are not antisocial. The usual example suggested is through sports competition which is termed as creative violence.

Lorenz believes that while violent instincts first evolved in lower animals, the tendency towards senseless violence has reached its peak in human beings. Human males, for instance, often attack other individuals (including women and children) whether or not the attackers have high levels of male hormones. Human also kill each other out of hatred, prejudice, politics, and just for fun- and not like animals, only when the victim intrudes into the killer’s home territory.

Central to all psychoanalytic theories is the orientation that things that happen early in the life of an individual influence his later life and the idea of a fixed amount of biologically derived energy which must be discharged in one way or the other. Although not widely accepted by social psychologists, the idea that violence is part of human nature has received serious attention
particularly in light of the continued occurrence of violence throughout history and as reflected in literature.

Biological theories also located the presence of violence inside the individual. These theories, however, differ from the earlier instinct theories because they attempt to identify specific “biological mechanism”\textsuperscript{10} that excites people to violence. However it does not identify the conditions that cause stimulation of these violent ‘seats.’

A second line of research has focused on the relationship between violence and hormones. These investigations argue that males are more aggressive than females because of hormonal differences which are innate. As Klaus Miczek says “Everybody knows that testosterone causes aggression. Wipe out male hormones, and lions turn into lambs.”\textsuperscript{11} Also from a sociobiological perspective, it has been argued that violent behavior has been favoured by natural selection in the evolutionary history of human species. But in comparison to both hormonal and evolutionary explanations, sociologists disagree with the statement that men are victims of hormones. They argue that stronger male tendencies towards violence are the result of gender-role of cultural socialization that glorify and promote such behaviour.

According to this perspective violence primarily is a learned form of social behavior – one that is acquired and maintained in much the same manner as other forms of activities. Albert Bandura\textsuperscript{12} suggests that the roots of such behaviour are varied involving aggressors’ past experiences and learning and a wide range of external, situational factors which are influenced by familial, subcultural and symbolic models.

An incisive understanding of the dynamics of violence, therefore, requires the study of the socio-psychological aspects of the perpetrator, the impact of the response of the victim, the performance of the act itself and the environment in which the act is performed.

At a simpler level, of course, the act of violence or conflict is the immediate outcome of primitive emotions rather than motives; rage and anger, and the urge to destroy. But the denouement must be traced back to the factors that generated it because these emotions are the outgrowth of our psychodynamic heritage. Thus the immediate reason behind violence has to be taken as an important guide for finding where the sense of outrage and injustice began to grow. As far as perception and understanding of violent behavior is concerned Tendulkar seems to believe that violence is an inherent and inevitable part of human nature. Thus, as reflected through his works, he appears to think that the beast or the animal is always there hidden inside
man along with the animal instincts, which are permanent. And when man acts to meet the challenges that come his way, he occasionally appears to behave like an animal. The hidden hatreds, insecurities, sexual frustrations and long suppressed violence burst out when the situations become oppressive. He saw violence as a metaphor for life and thus “wanted to study and understand what it is, where it comes from.”

Tendulkar finds violence and the exploiter-exploited relationship as natural and eternal. It is the primeval need to subjugate, an expression of raw power exercised over the one without. But as a mature writer, his plays also exhibit the impact of social and political institutions and ethical norms through which this violence actually takes place and gets perpetuated. This can be interpreted in terms of Tendulkar’s special interest in theoretical explorations as role of such factors determine human behaviour.

Thus while investigating the portrayal of violence in Tendulkar’s works it becomes imperative to examine the same in relation to the total environment in which such acts are performed. This requires taking into consideration the factors that determine the approach of the writer to such human behavior as well as unveiling the factors to which writer seems to ascribe such behaviour of the characters in his works under investigation.

The plays of Tendulkar pre-dominantly present violent human behaviour and very often violence is very brutal. He often creates milieu where individual is caught in a cross current of social forces resulting in the devastating injuries on his psychological and moral experiences. But invariably, the reader stumbles upon the sources of such acts because the dynamics behind these is only hinted at and sometimes these sources appear to be inaccessible. The reader gets insights into those sources fully only by tracing and establishing patterns of relationships between these factors. Tendulkar deals with a wide range of social and psychological situations like economic disparities and insecurities, caste operation and general exploitation. These situations work along with such factors as personal and social frustration, stigmatization and loss of self-esteem and even subtle irresistible human drives or needs. He deals with economic distinction as causes of shattering the family apart and reveals social stigmatization caused by age old Indian caste hierarchy generating violent conflict in society as well as devastating family life and even the individual’s personality. He is as much at home in highlighting violence rooted in patriarchal gender distinctions as he is in underlining the reality of biological instincts and urges leading to aggressive outbursts when thwarted by restrictive codes of social morality. He, in fact, has a very
penetrative and analytical insight into all these different factors working subterraneanly and causing violent upheavals in the life at various levels.

Tendulkar has always been interested in delving deep into the human psyche to understand the varying emotions. This psychological interest of Tendulkar has faithfully revealed various psychological factors which turn out to be potential causes for violent behaviour. The study of Sakharam in *Sakharam Binder* shows how his subjection to violence in his childhood produces in him low self-esteem, a sense of fear and even self-hatred the feelings he tries to combat through over-projection and assertion of male supremacy by violently trying to subjugate women.

Several psychologists view violence as a characteristic trait that is determined by a person’s subjective outlook on life. From this intra-psychic position, personality traits are produced, both by one’s biological inheritance and by what happens during critical stages in person’s early development.

Norman Mailer gives great significance to childhood experiences since they shape an individual’s later personality. He is of the opinion that the contradictory social norms are assimilated in as early a period as one’s childhood and the nervous system continues to be ravaged since then. Many childhood experiences are such that they warp the psyche. Thus one meets “the tempo of the present and future with reflexes and rhythms which come from the past.”

All children have aggressive tendencies which are usually fused with what Anna Freud called “loving urges” and when a child is unable to achieve this fusion due to rejection by parents or excessive punishment, the child becomes hostile and aggressive in nature. Karen Horney, a Neo Freudian, calls it “basic anxiety” i.e. “the apprehension a child feels in the world, which is perceived as hostile and in which child feels alone. The child may respond to this feeling by movement towards, against or away from others.”

Violence among family members, subjecting children to such experiences, tends to make them grow into violent individuals. M. Guttmacher states that “this victimization produces a hostile identification by the victim with their brutal aggressors and has a deep and lasting effect on eventual violent behavior as they had learnt by conscious example that violence was a solution to frustration.”
In *Sakharam Binder*, Sakharam is a man devoid of ethics and morality, picks up abandoned wives, shelters them for his sexual gratification and exploits them as domestic servants. Sakharam may be seen as the product of patriarchal tyranny at home in his early childhood and in turn displaces his aggression on his women. In the effort to come out of his damaged self and rebuild his battered image, he takes the path of aberration which reflects his psychopathic behavior. The emphasis is on self-introspection to attain the knowledge which is buried in the pains of his unforgotten childhood experiences, like his mother used to say, “the brat’s shameless. He’s a Mahar born in a Brahmin home”(*SB*:127). He had got fed up with his father’s beating and had run away from home when he was only eleven.

