Chapter: IV

‘Violence’ in the Select Plays of Mahesh Elkunchwar
Violence is one of the vital issues Elkunchwar seems to give special treatment in his plays. Unlike Tendulkar, Elkunchwar does not offer more explicit space to violence. However violence appears at juncture when it is sought as the culmination and outcome of crisis of conflict of human issues. Ending of the plays like *Desire in the Rocks, Garbo, Sultan, Party, Holi,* are violent nature. Violence takes in the plays in the form of murder, suicide, torture, humiliation.

In this chapter attempts are made to examine the depiction of violent acts of the characters in the plays in two ways. The first way is to evaluate the performance of the violence on the stage and its impact on the audience. The mechanism and the scheme of presentation of the violence on the stage have a significant role to play in Elkunchwar’s plays. Secondly the analysis of the cruelty enacted by the characters is to be sought in contextual references. The violence exhibited in the plays has its relation with sociological, psychological, cultural background of the characters.

Violence or cruelty has been recurring theme of theatrical performance. Aggression in the human behavior is considered as integral part of animal instinct. Man is a social and cultured animal. Theatre becomes an effective medium to express certain nature of social life in directed form characterized by the typical language and unities. Theatrical performances of the issues like desire, love, politics, envy, conflict, natural disaster, marital relationships, jealousy, poverty, struggle, friendship have proved very effective on Marathi theatres especially in the plays of Satish Alekar, Vijay Tendulkar, Khanolkar. The theatre in the strong sense is a medium that presents a view of life in its
miniature and sometimes in its magnanimous form. In forward to the book *Theatre and Violence* Catherine Cusack says,

> It seems to me that drama always had to reflect the violent forging of our world. And the refinement and changes in presentation of that violence in theatre continue to keep pace with the kinds of violence we inflict upon one another. Whether it’s subtle struggle within a family, dressed-up corporate violence or state-funded annihilation (Cusack xii).

Catherine believes in the idea that violence not only seeks its revelation in ever changing forms but it necessarily possesses a quality to appear in new forms. It is not easy to state how solely drama indulges in presenting or keeping pace with the kinds of violence we inflict. It however becomes an important phenomenon to observe how drama does offer certain effects on its readers and audience crossing the boundaries of mere presentation of facts. Catherine’s statement though evidently more generalized could be thought as the starting point of argument on the issue. It is so because simple act of violence that does not include large massacre or bloodshed, potentially exhibit the possibility of presence of complex and interconnected issues that instigate such acts.

Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* offers a detailed discourse on process of decolonization and violence. He deals with the issue of violence as inevitable one as far as the process of decolonization is concerned. He writes in the first chapter of the book entitled “Concerning Violence”:

> National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new
formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon (Fanon 27).

In the preface of the same book Jean – Paul Sartre makes peculiar observation about the violence enacted by the colonizers. He does not take interest in the impact of the violence on colonized but majorly is concerned with the impact of violence on the colonizers enacted by them only. While talking about the different ways in which the old ‘mother countries’ exercised their power on the colonized, he offers his observation on the issue of violence enacted by the colonizers. It is no pretence on the part of Sartre to exhibit that he has no ancestral relation to the rulers. He uses the word ‘we’. According to him the intensity of violence has increased many folds but there was a method in victory of the colonizers. The victories according to him did not alter them or they did not allow it to happen to them. After the violent victories, the humanism remained intact in them. But to their dismay

[v]iolence has changed its direction… United by their profits, the peoples of the mother countries baptized their commonwealth of crimes, calling them fraternity and love; today violence, blocked everywhere, comes back on us through our soldiers, comes inside and takes possession of us… Yet our lobes seem to be in perfect condition; is it not rather the case that, since we cannot crush the natives, violence come back on its tracks, accumulates in the very depths of our nature seeks a way out? (Sartre 23,24)
Sartre however brings up a new dimension to the enquiry into the human violence. To him violence does possess the tendency to find control over the mind of human beings. It tends to act on its own. It will not be difficult to find the evidence in various folk tales and many modern stories about the longings and cravings for supernatural powers and consequently possessing them. It also becomes bigger part of the struggle of their life making them to control the powers rather than they being controlled by them. This phenomenon could be considered as a small part of the entire complex structure of the discourse of violence as it could be seen in two ways as violence being the independent agent that influences human minds and possessing the ability to exist on its own seeking the process of naturalization in the humans. Such transformation usually informed to become the characteristics of a particular sects or tribes as though it is a tendency inherited by the generation by their fore fathers. Secondly violence could be seen as an integral part of human psyche being one of the ‘basic instincts’. In the case of Sartre’s statement in the preface, it could be said that it is just an attempt on the part of him to exhibit especially in the context of Algerian war inevitability and ‘innocence’ of war when he says, “When we were victorious we practiced it without its (violence) seeming to alter us; it broke down the other, but for us men our humanism remained intact” (Satre 23).

It also sure it was not stated in favour of the tendency by Sartre. He concludes his much sarcastic preface with the following way.

Thus the day of magicians and fetishes will end; you will have to fight, or rot in concentration camps... Then, perhaps, when your back is to the wall, you will let loose at last that new violence which is raised up in you
by old, oft-repeated crimes... The time is drawing near, I am sure, when we will join the ranks of those who make it (Sartre 26).

Franz Fanon too talks about the violence though concerning about only colonization and decolonization, with the gesture that of violence as an evil of necessary kind. Both Sartre and Fanon seem to be talking about violence in the same manner in case of describing one of the characteristics of violence in general. As we saw Sartre thinks that violence has its own mechanism of affect and works independently. The 8th edition of the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines the word violence as “violent behaviour that is intended to hurt or kill somebody” and it also gives the second meaning as “physical or emotional force and energy” (OALD 1719). Though the meaning of the word in the dictionary contains the adjective ‘violent’, it makes clear that violence is any behaviour that intends to hurt or kill and comprises in its second entry of meaning the both aspects violence i. e. physical and emotional. The dictionary gives the meaning of violence with much preoccupation of intentionality. And it is in this context Satre stresses the other aspect of violence itself.

Though Fanon has various issues to talk about the violence in the process of decolonization like that of legitimacy of violence and its necessity in getting rid of the colonizers who mainly operate their powers through the means of subjugation and suppression with the help of armed forces, he admits that violence has its peculiar impact on the colonized. He says:

The native who decides to put the programme into practice, and to become its moving force, is ready for violence at all times. Form birth it is clear to
him that this narrow world, strewn with prohibitions, can only be called in question by absolute violence (Fanon 29).

Violence is perhaps the most crucial phenomenon that made impact on the world especially in the form of colonization and decolonization. However it does not mean that violent attitudes did not exist prior to the process of colonization and decolonization. Violence was always an important tool in controlling people in order to sustain monarchy. Colonization stands differently in the history due to the peculiarity of its modus operandi. Colonization systematically operated violence and it left a water mark on the psychology of a community under the control of the empire. It is true as Fanon says violence is sought by the colonized as a means to offer solution on a problem and its prerequisites are the prohibitions and subjugations. This could be be seen from the violence enacted by Mangal Pandey, Chafekar Brothers, Madanlal Dhingra, Bhagatsingh, Rajguru to Sukhdev in the process of decolonization though the persons are oddly and randomly selected from the Mutiny of 1857 to the hanging of Bhagat Singh. These incidents are considered as individual instances where violence is sought as a solution to the problem of colonization though it had been the part of the whole movement instigated in the nation.

The extended discussion of this phenomenon of violence in the history of colonization becomes essential mainly due to its ‘inheritance of loss’ that has vivid impact on the Indians’ psychology after the independence in 1947. Elkunchwar’s plays describe the social pictures of Indian society in the time when the process of transition has been already activated. It is when the changes in the old joint family system are taking place along with the myriad technological advances and development of urban
culture. Fanon makes it clear in the following way how the continuation of violence activated in the certain disguised form. He says:

We have seen that this same violence, though kept very much on the surface all through the colonial period, yet turns in the void. We have also seen that it is canalized by the emotional outlets of dance and possession by spirits; we have seen how it is exhausted in fratricidal combats. Now the problem is to lay hold of this violence which is changing direction (Fanon 45).

In a thesis entitled *On the Principles of Political Violence and the Case of Anti-Fascist Action*, it is quoted that people like Engels, Trotsky, Karl Kautsky, Joh Harris, Sartre, Fanon and Andrent while attempting to offer meaning of violence in a Marxist way concentrating on the pre and post world war period. Engels ideas on violence from his *The Conditions of Working Class in England* (1841) are taken for analyses. According to Engels it is also violence one may not recognize from its obvious exhibition. When workers are reduced to the ‘premature and unnatural end’, it is a form of ideological violence. He takes into consideration the idea of violence which is activated, intentional and tends to exist in its micro disguised forms to the notions concluding, “Firstly, that a deontological argument against violence on the principle of “Thu shalt not kill” is not infallible to criticism. Secondly, violence does not have to be intentional to require justification” (12).
The thesis considers various aspects of violence but what connects the thread of our argument about the violence being an independent force is the later part of the above quotation from the thesis.

In his book *The Prince* Niccolo Machiavelli takes a practical position regarding the performance of violence as far as the qualities of a prince are concerned. He says that it is good for a prince to “maintain good faith and practice integrity rather than craft and deceit” (Machiavelli 67) but he admits that it is not completely true that it guarantees greatness of a prince. The experience of his time according to him shows that only those became great “who understood by cunning to circumvent the intelligence of others” (Machiavelli 67). And then he advises:

You must know, therefore, that there are two ways of carrying on a contest; the one by law, and the other by force. The first is practiced by men, and the other by animals; and as the first is often insufficient, it becomes necessary to resort to the second (Machiavelli 67).

It is here Machiavelli seems to believe in two aspect of power. One as it is celebrated the good one and the second is the outcome of the empiricism. It is a part of his observation of the kings making use of violence in order to sustain the power. It becomes clear here that the idea of violence need not emerge always from the personal reservoir of experiences which are generally product of the time and space. They do appear and instigate the minds of people from the experience of the society in general. It becomes a common knowledge through the history available to the people.
With the growth of time, nature of society, politics and technological advancement became more complex and phenomenon like violence has to be reconsidered with more possibilities. One of the reasons for it could be the resistance of the ‘other’. The distinction became clear that it is the conflict between the active and passive where subjugation is sought as an only way to perpetuate control in every form for all types of material gains. In the book *The Age of Revolution 1789 – 1848* Eric Hobsbawn writes about the violence of the time and changes taking place in the contemporary society mainly quickened by industrial revolution. He says:

Drink was not the only sign of this demoralization. Infanticide, prostitution, suicide, and mental derangement have all been brought into relation with this social and economic cataclysm, thanks largely to the contemporary pioneering work of what we would today call social medicine. And so as both the increase in crime and that growing and often purposeless violence which was a sort of blind personal assertion against the forces threatening to engulf the passive (Hobsbawn 204).