Incidents of violence, especially to the child, often produce poor self-esteem. A child growing up in violent home is likely to have very little self-worth which leads to pattern of negative self-talks. We find that in this play too, Sakharam suffers from low self-esteem. He says, “Nothing I did ever seemed right. You’d think I was his enemy or something. The way he’d thrash me!”(*SB*:127). In his life as a young man, feelings of frustration and isolation grow and along with it a hidden anger due to his feelings of helplessness which is the source of fuel that fans the flames of violence in relations. Such experiences of strong psychological and physical stress, when blocked or repressed, lead to trauma and ultimately tend to change the sufferer’s perception of life. It is evident through the character of Sakharam, who, living through or at the level of senses alone, tries to search the meaning of life. The path of self-knowledge for him is through immoderation which leads to self-alienation. Being self-alienated, Sakharam cannot feel the joy of life in its normal state. He vainly strives to overcome his feelings of inferiority and powerlessness caused by his humiliation by his own parents. In his vain pursuit of joy and power, he swears, smokes ganja, drinks liquor and indulges in mechanical sex without marriage and thus tries to violate the accepted norms of the society.

As the psycho-socialists, Salzinger, Feldman and Hammer say, victims of childhood violence “have limited social competence and are less cooperative and more disturbed in their interactions-they tend to display fewer pro-social and more anti-social behaviours.”\(^{18}\) The clinical psychopath appears to be a bit different from Tendulkar’s concept of psychopath because his character’s anti-social behaviour is due to emotional immaturity and is directed towards the gratification of immediate desires. Olweus agrees with the concept and puts forward his own
analysis: “A detached parent-child relationship” is “found to play a crucial role in producing this anti-social behavior pattern.”

Sakharam is considered an outlaw by society because his needs and demands run contrary to the restrictions and taboos laid down by society. Hence, the psychopath is declared an enemy by society, because society feels that his very existence threatens the foundation of its structure. It is seen how Sakharam becomes constrictive in states of stress and acts in destructive, socially unacceptable ways. When Laxmi, during Ganesh puja, objects to Dawood’s singing of Aarti, for he is a Muslim, Sakharam gets enraged and lashes at her with the belt. These inhuman beatings show how he takes Laxmi’s upright and quivering stance as a challenge to his superior ego.

After Laxmi, when Champa, who is extremely sexy but has different airs about her, gets home, Sakharam develops a deep ingrained fear that her sensuality will penetrate and subjugate his masculine subjectivity. His quarrel with her over the rules and duties to be performed is basically his “quarrel with himself-with those despised and muted elements in his personality which he cannot freely acknowledge because they challenge his sense of masculine supremacy and control.”

Violence for the psychopath is a means to purge one’s self. A psychopath acts to overcome the fear that leads to repressions, even if the fear is of himself, and the action is to murder. He tortures his women out of necessity to purge his violence for if he cannot empty his hatred, he cannot love and his being is frozen with implacable self-hatred for his cowardice. Some blows now and then towards his women are like warming up before good performance, as he says, “I’m like this mridanga here. It plays better when it is warmed up. I’m like that” (SB:129).

This hostile sexual behavior and his inability to form cordial relationships with others can be seen as the result of child abuse. According to psychological studies, child abuse leads to an insecure attachment style which has negative feelings towards self and others and these emotional deficits in early socio-psychological experiences in combination with poorly developed skills for coping with these negative experiences set a stage for sexually abusive behaviour.

Robert J. Stoller, a psychoanalyst, supports the point of view that “without hostility, sex for many people is ungratifying.” He says “people are basically sadomasochistic when it comes
to sex. They bring to the sexual relationship a need to inflict pain on the other people in order to compensate for past hurts inflicted on them. They are attempting to work through difficulties which occurred in childhood.”

Men demonstrate “their masculinity as a method of dealing with the anxiety around the natural identification with the mother” and troubled relationship with father figure. Sakharam always mentions about his masculinity. “Mine is no ordinary appetite” but when Champa says, “You’re not a man--not since she (Laxmi) came. She’s made an impotent ninny of you. Don’t have the guts to take me before her” he gets imbued with enraged “compulsive masculinity” which basically is an attempt to overcome his feelings of being inadequate and his fear of being not a man. He violently forces himself on her and makes her drink more and more and has his own way. It is in response to the “fear of retaliation (actually unconsciously by his mother whom the woman represents) for his sexual and aggressive feelings, which were not allowed expression when he was a child.” And in pursuit to reconstruct his manly self he asserts on his woman which has a violent expression. Fights and violence over household chores, Laxmi’s strange behaviour towards ants, adultery committed by Champa and her betrayal or Sakharam’s feeling of being cheated by his friend Dawood, may be assumed to be a chain of motives behind his action of violence and even murder; but in the strict psychological sense, these are not the real causes as they are not basic psychological needs. They are merely the events that generate either a final conflict or a continuing action pattern that contribute to the development of anger and hurt. It is not likely that either victim or offender could adequately describe his motives in the psychological sense for most would not have sufficient clinical insight to know the structure of their own personality dynamics. But Tendulkar exhibits a clear understanding of the psychological factors that trigger hostility. A study of such childhood incidents of violence is, therefore, necessary to understand the aggressive human behavior in adulthood. He clearly presents these ingrained factors and instincts which manifest themselves in their personal conflicts and anti-social human behavior frequently.

By exploring a person’s childhood and family life, it is possible to view the psychological factors responsible for violent behavior which are reflected in one’s social interactions. But when society itself serves as a catalyst for violence among its members, it necessitates one to explore the relation between an individual and his/her community. By what mechanism do social forces ranging from poverty to casteism become embodied in individual experience has been a matter
of investigation for the writers, social thinkers and men of literature. Tendulkar also focuses on this perspective by presenting both individual experience and the larger social matrix in which it is embedded in order to see how these large-scale social forces come to be translated into the personal distress leading to conflict.

According to K. Webb, a conflictive situation can be understood as circumstances in which “damage occurs to individuals or groups due to differential access to social resources.” The ubiquitous manifestation of violence is, therefore, due to the denial of rights and needs such as economic well-being, dignity, equality, education and so on. Such injustices are also part of the structural violence connected with the hierarchical social order of India. According to Manusmriti, Hindu society is divided into four Varnas but there are some who are grouped outside these Varnas. They are called Bhahiyas and are not considered as a part of Hindu social structure. Habituation to such structure is grounded upon the capacities of ideologies, tradition, religion or culture -- the aspect of what Galtung identified as “Cultural Violence” -- which makes structures of exploitation “look, even, feel right.” And hence the ‘marginalization’ is there, which means “keeping the underdogs on the outside.” Such discriminating and repressive social stratification leading to the structural violence has been highlighted by Tendulkar as one of the major causes of violence in society. The rebellion of men and women of lower castes in Indian social structure is often the result of their painful consciousness of being oppressed for centuries.

According to Khan, “Structural violence contains the intrinsic capacity to provoke behavioural violence from the deprived group.” Sociological studies that focus on behavioural violence consider it “to be a response to the inequalities and exploitations that underpins structural violence.” These studies are frequently built on theories of human needs in terms of “the frustration of material wants, civil rights and the deprivation of higher social requirements.”

Tendulkar in Kanyadaan has shown that social oppression in the form of structural and epistemic violence may lead to lower self-esteem and displacement of frustrations which find expression in violence as is evident from the case of Arun Athavale. He is a young promising dalit poet and for generations a victim of socio-political and economic suppression at the hands of the superiors of the social hierarchy. So unknowingly he becomes a part of class struggle, when Jyoti, an educated girl from a politically and socially conscious Brahmin family, decides to
marry him. From here the life of miseries starts. After marriage Jyoti becomes the victim of domestic violence at the hands of Arun, who himself had developed violent and aggressive tendencies after years of oppression suffered by him. This violent behavior of Arun can be explained through various theories of violence, structural, cultural and resource theory. The basic propositions in these three theories agree in predicting that interpersonal violence is more likely in families occupying lower levels in the social structure. The structural theory of violence given by Coser asserts that “one should find more violence among families who are in lower social positions because they suffer more frustrations and blocked goals than do families on the higher rungs of the social ladder.”