It is strangely true that practices like prostitution in society always relates themselves to the violent responses. And it is witnessed in almost all the cultures. In this reference Hobsbawn appears to be one more Marxist emphasizing the relationship between prostitution, infanticide, suicide, etc and the social and economical aspects. Hobsbawn and most of the above mentioned thinkers look at violence as not a mere act of aggression or force. It is becomes essential on our part to detect and analyze the whole mechanism that operates and ultimately leads to violence that could be categorized in various forms. It is to consider the phenomenon of violence is not a simple act of
application of violent energy but its basics consist of the fundamentals of human nature in general. It is why Slovej Zizek writes in the introduction of his book *Violence*:

But we should learn to step back, to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of this directly visible “subjective” violence, violence performed by clearly identifiable agent. We need to perceive the contours of the background which generates such outbursts. A step back enables us to identify a violence that sustains our every effort to fight violence and to promote tolerance (Zizek 9).


True enough that violence cannot always be avoided and non-resistance can be adopted only when it is a better way of resistance. But the responsibility for an intelligent control of force rests on us all. In short, the point is that to achieve anything we must use force: only we must use it constructively as energy and not destructively as violence (Ambedkar 06).

Elkunchwar wrote *Garbo* a tragedy in 1973. It ends with the murder of Garbo ‘a petty actress in B grade movies’ the trio Intuc, Shrimant and Pansy. Though what we see in the last scene of the play is a murder where Pansy accuses Garbo to be cheating the three of them and Shrimant plunging a knife into her. This violent act could be seen from at least four perspectives representing the four characters in the plays. As it is obvious from the names, they represent the attitudes in the society. At a larger level it relates with the patriarchal dominance and violence as seen is always a means to guarantee the
dominance and sustenance of the control. Intuc seems to be the only character offering deeper philosophical perspectives on life through his refined talk. In the introduction to the *Collected Plays of Mahesh Elkunchwar* Samik Bandopadhyay writes:

> The drama in Garbo grows out of a claustrophobic real-life situation pushed to the limits of endurance, burgeoning into a surreal holy dream that is too unreal and brittle to stand the test. But what gives the fantasy its compelling magnetism is the sheer power of Intuc’s words, coming in waves of cynicism, disgust, self-pity, lacerating introspection, flights of sacred vision (Bandopadhyay xv).

Garbo knows that her doing the scene in the film where she would ride a camel would result in abortion of the child. They could have used her double in the scene. She deliberately brings about the death of the child growing in her womb. It however is the first instance of violence in the play and the second is murder of Garbo. Feticide becomes the reason of the murder. Though Samik Bandopadhyay give more space talking on Garbo in his introduction, he does not offer any critique on the violence in the play.

Garbo’s decision to kill the child has ideological groundings. It is only Garbo knew that it was Intuc’s child. But she could never bear the idea of bringing up the child. It is because she knew it well that it was not a simple thing to bear that responsibility since it would result in losing her roles in the movies she was already doing. And thus eventually she would lose the only source of her earning. She knew it well that she was only a ‘sex machine’ for the trio. It was the combination of the realization what she thinks of herself, what society thinks of her and the trio thinks of her. The presence of the three views mainly affects her illusion and delusion. Human activities and thoughts are
governed with ideology which actively functions in every belief and non belief. Garbo seems to be acting in a certain manner as an obvious response to the conformist society. The thoughts of Garbo that ultimately result in decisions and actions are significantly governed by her place in the society and the social structure along with the gender she represents. She is doubly suppressed. She being a woman becomes the victim of male dominated society that exercises its power on female gender to sustain its control upon it. It not only true about the gender discrimination but also it functions similarly in case of every passive agent or the agent reduced to the passivity within a category. For the trio Garbo was not only a woman inferior to men but also a prostitute, a woman of no importance, a ‘sex machine’ what Shrimant would call her. Though Garbo is lured into loving Intuc and losing herself in the romantic idea of loving life, she does not however give herself to it. The ideology that sustains the control could be seen in the following remarks of Garbo as she replies Intuc:

I will not be happy with anybody now. It is too late for all that. Too late for happiness. For love… The mind has grown too calculating. If ever I feel momentary tenderness for anybody, the mind rears its head and hisses, ‘Are you in your sense? You are playing with fire. You know what suffering will follow (Elkuchwar 57).

She comes to the terms of renunciation and such kind of one’s agreement with the situation does have various roots that forms the whole of the gesture on assumes. She seeks the suppression of two natural sort of desires one that of becoming mother and rearing a child of her own and secondly she abandons the possibility of her happy married life or life with a partner, whom the society would not object. Her inclination
towards Intuc is obvious but she does not intend to tell him that the child is his. She knows it would be a burden for him. Besides it she has already taken the decision about its abortion. Violent act in this way appears to be of two types. These are two ways of looking at the act of violence. One is that of simple kind where Garbo comes to term with the abortion. It seems to be very clear utilitarian judgment. She cannot earn her livelihood without the job she does in the B grade movies. She does not believe in any future her child would have. This first category on the superficial level does not appear in a normal social context justifiable. The act is negated telling it as an ant humanitarian act.

Secondly it is the ideology that influences a human mind in a certain manner when an individual cannot conceive the idea of going against the established system as one taught to believe in immortal and fortified structure of beliefs. Beliefs are certain visible part of ideological structure. Some of them are more obvious and many of them are very difficult to recognize their ideological orientation due to their naturalization. The first part of his book *Discipline and Punish* Foucault has put his research regarding torture as form of punishment and its relation with power and knowledge. He writes:

> To analyse the political investment of the body and the microphysics of power presupposes, therefore, that one abandons – where power is concerned – the violence – ideology opposition, the metaphor of property, the model of the contract or of conquest; that – where knowledge is concerned – one abandons the opposition between what is ‘interested’ and what is ‘disinterested’, the model of knowledge and the primacy of the subject (Foucault 28).
It is here in the light of Foucault’s remark, this phenomenon of abortion of the child and the murder of Garbo by the trio could be understood with certain differences. The violence in the both cases has the form of ‘crime and punishment’. Garbo seeks the abortion instead of the violation of social norms that do not expect a ‘cheap woman’, a prostitute to rear a child. Secondly this violent act could be performed in a secret manner where there would be no question of identification and economic conditions were the pretext for her to rely on.