History has proven time and again that a person who has undergone years of suppressed frustration is bound to explode any day with all the inner violence accumulated over the years and Arun is no exception. He is so angry with the world that he wants to set it on fire, to strangle people, to rape, to kill them, and to drink their blood. It is his restlessness that renders him violent. He considers the high caste people as demons for treating the dalits inhumanly. Arun has also developed a sense of inferiority because of his dalit background and environment. He feels quite nervous and ill at ease on entering a comfortable middle class house. He suffers from a sense of alienation or class consciousness when he says, “I feel uncomfortable in big houses….If you see my father’s hut you’ll understand. Ten of us, big and small, lived in that eight feet by ten feet…Here, these damn houses of the city people, they’re like the bellies of sharks and crocodiles”(KD:512).

Cultural theory of violence given by Wolfgang and Ferracuti proposes that “among certain groups or subcultures there are norms and cultural values that approve of violence rather than define it as deviant and locate these pro-violent norms among individuals and groups in the lower social strata.”

Several treatises that focus on class differences in violence take note of the fact that the lower class person is less inhibited in his expression of violence and is less willing to offer gratification now in exchange for a somewhat bigger pay off later. As he has learnt as a child to approve of violence, to Seva’s question, why he beats Jyoti, Arun responds in the following manner: “What am I but the son of scavengers. We don’t know the non-violent ways of brahmins like you. We drink and beat our wives”(KD:540). Violence is part and parcel of the day-to-day
life in the section of the society that Arun belongs to. Throughout his life, he has seen his father coming home over-drunk and beating his mother half-dead.

Though class variable must be interpreted as referring to various kinds of social and cultural dynamics and not to mechanical relationship between poverty and violence, resource theory given by Goode argues that lesser resources a person commands, more he “deploys force in an overt manner.” The theory states that “violence is used as a resource when other resources are lacking; thus, a family member that has little prestige, money and power (with which to achieve his aims) suffers greater frustration and bitterness and resorts to violence more.” As Arun once talking to Jyoti, grows eloquent on the subject of untouchability, asks her, “Will you marry me and eat stinking bread with spoilt dal in my father’s hut? Without vomiting? Tell me, Jyoti, can you shit everyday in our slum’s village toilet like my mother? Can you beg, quaking at every door, for a little grass for our buffaloes?” (KD:513). When Jyoti finds such talks revolting and she covers her face with her hands, Arun says, “And you thought of marrying me. Our life is not the Socialists’ service camp. It is hell, and I mean hell. A hell named life” (KD:514).

Victims of violence turn out to be good tools of violence. Being at the receiving end of a system of dominance and being a helpless witness to oppression “produces a psychology of vulnerability” as is evident in the case of Arun. The resulting self-denigration and vague search for mastery over fate propels him to do the same what has been done to them. This can be called revenge or scapegoating, for such violence often has as its target people close to oneself, people more than vulnerable and particularly against whom one is prejudiced. It is evident from the words of Seva: “for entertainment, he wants to kick his wife in the belly, why not? Doesn’t his wife belong to the high caste? In this way he is returning all the kicks aimed at generations of his ancestors by men of high caste. It appears that this is the monumental mission he has set out to fulfill” (KD:544). So, his cruel treatment to Jyoti may also be seen as revenge sought by a dalit on the upper caste people for the misery and suffering they have inflicted on the downtrodden for centuries in the hierarchical structure of Indian society.

Such displaced violence is not always a matter of volition or self-controlled choice. The personality of the victim is often so distorted – violence, humiliation and exploitation in daily life can be so overwhelming that the traumatized begins to seek voice and audibility through violence. “Violence speaks, and through it speaks the secret histories of uprooting and oppression of their class.”
In *Kanyadaan*, Tendulkar tries to document the full force of structural violence by revealing the ways oppression is painfully internalized and gets expressed as the violence of everyday life among the persistently poor and lower cast dalits. Gender relations are also as strongly rooted in the binary structure of the society as class and caste structure which provide privileges to one over the other.

Social support has frequently been identified as a factor that can reduce the likelihood of violence as a response to stress. Witnessing violence within an individual’s peer group and community contributes to the view that violence is an acceptable solution to difficulties within family. Men’s peer groups may support rigid sex role, norms designed to ensure a superior status for men and subordination in women and children. Religious groups may endorse corporal punishment for children and encourage women to stay within abusive marriages in order to keep the family together.

Feminist theorists support the universal-risk theory arguing that many societies have institutionalized legally and socially maintained male dominance and female subordination through a patriarchal framework that puts forward male privileges, misogyny, and an asymmetry of power favourable to males. Analyzing Tendulkar’s plays with feminist paradigm, males in the plays utilize all forms of violence over females to exert their power. Responsibility of such violence lies on males operating within a global patriarchal system that denies equal rights to women and legitimizes violence against them.

‘Patriarchy’ as defined by Kurz is “the system of male power in society.” In patriarchal societies, men have more social, economic and political power and status than women. They consider themselves superior to women and children and feel entitled to use force if necessary to maintain dominance in family decision making. Women throughout history have never had the right to control their own bodies. It is men who determined that women were basically creatures of reproduction put on earth so that males could assert their masculinity.

To prove a woman’s supposed inferiority, the anti-feminists tend to draw upon religion, philosophy and theology and justify the patriarchal rule as put in great Holy Scriptures. Patriarchal power, for instance, is reinforced in the Old Testament when God says to Eve for having eaten the forbidden fruit: “I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”
The Christian church, too, did not relieve wives of the iron fist of their husbands. “Wives,” said St. Paul, “be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife.” The Hindu texts also propound that in “childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.”

In general, feminists and proponents of international human rights have argued that writings from all the major religious texts have been used and misused within patriarchal system to maintain the power and authority of men. Organized religions are viewed as upholding coercion by men, for example, in promulgating the notion that men are entitled to have sex with their wives, whether their wives want to engage in sex or not. From this perspective the problem is not so much with the religions per se. It is rooted in the misuse of the texts for political purposes specifically for maintaining male dominance. For too long, women have been locked into traditional roles of wife and mother with little or no identities of their own outside these parameters. It is like a small brook that incorporates with big river. The rivulet loses its name, it is carried and re-carried with the new associate, it bears no sway, and it possesses nothing during coverture. A woman, as soon as she is married, is called covert in Latin, nupta, that is veiled, as it were, clouded and overshadowed. To a married woman her new self is her superior, her companion, her master. Because the husband, after a hard day of struggle with equals and yielding to his superiors, likes to feel himself an absolute superior at home, a dispenser of undeniable truths. And violence is “deployed in the family as it is in society-by a superior status group (husbands) on an inferior group (wives and children) when the legitimacy of the superior group’s status is questioned.”

Tendulkar deals with the topic of male domination in almost all of his plays centering on the gender themes – the unenviable status of women in the male-dominated urban middle class society, the hypocrisy, lust and violence latent in the human psyche. In Kamala, Jaisingh Jadhav, a brilliant and brave journalist, exposes scandals and feeds the paper with sensational news. His craze for publicity in exposing the criminal sale of human beings has been given the name of “social purpose” and a “commitment” to shock the public “into looking at the truth”(K:24). Jaisingh exposes the ills and evils of society, but proves himself to be more inhuman than the perpetrators of “flesh-trade” and an oppressive master not only of Kamala, a purchased girl, but his wife Sarita also. Jaisingh, following the typically modern phenomenon of getting at the goal
come what may, follows the principle that the end justifies the means. Here, Tendulkar reveals that this general principle is responsible for woman’s bondage to man in a success-oriented patriarchal society.

It is through Sarita that Tendulkar exposes the chauvinism intrinsic in the modern male who believes himself to be liberal minded but still keeps, in Jain’s words, a “bonded labourer”\(K:17\) in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Sarita is indeed a “lovely bonded labourer”\(K:17\) taking note of all the phone calls, attending to all Jadhav’s physical needs and running about in the house carrying out all his presumptuous instructions.

In such a sexist and patriarchal familial system, a ‘good’ wife refreshes her husband so that he may work hard for his employer. As Steiner says, “In order for a man to be optimally exploited in his labour he must live with a woman who, on his eight hours of off-work time, re-supplies him with energy.”\(^{43}\)

Jaisingh too has a strong need to have his wife adhere to his concept of a wife’s role behavior. He becomes terribly upset and reacts when Sarita refuses to go upstairs to the bedroom against her feelings and desires: “Don’t I have the right to have my wife when I feel like it? Don’t I?”\(K:32\). As Simone de Beauvoir in \textit{The Second Sex} says, “Woman’s function is also to satisfy male sexual needs and to take care of his household. These duties placed upon woman by society are regarded as a service rendered to her spouse.”\(^{44}\)

Tendulkar shows that in marrying, a woman gets some share in the world as her own, legal guarantees protect her against capricious action by man, but she becomes his “vassal.”\(^{45}\) Marriage incites man to a capricious imperialism, the temptation to dominate is the most truly universal. Tendulkar goes on to suggest that it is true that every man wants to physically abuse his wife and this is ingrained in every mind which is formed with the combination of basic instincts and subjective cultural impact of environment and tradition. Tendulkar has also expressed these views through Kakasaheb, Sarita’s uncle, who too had behaved recklessly with his wife as if it was his right. Kakasaheb’s recapitulation of his cruelty towards his wife proves that cruelty to woman is an eternal manifestation in man’s life and woman is still in the modern world, a symbol of slavery. Sarita is not permitted to be autonomous, for when out of sympathy, she asks to let Kamala stay with them, the male chauvinist in Jaisingh wakes up: “It’s I who takes decisions in this house, and no one else”\(K:42\).
Men generally pretend to be ignorant of the complaints and resistances that women show when emotionally hurt. Sarita, being incredibly upset, feels deeply hurt at being deprived of her self-dignity and place in this house of which she seems to be the mistress but in reality is only a slave dancing to the tune of her master. Sarita is viewed by Jaisingh as an extension of himself and as an object to be paraded as wife at the parties to enhance his status. She is completely disillusioned and deeply hurt when she realizes that she has no right to have a will and identity of her own, just like Kamala. Thus, Tendulkar highlights the position of women in the success-oriented, male-dominated contemporary society. Jaisingh is an individual who always gets what he wants and uses people like Kamala to achieve his desires of getting success in the field of “mercenary journalism”(K:23). The cut-throat competition for fame, money and position in the hierarchal society dehumanises him. It cripples his soul and makes him loveless. Tendulkar shows how Jaisingh’s strong moral purpose of exposing evil gets subordinated to the amoral urge to score personal triumphs as a man and professional victories as a journalist. The human and social significance of what he reports degenerates as the victims of injustice cease to be human beings and become, what Sarita realizes later, pawns “in his game of chess”(K:43). Though the dynamics behind Jaisingh’s immoral way of using Kamala is to achieve a higher status in commercialized modern society but the underlying purpose remains the same, that of fulfilling the traditional gender roles of showing courage and adventure which are associated with manhood and is always present in men raised in patriarchal family structure. It is through Kakasaheb that Tendulkar tries to unveil the cause that lies behind domestic discord. It is in his attempt to adhere to the concept of manhood and patriarchy that man forgets that he is emotionally and psychologically abusing women outside as well as within the walls of the house.

It is the masculine code or the social convention developed by the males in their interest that has established the concept of manhood and social/familial status. When man, better equipped to succeed in fulfilling his destiny as man, fails in his mission, he takes out his frustration on the woman, his weaker partner. Men, while living in a social stratum that suffers a low standard of living for a long period of time, have greater expectations and when society gives them no return for their capabilities, then these expectations almost inevitably prove to be unrealistic and give way to disappointment, grievance and frustration. These frustrations, being preceded by extensive exaggerated hopes, show “aspirational deprivation” in which individual or group,
while not anticipating or exercising a significant loss of what they have, “are angered because they feel they have no means for attaining new or intensified expectations.”

Society’s standards and expectations for role occupancy and behaviour in the society, often, are at odds with certain individual’s means and abilities to live up to prescribed roles and meet the expectations. This results into frustrations leading to self-flagellation, bitterness, criticism and quarrel with the world around. Such clearly visible factors behind violence have not escaped the attention of Vijay Tendulkar.

Tendulkar in *Silence! The Court is in Session* shows how the members of an amateur group, who are failures in their profession, lead a frustrated and pretentious life. Tendulkar’s penetrating insight into the lives of these characters explains how the interrupted goal-directed behavior or frustration results in aggression which is a motivated force and usually gets displaced towards a vulnerable victim. Benare, a successful school teacher, is an object of envy among her co-actors. She is also a source of fear for them as she challenges the legitimacy of their superior status. By making fun of their aspirations and vanities and the farcical moral code of society that they represent, she invites their displeasure. Benare with all her economic and moral independence is put in contrast with these conservative and hypocritical people, who, unable to keep pace with the world around, are highly critical of her independent nature. Mr. Kashikar, who is issueless, is constantly aware of his biological marginality. As a result, he leads a fragmented and frustrated life. His life is characterized by a sense of purposelessness, low self-esteem and a craving for authority which is expressed through his patriarchal tyranny insisting upon obedience from Mrs. Kashikar and the adopted boy Balu Rokde. It is only out of this sheer frustration that Mr. Kashikar gets tied up with “uplifting the masses” and “spreading enlightenment”*(SCS:59)*. The use of the word “prime objective” by him reflects his own sense of failure in fulfilling his other objectives in life *(SCS:59)*.

Sukhatme, another co-actor has tried to prove his efficiency as a good lawyer and dreams of becoming a barrister. Benare calls him “expert on the law” but unfortunately “even a desperate client won’t go anywhere near him! He just sits alone in barrister’s room at court swatting flies with legal precedents!”*(SCS:59)*. He acts like a pompous barrister who refuses to admit that he is a failure in real life. Karnik likewise is unable to get the recognition of an actor which is his heart’s desire. Ponkshe is of the type who can never achieve his goal however hard he may try and whom Benare describes caustically as “Sci-en-tist! Inter-failed!”*(SCS:59)*. His
aspiration was to become a scientist but he ends up as a clerk in telegraph office. And Rokde thinks he is paying for the sins as he gets free education from the Kashikars and longs to have an independent life. Although Kashikar claims to be a social reformer but he has made a slave out of Rokde.

All the members in the group, come together to expose the private life of Benare. In their malicious and spiteful attitude towards Miss Benare one notices the inferiority complex reflected in their frustrations and repressed desires. Even Mrs. Kashikar, herself a woman and victim of male subjugation, never misses an opportunity to comment at Benare. Hers is a behavior reflecting an irresistible urge to compensate her own humiliations and hurts by her husband even in public: “Can’t shut up at home, can’t shut up here” (SCS:77). She tries to compensate her loss of face by inflicting pain and humiliation upon Benare. Moreover, Mrs. Kashikar is barren and leans heavily upon her husband for support. She is, therefore, consumed by jealousy for Benare’s independence.