On the other hand, Garbo posed challenge to the power of the trio on the different personal levels of them. They had no problem with the conditions as long as she was giving them the physical pleasure being a ‘sex machine’. For Pansy she was place to seek solace of sexual and protective type. For Intuc she bore deeper values of philosophical nature and for Shrimant she was an object of sexual experiment to realize in vain his potency. The murder of Garbo by the end of the play is the upshot of the attempts on the part of the trio to regain the losing ground of control over the feminine world of pleasure represented by Garbo. They could not bear the thought that she killed the infant. It was meant to offer a meaning to their lives in a specific way. She was already a part of the world they had created on the psychological level where they would never have the epiphany moments until this structure of the constructed world is disturbed by the violent act of Garbo. Intuc felt it could have been a real creation devoid of the false pretence on his part as finds it in his poetry. He loses the only possibility of truly creative thing in its total originality. And thus also loses the only hope of being meaningful and useful in a philosophical manner. Shrimant and Pansy do not bear the loss of their fantasy. Shrimant especially loses the last opportunity to tell the world that he is father of the child and in
this way he could maintain his position in the society that he is potent. It is Shrimant who stabs Garbo since he lost the hope against the problem for which Garbo was the only hope. The murder of Garbo takes place not on the account of the revenge that she killed a life and such acts are to be punished in a similar fashion. It is articulated mainly due to its immediate disturbance to the structure of patriarchal authority. Kate Millett in her book *Sexual Politics* making allusions from different cultures from China, Indian and Muslim countries talk about the male cruelties against women. She continues,

The rationale which accompanies that imposition of male authority euphemistically referred to as “the battle of sexes” bears a certain resemblance to the formulas of nation at war, where any heinousness is justified on the grounds that the enemy is either an inferior species or really not human at all. The patriarchy mentality has concocted a whole series of rationales about women which accomplish this purpose tolerably well. And these traditional beliefs still invade our consciousness and affect our thinking to an extent few of us would be willing to admit (Millett 46).

It is very interesting to observe that the literature dealing with incest depicts such relationships with an aura of fear of destructive culmination. To name few, beginning with *Oedipus the Rex*, *Hamlet*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Raj Kamal Jha’s *The Blue Bedspread* or Mahesh Dattani’s *Thirty Days in September* have the relationship at the centre of thematic concern.

Oedipus is introduced mainly as a part of the elaboration on Freud’s theory of Oedipus Complex. Hamlet’s reluctance in thinking his mother to be an accomplice in the plot leading to death of his father poses the existence of conscious desire for one’s mother
whereas Oedipus’ relation is not intentional and the realization results into tragic end. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the story of seven generation of the Buendia family. Jose Arcadio Buendia and his wife Ursula who is cousin of Jose Arcadio, are aware of the possible vicious consequences of the incest relation they have engaged themselves in. Ursula tries to avoid the relations in vain. The myth, that such relationship yielded a child with a pig’s tail and was eaten away by ants, haunts mind of the family. In the end of the narration of the trajectory a child is born out of incest relations with pig’s tail and is eaten away by ants. The same destitute conditions of the partners engaged in the relationship can be seen in *The Blue Bedspread* and *Thirty Days in September*.

Of course, it is essential to recognize though the relationship is taboo, the texts mentioned here from different cultures, pose different possibilities and discourses on the issue. Attempts can be made to put thread to pass through all the texts mentioned with the same theme with all their differences. Maya in *Thirty Days in September* is tormented by the memories of child abuse by her uncle who not only abused her but her mother too whereas Jha depicts a brother and sister with such relationship when the sister dies after giving birth to the child of his brother.

The common understanding, that the marriages among close relations are likely to result into having more possibilities of hereditary medical problems, is specifically considered today among many learned communities. But what incest is for a community is not incest another community. The relationships considered as taboo in Hinduism, are not taboo in community like Muslim. Levi Strauss almost succeeded in telling in his book *The Raw and the Cooked* how incest is common in various cultures. It was an attempt to propose a poetics of the relationship forming a universal whole in vain. As we investigate
the taboo, we understand that it has whole network and circle of reasons interconnected, which is of spacio-temporal nature. It is not easy to make an attempt like Strauss as we are aware of the diversity of conditions and situations in different places which have life governed by a specific set of values and principles.

It is not also so easy to catch them in their nudity in the age like this where time is rapidly changing and with it the values change gradually and more speedily in certain cases. The change in life style, city culture, industrialization, decentralization of joint family, the virtual reality generated by the media, the loss of traditional values creating a vacuum of desperation in the minds of people are few of the reasons that form the circle around which this investigation can move.

The end of Oedipus, though executed by himself and the suicide of Jocasta, the deaths caused due to procrastination by Hamlet, child being eaten away by ants in One Hundred Years of Solitude and traumatic conditions in which Maya lives even after many days of actual incidents of the abuse, are full of violence. Elkunchwar’s play Desire in the Rocks meets with a tragic end where villagers beat Lalita and Hemkant brutally. Lalita sets the wooden mansion (wada) on fire where the couple dies.

The story of Hemkant and Lalita in Desire in the Rocks holds the significance of fundamental nature to Indian culture. It is the story of incest relationship between the brother Hemakant of thirty five and his sister Lalita of twenty in a general sense but issues like superstitions, human sacrifice, madness of Hemkant for the art of sculpture, childhood memories of Lalita, violence are few of the issues the play deals with. Violence is sought as a solution to the fear of the possible side effects of the incest. It
becomes necessary to investigate how this culmination and its relation with the other factors that stimulate it or are affected by it, take place.

Probably one cannot maintain a standpoint by seeking a selection of an issue in its isolation denying the related ‘circle of reason’ for such an attempt is likely to result into fragmentation of investigation rather than bringing about the analysis of fruitful nature. It is exactly why, while investing the violent incidents like human sacrifice, Lalita’s decision about becoming a prostitute, villagers beating the beggar who agrees to bury their dead child, villagers’s pelting stones and beating Hemkant and Lalita and Lalita’s setting fire to the wada burning themselves dead, one has to concentrate on the specific issues which may not form a systematic whole or prove a help to complete a structural unity but offering a whole arena of network of diverse situations. Let’s move on with this thinking with the close reading of the text that clearly offers the trinity of reasons which are related with society killing the human being indulging in incest relations, the human sacrifice due to superstitions and Lalita’s exploitation, renunciation and the state of mind she arrives at.

In the play, the violent incidents are the end result of accumulation of intensity of certain feelings, beliefs and actions leading to the violation of certain social norms and values. The killing of the beggar along with her child and buried in the basement of the wada is purely the result of superstitions concerning the vastushastra and the various rituals like vastushanti exercises that have been performed since the time unknown. Many attempts of construction of the wada were made in vain and the necessity of human sacrifice was proposed. The beggar is captured with her child and both were buried in the
basement of the *wada* and only after this sacrifice the construction reached its completion.

The incidents like human sacrifice can be frequently heard in today’s time too. The question is what set of thoughts gets into making of the blind belief that such sacrifice would gratify the evil spirits that (may) cause the trouble. The beginning of such ritual could be traced to the old traditions when human being gave and still giving animal sacrifice to please the natural forces and the specific gods. Human tendency towards violence in the case of communal riots appears to be very nature specific. Darwin explained how different animals developed from the same origin which was in accordance with natural selection. Requirements to be alive and to reproduce and struggle for existence brought changes in genes and the rate of the transformation increased with the intensity with which every generation struggled and craved for. However, this change according to Darwin does not thoroughly abandon the genes which were useful in a time long before though the same don’t find any relevance in the present. This can also be related with the philosophical questions elaborated by Rousseau about human beings basically good and finding themselves in chains as they enter society and human beings being basically possessing bestiality which is moderated by social institutions. Golding showed how the children’s bestiality turns uncontrollable in the absence of social control in his *Lord of the Flies*.

One more example could be cited here that of the couple of lion and lioness giving birth to a white cub in the jungle of Africa. The show on the channel Animal Planet about the cub does not concentrate on its strangeness. But rather comments on how it gets very difficult for the cub to hunt for his survival as he grows up. During the
night, when the lions generally go for hunting taking the advantage of the darkness, the
cub would be identified very easily in the darkness due to his white colour. The reasons
behind such change which could not be called as mutations were stated that they were the
genes of those ancestors who lived in the Ice Age where the white colour was an
advantage for hunting the animals and that in turn assured the safety to their existence. In
this way, the purpose of nature does not seem intelligible as to keep the genes existing
through the broken chain of generation. It is not easy to call it a preparation on the part of
Nature to have a tool ready for any possibilities. The question remains whether human
beings have the traits of violence travelled from the time when man had to be violent for
his/her existence, before the beginning of civilization which could also be called as
socialization of violence.

In her article, “Kai Aahe Hinsachar?” Pratima Hawaldar offers the example of
Chignon an anthropologist who studied Yanomamo community who lives in the southern
part of Venezuela. “Chignon showed how violent life style of the community, the values
imbibed through ages, develop a violent nature in the upcoming generation. He observed
that more the person violent, more he receives acceptance, prestige, and appreciation in
the community. And the person intensifies his violence as to receive more respect in the
community” (Hawaldar 01). He also showed how violent nature is developed through
generation. It also becomes a part of their psyche.

The human sacrifice of the beggar could not just be said to be an act instigated by
violent traits genetically present but such instincts generally function in accordance with
the set of values and principles governing the social milieu, which is of spacio-temporal
nature. In the play, people’s beating to Hemkant and Lalita, are to be understood from the
women mentioning about the incest relations by calling it ‘filthy sin’. They are the embodiment of the social and religious forces which always look after the conformity. The incest relationship is considered a sin, a challenge to the set beliefs and religious values and teaching. Violence is always a preferred way to response to such relations as violence is the act one chooses as one realizes that the logic, reason, meaningful and positive culmination from the argument is impossible. Of course, it is always an irrational tool. And above said preconditions consists of uniformity of thoughts justified by a philosophy which could appear flawless for those ones who inflict pain. The production of such a philosophy is culture-specific, community-specific, gender-specific, space-specific. The people in the village never approve the relation between the brother and sister. Besides it, the art of Hemakant that produced many statues in the form of nudity of Lalita are also disapproved. They destroy the statues. It is also a violent response by the society to the art which does not follow specific norms. The norms are so fortified that the change in time does not affect the values in certain cases. The example in Indian context can be clearly seen in caste system, religious values and places, concepts of morality, etc.

The character of Lalita undergoes a vital change. She almost becomes suicidal. She starts feeling that she has committed sin and she has to accept the evil effects of it. It is Hemkant who is responsible for the thinking of Lalita for she realizes that Hemkant does not love her but just makes use of her. She does not think her love for Hemkant a sin earlier. But when she realizes what she feels for him, he does not feel for her and he deliberately separates himself from her without getting involved in her since he thinks it is the way to understand something being objective. The realization of lack of love for
her in Hemkant dawns on her. She does not tolerate her world of love conceived getting dismantled. Then her mind is full of thoughts of guilt, loss, the curse of the beggar, renunciation, self destruction as to get the punishment for the sin she has committed.