Tendulkar places the persecution of these women in the context of Hindu social structure in which woman is placed firmly in a position of inferiority and subjugation to man - socially, economically, mentally and morally. He brings out how the man-made moral code in the patriarchal set up serves as a means in the hands of men to control, repress and coerce women to his will and whims. It is often used by man to ward off his anxiety and fear about the freedom and strength of the other sex. They perceive free woman as a threat to their world and dominance. Benare’s pregnancy without marriage is seen as a defiance of the male code and, therefore, she is humiliated by her co-actors for her illegitimate pregnancy which she is asked to get terminated. She is treated like any other “marginal woman neither fish nor fowl.”

Tendulkar exposes the gender biased value system of the patriarchal society, by showing that “Damle’s crime is connived at whereas Benare is accused of immorality.” Mr. Kashikar passes a verdict based on the moral ethics of the so called patriarchal society and tries to drive her to a criminal act of committing infanticide by getting her pregnancy terminated in order to undo a mistake that her group considers unpardonable. They all stand in defense of patriarchy to ensure their own well-being and the social structure which serves and protects them. They all join hands to safeguard the privileges they enjoy by keeping women away from power. Tendulkar also reveals the conditioning of the mind of women like Mrs. Kashikar, who ironically supports patriarchal system which is inimical to their own freedom and dignity.
Tendulkar shows remarkable insights into the proverbial animosity of women against women. Here, in this play, Benare has to face the searing sneers and caustic comments of Mrs. Kashikar which reflect the latter’s compulsive malice and spite. It is noticeable that Mrs. Kashikar is a victim of her own failures and frustrations resulting from her infertility and also from the way she gets nothing but rebukes and insults from her husband even in public. She has remained all her life abjectly servile to her husband because of her dependence on him for her very survival and social status. The playwright shows how women like her often tend to be jealous of those of the younger generation who have access to greater opportunities, economic and social freedom. That is why they tend to be very jealous and loud in endorsing patriarchal codes of morality and in their concomitant visceral intolerance of independent and self-assertion of modern woman, like Benare. The way Mrs. Kashikar plays an enthusiastic role in putting Benare on trial only shows how she makes a desperate effort to compensate for her utter nothingness in life by sadistically hurting Benare by her outbursts: “That’s what happens these days when you get everything without marrying. They just want comfort. They couldn’t care less about responsibility” (SCS:99).

Through this play, Tendulkar shows how the frustrated men and women, living with false pretensions, gang themselves up against a hapless woman in the name of sham morality. They use their social system of support in order to camouflage their own drawbacks. This serves their sexist objectives by reinforcing the fears of the orthodox that independent, assertive women are a menace to society. The play underlines the fact that as women gain more ground socially and economically, they face backlash from portions of society resistant to social change.

The patriarchal structure of society which prescribes a strict moral code quite often works as a restraining force and suppresses the basic human drives aimed at seeking pleasure. These drives very often manifest themselves in heterosexual relationships but they may also seek normal fulfillment in homosexual relations as well. But the restrictive and coercive morality of society does not accept such relations which are condemned as unhealthy. When such biological urges conflict with traditional social norms of sexual behaviour, it becomes a repressed force and tends to find expression in violence.

Tendulkar has very powerfully and incisively rendered this aspect in A Friend’s Story. The playwright shows how biological urges manifesting in the form of libidinous drives tend to find a violent expression, particularly in the face of thwarting situations. Freud maintained a
fairly consistent view, a belief that the “basic motivation for behavior is pleasure.” He proposed that the impetus for behavior is derived from psychic energy which is based on biological sexual instincts. The component of the psyche which is the “seat of instincts” was labeled by him as ‘id’, and he viewed violence as a “variant or displacement of id energy or libido,” when restrained/blocked.

Mitra, in this play, is portrayed as having her own hormonal configuration which distinguishes her from other ordinary girls treated as normal in society. She herself is conscious of the fact that she is different from the girls in having a stubborn nature like that of a boy--always following her instincts. Her general aggressive behavior can be attributed to high level of androgen leading to “adrenogenital syndrome” which results in masculinization of girls. This is “evidenced in part by increase in rough and tumble play” in such girls and which enhances the level of their aggressive behaviour.

Mitra also realizes that she likes the company of men “but not for ‘that’ kind of relationship”. In close intimacy with men, she feels no physical thrill; hence, she becomes like any other lesbian who “may often wish she were a normal and complete woman while preferring not to be.” That is why, in spite of men being a good company, she can’t appreciate their “weird and unpleasant” ways with women. Such case of deviation from normal sexual preference often becomes a source of tension and conflict. A girl with such deviation often feels odd with herself for not being able to lead a natural life. Her superego stands in conflict with her ego which reflects the guilt embedded in her psyche. This results into frustration and anger prompting her to do violence to her own-self. Since Mitra seeks self-affirmation through an experiment with her servant, it is disappointing for her not to realize wholly her feminine possibilities; heterosexual relations seem to her at once belittling and perplexing. This leads to frustration and anger which get directed against self and she tries to commit suicide.

Bapu, her college friend and confidant, is well aware of the fact that her outward appearance is deceptive and there is a turbulent storm raging within her. Behind her loud, full-throated, masculine laughter and her repeated statement, “I don’t care,” is hidden a great sense of restlessness which “betrays the inner disequilibrium.” Due to this inner conflict, stemming from her sexual orientation leading to lower self-esteem and depression, she often becomes dominating and abusive in her relation towards him. Realizing her lesbian feelings for a girl,
Nama, she becomes reckless in the sense of being quite careless of social norms and moral values and yearns for her in the same way as Freud believed that “there is always a childish part of our personality which demands immediate gratification of its wishes. Whenever this child in our mind is frustrated, it may throw a temper-tantrum or display other immature form of emotion.” As when Nama cannot make it to meet her in Bapu’s room, Mitra grows quite restless; her face seems immersed in pain. The biting of lips and “gnashing her teeth”(AFS:445) in the event of Nama’s failure to keep her word underline the anger and violence in Mitra’s mind.

Here, Tendulkar shows how Mitra, driven by her irresistible lesbian urges, becomes highly aggressive in her desire to possess Nama as her mate. She seems to be the one whose main aim is to cater to her own physical needs irrespective of what others may think of her behavior. If a lesbian is active and fiery it is not only on account of some combination of male and female hormones, but also because aggressiveness and lust for possession are regarded as virile qualities. It is seen that Dalvi’s threat of killing Mitra doesn’t frighten her when she is seen with Nama in a room. Instead, she stands composed and alert, with the piercing eyes of a wild animal. She is mad with anger not because Dalvi offends her by calling her “lesbian bitch”(AFS:456) but because Nama follows him calmly like a pet dog. This humiliation and betrayal makes her more savage and she gets into a fit of uncontrollable rage. Here, her violent reaction can be viewed simply as a reaction to the blocking or the thwarting of her libidinal impulses. Homosexual relations often make one’s life so complex that greater the wish of one partner to be independent, greater is the other partner’s dependency and more frequent is the abuse because of jealousy. Mitra remains quite brutal in her relationship with Nama who gets “fed up even with her love”(AFS:469) for it often becomes too possessive and controlling in nature. In such relations, the perpetrator is pathologically jealous and demanding in nature and aggressive in behaviour.

Also like most lesbians, Mitra dislikes men like Dalvi, who subject their women to defilement. And to this feminine resentment of hers is added a “masculine inferiority complex” for men are rivals inclined to seduce, possess and retain their prey. Mitra’s extreme jealousy of Dalvi is also because it is he who always comes in her way, depriving her of the pleasures she tries to seek so passionately, and which, according to Freud, is the basic motivating force behind violence.
Using Freud’s basic idea, it can be safely assumed that violence results from frustration which occurs when one is highly motivated and encounters a barrier of some kind that prevents one from reaching a much desired goal. The barrier may be psychological as seen in the betrayal of Nama who seems to be suffering from the weight of social censure. Or the barrier may be social like Dalvi’s interference and sadistic action of making their relation public, for he represents the society as a whole. Feminine homosexuality, as implying a mode of life, arouses contempt and scandalized disapproval from society. And when the biological urges in Mitra meet a clash with social restrictions, it leads to more frustration and takes her towards violence.

If there is good deal of aggressiveness and affectation in the attitude of Mitra, it is also because there is no way in which she can live naturally in her situation: “being natural implies being unselfconscious, not picturing one’s act to oneself.” She tries to fit into the feminine roles accepted by society but the attitude of other people constantly directs Mitra’s attention upon herself. All this leads to more frustration which ultimately leads to the arousal of self-destructive tendencies. Freud’s view makes it clear that “human psyche is afflicted with death instinct which avoids suicide only by a triumph of Eros over Thanatos.”

Bapu’s relationship which is nurturing and constructive in nature is not able to avert the disaster that the destructive lesbian love of Mitra comes to. Tendulkar projects a vicious cycle of love and hate and how the resultant violence can be beyond human control. He presents the factors which help us to find its roots in the biological dynamics of violence and give us a deep insight into the depths of the mind of Mitra who is a highly complex character.

There is increasing interest in the role played by biological factors in violent behavior. Most researchers and Tendulkar himself believe, however, that it is the interaction of biological, developmental and environmental factors that is important. Biological factors may set the stage for learning, discovering limits and possibilities rather than determining outcomes. Developmental and environmental factors play a larger role. Genes, hormones and instincts are only part of a process that also includes context, timing and history: “It’s not a gene or a biochemical you have behaving” says Crains, “It’s an integrated organism behaving within a real world.”

Another instinct for survival that too is very powerful like libidos is the greed to accumulate more. This accumulative instinct which is an expression of the sense of fear or insecurity leads to inordinate greed and gets intensified in this modern age of cut-throat
competition. In some cases, this brutal aspect becomes dominant and distorts not only the life of the individuals but also the family. This phenomenon has been presented very powerfully by Tendulkar in *The Vultures* where he shows how human greed and self-centeredness can render one inhuman and brutal.

Tendulkar also portrays how violence can be an effect of deteriorating values that human beings have come to share. Valuing individuals by their bank account overlooks nearly everything essential about human beings which includes the love and depth in our relationships, our contributions to others and to our communities, the nobility of our life purpose. When these values are replaced by the quantifying values of money and the marketplace, violence is inevitable, for there are no real inner restraints on violent economic competition which encourages violent personal behavior. With no social encouragement to look deeper for our values, many seem to have come to the moral conclusion that “What’s right is whatever you can get away with.” This erosion of shared moral and ethical values affects everyone and contributes to the stress and unease that one feels in this modern world. On a deeper level, it is known that what really gives one a sense of social security is being part of a community fabric of widely held values and beliefs.

In ancient times, there was more of an understanding that the entire community of life was an interwoven whole expressed by John Donne as “no man is an island.” In some earlier cultures there was a greater feeling for the unity and connectedness of all life and being part of a great unity, believed all things flowed together towards ultimate good. Many people seem to have lost this deep inner sense of knowing their place in the world and cosmos in the bustle and pressures of modern times.

It has often been noticed that societies going through process of modernization or development may be subject to greater disparities between the satisfaction of human needs and the general desire of the citizenry to acquire the perceived benefits of modernity. This can be seen as an important cause of frustration and conflict. Now the motto seems to be only self-fulfillment which unleashes jungle warfare. Individual’s lack of personal fulfillment, both material and non-material, can be a motivational factor in various forms of conflictive behavior. Writers from Marxist tradition like Ronald G. Ridker have suggested that “economic needs, once frustrated, are the most important element in understanding conflict and violence.”
In an economically hierarchized society everybody strives to scramble up the ladder. In doing so, they become loveless and resort to any means to reach a higher rung and hence are self-alienated which worsens the situation. It makes people joyless and they seek this joy through the morbid stimulation of liquor, drugs and senseless violence.

Such inhuman violence resulting from selfishness and avarice leading to self-alienation can be found in Tendulkar’s *The Vultures*. Hari Pitale cheats Sakharam, his own brother, in business and prospers. His sons, Ramakant and Umakant, and his daughter, Manik, inherit his culture of inhuman selfishness and greed. They are all ever ready to cheat one another and do not even hesitate to harbor the thoughts of killing one another to get a bigger share in the property. These people having lost all the finer human feelings are always on a look out for eliminating the other to fulfill their material needs and as a result, get suspicious about their safety. The whimsical Manik has a lurking fear of getting her medicine poisoned and getting strangled if the door is left open. Manik’s fear regarding her safety is not a whim for the fact that both Ramakant and Umakant want to get rid of Manik to get her share. This becomes clear when at a game of cards Umakant is about to choke Manik to death. Watching this Ramakant goads on Umakant saying: “Don’t bloody let her go, Umya! Drag the bloody money out! Look, how she’s wriggling! Squash her bloody neck! Twist it!” (*TV*:235).

The excessive greed and violence of the two brothers reveal how the relations even between brothers and sister get brutalized. The gruesome and bloody scenes of breaking Manik’s leg in order to prevent her meeting with her lover, “the Raja of Hondur,” (*TV*: 235) suggests the extent to which they can go in their cruelty. They even plan to blackmail her lover into paying them an amount of twenty five thousand rupees for impregnating their sister. Things come to the horrific point of savagery when they learn that her lover is dead and they, finding their plans frustrated, even abort their sister’s pregnancy. As for them, the greatest frustration results from the obstacles which prevent fulfillment of their inordinate greed. Brought up in an atmosphere of betrayal and deception, sons have no respect for their father which is evidenced by the words like “Crafty old swindler,” “scoundrel,” “rascal” and a “bloody burden to the earth!” (*TV*: 211). “A mangy dog would have made a better father!” (*TV*:213). They also resort to physical violence against their father and contrive a fake fight among themselves to hurt him and also to take details of his bank account. Such inhuman treatment of their father at their hands shows their violence emanating from greed. This inordinate greed strips even the slightest veneer of a
civilized and moral behavior degenerating them into voracious and predatory animals preying on the weaker ones.

Tendulkar rightly calls them birds of prey, i.e. ‘Vultures’. What is significant in this context is the fact that the insults or hurts that lead to violence are based on distorted and perverted values. These in turn can be used to explain why one loses one’s head in anger or succumbs to blind fury. The resulting violence is attributable to their materialistic values, which they acquired from their father and now practice indiscriminately. Even the poor family gardener becomes a hapless victim of their avarice. Instead of his wages it is the ruthless beating which he gets from Ramakant for his work. Manik’s inhuman and selfish reaction in this regard is also shocking which reveals her moral and ethical degradation: “Oh what a sin: There isn’t enough even for us….The last two months, I’ve been dying for the latest necklace at Harivallab’s”\(^{TV:207}\). Even their father thinks that the working class people like the gardener need a “kick as they rise, and a curse as they sit”\(^{TV:208}\). Here Tendulkar exposes an existence of a clear-cut power structure in which the weaker is exploited by the strong.