She thinks they both would have been dead, had Dadasaheb stayed in the wada. The existence of complex and phobic situations in which Lalita lives since her childhood, have prompted her to think it.

Lalita: You’re older than me. By fifteen years. That’s why I feel scared. I’ve spent all these twenty years of my life just being scared.

Hemkant: Were you afraid of Dadasahebz.

Lalita: Petrified. After he died, I thought I was free of fear. But then the trustees and solicitors came. I was afraid of them. I couldn’t understand what they were saying. Then you came, Hem. And I felt really free (Elkunchwar 72).

She is afraid of the darkness through which Hemkant led her to the wada. When she tells him how afraid she is of the darkness and the ghostly appearance of the wada, Hemkant not only ignores it but humiliates her for being so afraid of it. He is so much obsessed with the carvings, sculptures, designs on the pillars, that he simply ignores frightened mind of Lalita and describes the design on the stone and tells her how rich, stately and prestigiously they appear. Lalita does not react to this angrily. One can realize here that Hemkant can decipher the degree of skills with which the stones or woods are carved and can explain the grandeur in them but he fails to recognize the mind of Lalita. He takes Lalita for granted to a state that for Lalita too it appears to be natural. The situation is prerequisite of a negative result. She says that she cannot take any decision
and she has lost the ability to take any decision since the time she met him and tells him
to all decisions about her. It is he who brings Lalita to the village full of rocks and after
listening to reluctance of Lalita about staying there, he tells that the village full of rocks,
was beckoning him. It is challenge for the artist like him. He says that he does not know
about Lalita’s decision about staying there but he is going to stay there even if Lalita does
not accompany him.

The people of the village call them sinners. The violence is mainly concerned here
with the concept of sin. The concept has its roots entangled in religious thinking. When
Hemkant tries to make it clear that Lalita is thinking that they have sinned just because
the dead child is born as it was the curse for the every generation that dwelt in the
mansion. He tries to convince her that if the child would have been alive, she would very
fondly look after him and bring him up. It would not have been a sin then. But she
replies, “It’s like a patch of leukoderma that has spread over the whole body. A few days
of shame, but when the whole body is covered, what shame can there be? Sin once. Then
it’s over. That’s not how it is. Sin never ends” (Elkunchwar 115)

Lalita thinks that by committing the sin, they have acted against the wish of
Goddess and she says that the Goddess had come to her in her dream and “[t]hey want to
punish us. The Goddess has commanded them to” (Elkunchwar 119).

For Lalita everything that is happening is a due course since they have sinned.
When Hemkant tells her not to go out since the people are mad with rage. Lalita replies
that is natural and the people are not to be blamed as they have broken all their
conventions. It is noteworthy to find the same remarks by mother of Mala about the pain
being unable to speak in Dattani’s *Thirty Days in September* when she tells,
“[F]or ten years! For ten years!! (Pointing at the picture of God). I looked at Him. I didn’t feel anything, I didn’t feel pained, I didn’t feel pleasure. I lost myself to Him. He helped me…. By taking away all my feeling. No pain no pleasure, only silence…. But my fongue was cut off… I am dumb” (Dattani 55).

And the peak of her pain is felt when she jabs the sharp pieces of glass into her mouth making her mouth bleed. It is her punishment to herself for being unable to speak, being responsible for existing circumstances. Lalita tells the same to Hemkant.

Lalita: Everything inside us is dead. It has smouldered within itself and burned down. To ashes. Ash is all that’s left. A heap of ash. Not now. Never again (Elkunchwar 120).

Lalita picks up the torch and sets the mansion on fire. The couple dies. Lalita accepts it with no fear. Hemkant with his discovery of vanity of his idea of art, seems to admit his fault. Samik Bandyopadhyay in his introduction to Collected Plays of Mahesh Elkunchwar, attempts to bring a similar line of the violent act by Lalita and the people. He says,

“The slow growth and eventual outburst of violence in/from the community matches the course of the pitched battle between Hem and Lalita, though maybe at a different level. Primeval passions lie at the root of both the passages of violence; the passion that holds a conventional society together against inroads from outside, and the passion that will hurl itself at the constraints to break free. It is the violent confrontation of
the two passions that charges the Hem-Lalita relationship with a corrosive, self-destructive force” (Bandyopadhyay xvi-xvii).

However, the silence of the mob does not offer explicit elaboration on the violent action they do. But their violence can be thus explained by investigating the issues like superstitions, taboo, epiphany moments, mob psychology and the set of values and norms with which a society maintains its standards and violence is legitimated for the sustenance of those values and norms.

_Holi_ has been already considered for the elements of revolt in the previous chapter. Revolt is a precondition of violent act. However every revolt does not end up in violence. The very use of the abusive language among the students in the play suggests violent possibilities of the issues that become the part of their discussions. The sheer disgust and anger against the authoritarian regime of the principal who does not declare a holiday on the day of festival of _Holi_, leads through the amalgam of different subjective, political complexities, to the violent end with the suicide of a student after the torture he undergoes by the students on the campus. There are two incidents that prominently can be called as violent in the play. The first is the mental torture of the student named Anand by the students because he is the one who informs their names to the principal. The second incident is that of suicide by him.