Through these characters Tendulkar assails at those who are ready to go to any extent to satisfy their avarice. The ambitious Ramakant, in his greed to accumulate more and more, becomes reckless in his business dealings and takes to gambling and drinking. This, in turn, results in his impotency and also increases his violent behaviour causing disharmony in his family life. Thus the family disintegrates due to his abnormal craving for money and violence. Tendulkar, thus, presents the modern materialistic culture and its concomitant degradation in moral and spiritual life. The disintegration of human relationships and loss of spiritual values ultimately throw these men into a state of utter loneliness.

This again reveals Tendulkar’s ability to lay bare the darker areas of human mind and locate the explosives buried in human consciousness bursting in the forms of violent behavior. Tendulkar suggests that the insatiable craze for money is in fact a form of human hunger for power. This urge or instinct for control and domination over others is so deep rooted in human psyche that it gets manifested in a number of forms – overt or covert. Very often it appears as an ersatz triumph over the sense of powerlessness to change their lives that many people, especially the disadvantaged, feel in modern society.

Power is unavoidable in social relations and is a part of everybody’s daily life. It is applicable to everyone – the rich and greedy, the armed and forceful, the elected and official.
Power is identified with the “ability or authority to dominate men, to coerce and control them, obtain their obedience, interfere with their freedom and compel their actions in particular ways.”

Following the lead of the social psychologists one suspects that ‘power motive’ drives a person secretly to amass and conceal the where-withal to destroy. But it is dangerous only when it gets out of hands. One must simply be alert to signs of unusual interest in power, which are the portents of villainy. Rallo May has gathered case studies to support the view, which Tendulkar shows through his characters that in the game of power politics “those who do not develop a sense of, or a position of power in the everyday social world are the ones most likely to become corrupted psychologically and morally in ways that lead to violence.”

According to Freud’s theory of sublimation, the instincts of violence remain as they were in the heart suppressed due to impact of human civilization. But under certain pressures and inevitable conditions prevailing in the society, this basic instinct expresses itself violently. This often happens in situations involving struggle for power. Tendulkar’s plays are replete with incidents and situations focusing incisively on this game for power. Tendulkar has dealt with such violence in *Ghashiram Kotwal*, showing it as an important constituent in power game. The play is particularly interesting because it takes the overwhelming violence and insult to be the main cause of psychological frustration for the male protagonist. This, in turn, provokes his own violent reaction and thus triggers off a never-ending cycle of violence.

The desire to hurt can be regarded as one of the basic motives in his life. This is rooted in the insults he was subjected to by the brahmins of Pune. A man of ego with dreams of honor and prestige, Ghashiram finds himself seething with anger when he is called a thief by the brahmins. Deeply hurt and humiliated, he vows to take revenge and thus turns into a hubristic power crazy monster. He pledges, “I’ll come back to Poona. I’ll show my strength. It will cost you! Your good days are gone! I am a Kanauj Brahman, but I’ve become a Shudra, a criminal, a useless animal. There is no one to stop me now, to mock me, to make me bend, to cheat me. Now, I am a devil” (GK:376).

Tendulkar explores the psyche of ambitious Ghashiram to the extent of revealing the hidden sense of failure and sense of superego which has been humiliated and haunts his life. Ghashiram looks for the best way to get enough power and an official title, the Kotwalship, to be the persecutor, in order to feel powerful, and thus overcome his powerlessness. Nana, the
Peshwa’s representative in Pune, promises to appoint Ghashiram, whose daughter he lusts after, the Kotwal of the city. Ghashiram falls into dilemma as it is psychologically stressful for him to live a life of debilitating powerlessness. Either of the choices he makes leads to his decadence. His urge to avenge for his humiliation on the people of Pune ultimately leads him towards his doom: “a person who indulges himself in a phantasy of violent revenge…is courting lasting damage.”

Through the character of Ghashiram, Tendulkar makes a comment on man’s unhealthy appetite for position and his urge to hurt and humiliate others. When Ghashiram uses his power to oppress the citizens of Pune one sees in him glimpses of the power-drunk officials one has ever known. Ghashiram becomes the scourge of the city of brahmins. He revels in their pain and disgrace and thus finds a kind of relief from the misery and insults they had earlier inflicted upon him. This is also symptomatic of his emotional need to revive and reassert his sense of pride as a man by confronting his oppression. Violence, thus, forms an important tool for the brahmin man to encounter disruptive effects of violence against himself by the state. With a stronger ego, one could get out or ignore the social loss of face and the internal sense of lessened worth and thus start a new life. But like most neurotic solutions to life’s problems, violence is easier, given all the restraints, assumptions, pressures and sense of injustice each person feels. Here, infliction of injury is not really the goal of most overt violence of Ghashiram, rather it is the pain caused in the other person which serves to restore or bolster the aggressor’s self-esteem or sense of power.

Once, he had sold his daughter to acquire power, now, he accepts her death only to continue with the exercise of his power in a more inhuman manner. The internal and external voices that have held him back from full expression of his indignations, frustrations and murderous hatreds have been momentarily tricked, as it were, and they seem no longer to have a case. He starts murdering and torturing people on the slightest suspicion. He loses all reason. The resulting joy of revenge, revenge beyond his wildest dreams, continues when he goes patrolling on the streets of Pune with his equally excited buddies. This kind of phantasy fulfillment of the soldiers who were obediently performing their duty also needs a closer examination. Tendulkar tries to present what has been seen in the long and gloomy history of man; one finds more hideous crimes committed in the name of obedience than in the name of rebellion. Many Nazi war criminals, for instance, claimed that they were only following orders when they committed inhuman aggressive acts. By denying responsibility for their behaviour, they reduced their
inhibitions against aggression. Through such obedience they often associate themselves with power and automatically with authoritarianism whose very essence is violence itself.

For Ghashiram, satisfaction is possible only with the realization of vengeance. The urge for this kind of satisfaction motivates one who has himself been a victim of brutal crimes to perpetrate violence on others. But this is only a vain attempt of Ghashiram to clutch at the power that seems to be slipping from his hands. His penchant for blood and violence leads to his self-destruction as he becomes too big for his boots and as a result his death warrant is signed by Nana. In the end, the way the angry mob tortures Ghashiram in different ways and stones him to death gives one an ample insight into the psyche of such frustrated people. This is no more than a thirst for drama, for excitement. At a deeper psychological level it is also an expression of each person’s reservoir of hostility, his desire to participate vicariously in the striking of blows. Here, Tendulkar’s in-depth study of crowd psychology can be seen in the light of psychoanalyst Zimbardo’s observation that groups show more violent behavior, as explained by the theory of “deindividuation,” claiming that “by becoming submerged in an anonymous group, individuals lose their sense of personal identity and responsibility and are thus less inhibited about showing negative social behavior normally suppressed by their internal standards.”

Decades ago, in the wake of World War II, psychoanalysis identified the forms of sadomasochism that underlines mass violence and authoritarianism. Tendulkar’s diagnosis of violence of Ghashiram and brahmins of Pune parallels that discovery and has ominous implications for the long term well-being of modern public life.

Thus power has been regarded as a means to other ends in the case of Ghashiram as power gives an opportunity to fulfill his appetite of taking revenge. This sadistic objective renders him blind and fails him as a father, as a Kotwal, and finally as a human being proving the doctrine of Lord Acton that “power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Power is regarded not only as a means to other ends but also as an end in itself as in Encounter in Umbugland which is a powerful satire on politics and politicians. Historically, violence has always been a political instrument to achieve political ends, particularly when perpetrators of violence believe that other options have been exhausted. Political intrigues have often used violence as an important instrument in quest for or perpetuation of power. In the kingdom of Umbugland, selfish designs of the Ministers show that power is more important than duty and public interest. That is why, they are inclined to do everything to achieve it even if it
means disorder and bloodshed. They see in the death of Vichitravirya, the king of Umbugland, an opportunity to seize power and thus fulfill their secret and suppressed lust for authority and supremacy. But mutual distrust, rivalry and lack of self-confidence prevent any one of them to stake his claim openly and courageously, intensifying their fear of each other and consequent frustration in achieving the coveted goal. Forced to conceal their personal ambitions and frustrations the ministers accept, though reluctantly, Vijaya as the queen and try to patronize and reduce her to a puppet in their hands. But Vijaya, who was initially rather unschooled in the game of power, learns gradually, partly from her eunuch attendant, Prannarayan and also from her experience, the ways of holding reins and assert herself as the queen: “For once a person is made aware of the power network he or she resists becoming pawn in someone else’s game.”

Besides the use of deceit and deception she also becomes well-versed in the art of conveying veiled threats in diplomatic tone and language. Show of power, strength and self-assertion is expressed by her through the defiant and aggressive stance she begins to take to confront the challenges to her authority. This is all motivated by her basic instincts to survive and to preserve her power and prestige as the ruler of Umbugland.

Tendulkar gives a peep into her ambitions, to become the unchallenged ruler of her country latent in her heart. They soon sprout and grow under the tutorship of Prannarayan, but they grow inordinate and become the most powerful element ruling her mind and action. The motives of Vijaya’s plans and actions become clear when Prannarayan counter questions Vijaya’s justification:

Vijaya [angrily]. My motives are pure! I want to give status to the poor people of this Island.

Prannarayan. Perhaps thereby Your Highness wishes to increase your own!

The motive of improving your own position on this Island may also be hidden behind this pure motive”(EU:325).

In this process, all her motives and actions are overshadowed by her overriding ambition “to rule in earnest and without restraint”(EU:325). She asserts, “I don’t just want to live, I want to rule as well! I want to rule a hundred years, a thousand years. I want to thumb my nose at these Ministers, and give my Umbugland whatever shape I wish”(EU:345). Once weak and rather innocent girl turns ultimately into a determined fighter to promote her autocratic rule using all the cunning and manipulation to defeat her enemies at their own game of using violence for their
vested political goals. She cleverly projects the ministers themselves to the mob as persons responsible for their woes and faulty plans of ameliorating the lot of Kadambas. Ironically, the ministers who also sought to whip off violence against the queen, themselves become the object of the mob’s fury and indignation.

Tendulkar through his treatment of the ministers reveals how politicians are blinded and desensitized by their greed for power. They tend to lose all sense of right and wrong means in their irresistible urge to gain political authority. An acute observer of his times, Tendulkar lays bare the ugly, even inhuman ways of power-crazy leaders to sacrifice callously the lives of others to fulfill their own dreams. Vijaya’s ministers can shock any person by the way they plan riots and eagerly wait for the deaths of the common men to feed the fire of revolt against the queen. No one can miss the sting of satire against these dehumanized and power hungry monsters in the following conversation between Aranyaketu and Vratyasom:

**ARANYAKETU.** Very well, supposing that our stratagem is answered by the Queen with troops, there will be bloodshed.

**VRATYASOM.** Ha! There will! What’s wrong with shedding a little blood? As long as it’s not your own! (*EU*:335).

The whole dialogue exposes the brutality and hypocrisy of the politicians. They swear by the interest of the poor and common man, but in reality reduce the uncomprehending people into mere raw material, scapegoats to achieve their personal political aims. They even set one group or community of people against the other and thus fan the fire of political hatred and violence to destabilize the queen. The scathing attack on the bestiality of the ministers in particular and the politicians in general is, perhaps, in the play, nowhere more evident and direct than in the words of Vratyasom who scoffs at the very sign of feeling disturbed at the loss of innocent lives and valuable property:

**VRATYASOM.** For an experienced politician, you are using embarrassing terminology. Destruction brings change. Anyone who cannot watch even the greatest destruction dispassionately is in my opinion no politician at all (*EU*:335).
Tendulkar further shows that the innocent masses are the worst deceived, exploited and brutalized by all those involved in the reckless struggle to gain or grab power. First of all the masses constitute the most deprived and dispossessed lot forced to live a life of constant misery. The leaders seek to thrive on their promises to improve their conditions, the words which they never mean to keep. But this certainly sets poor men and women dreaming for something better. The consequent frustration generates conditions potent with explosive outbursts in the form of riots. Hannah Arendt sums up such situations when she observes that “frustration of political needs is the primary cause of conflict. When goal directed behavior is obstructed, frustration results and this always leads to aggression.”

Violence of which mob is both the perpetrator and victim illustrates this truism strikingly in this play. The ministers are always confident of selling through their agents “any stupid idea to the mob. In return, they ask for its anger”(EU:334). In order to bring down the queen, the masses are fed by the agents of the ministers on rumors and lies that the queen was harming their interest by being partisan to the Kadamba tribe. By sowing these seeds of rivalry, fear and hatred, they manipulate and mobilize their followers against the Kadambas and thus project the queen as their sworn enemy. The innocent masses are thus instigated into hostility and violence against the queen.

Tendulkar, a dramatist with remarkable understanding of human mind, shows how people in a mob tend to lose their personal sense of discretion and independence of judgment and action. They tend to be carried away by the tide of impersonal violence and instinctive action. This is what marks the behavior of the mob in the play characterized by a complete absence of order, rationality and control. They throw stones indiscriminately and are replied with bullets, creating a scene of destruction and utter confusion. But what Tendulkar particularly highlights here, besides the psychology of the violent mob, is the way the ministers feel elated at the sight of bloodshed, as they see in it the foundation for the edifice of their political power and authority in future.

Both Ghashiram Kotwal and Encounter in Umbugland appear to have a powerful social and political relevance mirroring violence not only in contemporary Indian polity but also in some other parts of the world today. However, like great works of art they transcend in their appeal the boundaries of time and geography because of their being true to the human psyche.
This imparts to all of his plays an element of socio-psychological realism, deepening and enhancing the readers’ perception of various layers of his being in the scenes and characters locked up in violent struggle in life driven by motives or forces very often beyond his control, and, sometimes even comprehension. What philosophers, social-scientists and psychologists have propounded in the forms of complex theories appears in such a lucid, penetrative and grasping dramatization in his plays that one can rightly describe them as an image of life and human nature.
References


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16 Karen Horney qtd. in Miriam F. Hirsch, p. 25.


19 D. Olweus qtd. in Gün R. Semin and Klaus Fiedler, p. 359.


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24 ibid.


28 ibid., p. 294.


31 ibid.

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35 ibid., p. 633.


37 ibid., p. xi.

38 Demie Kurz qtd. in Denise A Hines and Kathleen Malley-Morrison, p. 27.


44 Simone de Beauvoir, p. 427.

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51 Benjamin James Sadock and Virginia Alcott Sadock, p. 153.

52 ibid.

53 Simone de Beauvoir, p. 412.

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56 Simone de Beauvoir, p. 423.

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64 Rollo May qtd. in David Nyberg, p. 37.


66 Zimbardo qtd. in Gün R. Semin and Klaus Fiedler, p. 362.


Hannah Arendt qtd. in Tim Jacoby, p. 105.