Though violence by the students on the campus appears as the ultimate culmination of the pressure that is built up in them against the authoritarian power they could not directly challenge, it runs from subjective level to what Zizek calls it ‘objective violence’. The two levels could be distinguished as the violence that appears to us in the form of personal aggression or Gopal slapping Anand on his face or Shrinivas bringing
sari for Anand for making him wear it or Gopal threatening Anand saying that they will, “shave off his eyebrows. Tonsure his head. Tomorrow we’ll drag him all over the campus in the sari! Go and tattle our names now! Go ahead!” (Elkunchwar 25)

Subjective form of violence is easily visible. It is the visibility of the form of various types of violence many a times deceives us making incomplete analyses of the basic nature of the violence that forms core of ideological framework of power. Power demands the others to be passive and expects to obey its orders with total submission. Any sort of denial to the power is handled with controlling measures. The principal does not expect any sort of opposition to the idea of having a guest lecture on the day of Holi. The protest against it is comes under the strict disciplinary action. On the other hand, the group of students engaged in the protest is the other. They are subject to the authoritative power of the management of the college. But they have their own structures of power within the group where power is exercised in the certain manner. They do not seem to believe and appreciate the subjugation of their ‘right’ to have the holiday. They indulge in violent act of making the Holi fire. It is the very idea of resisting the suppression against which the students are protesting, becomes the tool when they express their anger against Anand. They torture him that leads to his suicide. In this way “violence inherits a system: not only the direct physical violence, but also the more subtle forms of coercions that sustain relation of domination and exploitation, including the threat of violence” (Zizek 10). The following remark of Ranjit reveals his violent ideas against the politicians and businessmen. He says, “I have just one effing ambition. Collect some potbellied ministers, some fat businessmen, and removing their clothes in some public square, kick them on their naked asses!” (Elkuchwar 13). Gopal says that there should be
one correction in Ranjit’s remark that after they are done with the kicking, rabid dogs should be set after them.

Zizek in his book emphasizes the need of understanding the real cause of violence. According to him out the three forms of violence i.e. subjective, objective and symbolic, we tend to concentrate on the subjective form of violence caused by “the social agents, evil individuals, disciplined repressive apparatuses, fanatical crowds” (Zizek 10). He stresses the importance of understanding the objective nature of violence that exists in an isolated form. It seems to be alive independently. He thinks that the first form of visible violence occupies the larger space of common human mind since it is immediate to the vision and the impact of it very vital. For Zizek, it is this form of violence, ultimately keeps us away from the proper analyses of the nature of ideological violence in the form of gender discrimination, racism, incitement, etc. It is why he advises “that one should resist the fascination of subjective violence… subjective violence is the just most visible of the three” (Zizek 11). It is in the same fashion if we consider the fact of homosexual tendencies grown between Shrivastav and Anand have become known to the other students on the campus and it is harboured antagonism towards the both especially towards the passive partner who is Anand. Kate Millett points out the peculiar violent characteristic of the sexuality. She says,

But the taboo against homosexual behavior (at least among equals) is almost universally of far stronger force than the impulse and tends to effect a rechanneling of the libido into violence. This association of sexuality and violence is a particularly militaristic habit of mind. the negative and militaristic coloring of such men’s house homosexuality as
does exist, is of course by no means the whole character of homosexual sensibility (Millett 50).

It is this way in her larger argument regarding the strategies of patriarchal tradition that have been in a certain design always looked after sustaining its dominance over the female. It could be called in Zezekian term ‘objective violence’. It is perhaps more true that one has to fight the objective form of violence rather than finding remedies for subjective one. Millett’s disappointment is appropriate when she remarks about the course of even in *Doll’s House* grows with the explicit implication of author’s sexual orientations, traits of female character and ‘masculine fixation’:

What is perhaps most discouraging of all is not even the masculine fixation on violence but the futility of the girls’ sedentary dream, even its barrenness, for they sit awaiting the “intrusion of men and animals” and doing nothing at all – not even the “nurturance” expected of them (Millett 217).

In a broader perspective of observation of the criticism of dramatic and other writings in India and abroad a development of the stages of concentration could crudely be traced down to the subjective violence, objective violence as in the case of Millett mentioned above and the latest could be called as its symbolic state. Anshul Chandra in her essay “Vijay Tendulkar: A Critical Survey of his Dramatic World” the implications of violence that crosses the mere considerations of personal orientations which are specific to the situation at hand. She writes that Vijay Tendulkar’s bifocal perspective on violence. According to her, *Gidhade*, has violence that tends to become ‘an end in itself.’ For her it is:
the easiest way left for many ordinary citizens to cope up with their fractured selves and problems of living. No longer does violence come from ideology, faith or even self-interest. On the contrary, it seeks outlet in ideology, faith and perceived self-interest and latches on to these ‘causes’ to find public expression and legitimacy. In this paradoxical world, violence is prior to its causes (Quoted in Chakraborty 99).

In the chapter entitled “Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention” from her book Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention, Sharon Marcus’s views recognize the objective violence but it does not rely on the mere recognition of the kind of violence but favours for counter action plan against the violence and refutes the views of Susan Brownmiller in her book Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape that violence of rape exists in society as a ‘fixed reality’ and ‘a fate worse than … death’. According to her, “Such view takes violence as a self-explanatory first cause and endows it with an invulnerable and terrifying facticity which stymies our ability to challenge and demystify rape… the apocalyptic tone which it adopts and the metaphysical status which it assigns to rape can only be feared or legally repaired, not fought (Brownmiller 432).

The thesis of Zizek along with the various aspects mentioned above from different perspectives, leads us to reconsider the incidents of murder of Garbo in the play Garbo, the violence enacted by the crowd and suicidal end of Hemkant and Lalita in The Desire in the Rocks and humiliation of Anand and suicide of Anand in Holi, the act of killing the tiger named Sultan by Rajshekhar and his suicide in the one act play Sultan and the
murder of the old man in the play Eka Mhataryacha Khun by a woman and two men and the murder of Amrit in Holi.

On the superficial level these incidents appear to be the result of the immediate conflict that forms the background of the violent end. They are characterized with the issues like loss of potency in case of Shrimant who stabs Garbo, the mob’s superstitious fear of evil befalling on their village due to the immoral act of taboo relation between the brother and sister, fear of restriction in the minds of student as Anand informs their names to the principal, Anand feeling too humiliated and unable to sustain self esteem against the act of the students making him wear a sari that attributes him the qualities of a woman, loss of meaning in life for Rajshekar in Sultan, inability to get rid of the problems of life results in killing of the old man in Eka Mhataryacha Khun and the mystery that lies behind the release of Amrit and subsequent murder and possibility that the tribals will likely be accused for the murder of Amrit in Holi.

All the above mentioned situations in the plays do appear as a coherent part in the story line of the plays. They have their immediate cause of action. But all the incidents are the part of the larger structure of the network created by the system developed with the relationship among the producers and consumers in the society. As Zizek says the phenomenon of the ‘objective violence’ has undergone vital change with emergence of capitalism however he feels the need of the idea of the violence to be thoroughly historicized. In Indian context, monarchy could be described as a controlling factor of means of production and thus ultimately the people in the disguise of kingship. In European context, kingship was successful in receiving the status next to God. In India they were favoured by Gods and they were said to possess the blessings of Gods and
Goddesses. As the forms of governance went on changing in the course of time, the systems changed accordingly and with enlargement of the structure of society, population, emergence of new institutions, modernization, technology and so on.

With the industrial revolution in Europe, everything started changing very swiftly. Erick Hobsbawn in his *The Age of Revolution 1789 – 1848* talks how it affected the social structure and how there was the emergence of the two distinct classes of workers and capitalists. As Marx said how the superstructures are governed by the laws of the base and how superstructure itself is the very creation of the base. The base looks after the protection of its interest and creates the system in the form like that of judiciary and parliament that systematically protects the benefits of the base.

The interesting thing about the system is it appears to be very natural and it is exactly the idea that prevents the individuals to look into its artificial nature and how it works with certain vested interests. Alex P. Schmid, in his book *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature*, talks about definitive nature of terrorism and points out the variety of issues regarding violence and terrorism. He defines terrorism in a certain explanatory way. According to him it is anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-)clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. He rightly points out how randomly selected victims work as messengers. He continues:
Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought (Schmid 28).

Amrit in *Party* is killed with a perfect plan. He had become the threat to the interests of the politicians. Amrit led a democratic way of opposing the intrusion into the rights of *adivasi*. Government was giving the land of *adivasi* to industry. It wanted to deforest the entire area. Many investors including the politicians like the chief minister himself were interested in the land. Amrit was a trouble to them and it was not easy for them to silence Amrit since he had a lawful way of protest but they managed to turn the silent protest into violent one and got Amrit arrested.

Naxalism is one of the issues that India is facing which could be called as the upshot of the political and economical imbalance since the time of British Raj. Naxalism is frequently characterized by its violent way of protest which perhaps is sought as an only means for solution to the problems of regional disparities and imbalances. Such situations bring the common people to the position of lookers on. They can do nothing but speak. Balram Halwai the protagonist in Arvind Adiga’s novel *The White Tiger* apprehends the corrupt democracy and politics. He says it becomes no matter of wonder to see democracy and village people discussing the elections “like eunuchs discussing the *Kamasutra*” (Adiga 98).

Violence becomes an only way out for the section of society trapped under the fortified system of power. The two forms of violence one enacted as a form of resistance
to the authoritative regime and sought as an only way out whereas the second is the state’s organized violence in the form of ideology. Amrit became the victim of state’s violence whereas the Naxalism undertook the violent way and began to attack the base of the superstructure. Of course one must never forget that it is the last weapon one has to choose realizing well the possible threat to one’s existence. An authoritative People’s Daily article, poetically captioned “Spring Thunder Over India”, hailed Naxalbari and laid down the line for the Indian People’s war against the four “big mountains” – imperialism, Soviet re-visionism. Feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism.

The changing nature of economy has brought but more disheartening and challenging conditions making their lives impossible and state’s totalitarian regime poses political impossibility. In his article in Economical and Political Weekly in August 1972 Mohan Ram emphasized, “[W]ith the arrest of Charu Muzumdar, just as five years ago they gleefully pronounced revolution in India dead with failure of the Naxalbari uprising, as though Naxalbari was the beginning and end of the Indian revolution. It was neither; at best it could be vested with a certain symbolism” (Ram 1471).

On the other hand, holding on factual line of recent development in Naxal crises in November 2008 PCAPA (People’s Committee Against Police Atrocities) led mass protest against police brutality. The spokespersons of PCAPA Asit Mahato declared the outfit would no longer continue democratic protest. “After continuous torture by the joint forces, the PCAPA has decided to combat the forces” (Mittal 30).

However the depth of the fear imbedded in such statements provides us with the revolutionary potentials that exist in the country. Indian mindset requires breaking
through the shackles of human civilization oscillates between the ‘Freedom from Fear’ and the ‘Fear of Freedom’. ‘The spirit of man … is free but contextuality of freedom is always restraining factor in the operation of freedom. If freedom means the birth-right to and individual to act without inhabitations of control, the free will to act operates in given context. The contest may be physical, existential, political and social. Freedom without context is too abstract to contemplate” (Mohanty 220).

Shrimant and Anand’s articulation of violence is a part of the similar structure of gender. They have had the masculine conceptions descending from the thought line of patriarchal tradition that unconsciously and invisibly imposes certain responsibilities on them. It is how every ‘man’ gets entangled into them and so the ‘woman’. Their actions of violence do get the motivations from the thinking of sustenance of the power being male and it is the condition that made them think themselves powerful as far as potency, honour, meaningfulness and self esteem in society and personal life is concerned. They cannot manage the threat to these illusions and delusions which are the product of the larger structure of ideology with non violence. Violence becomes legitimate tool for them to react with and it is how Shrimant can make use of violence because being a man he qualifies himself to make use of it and Anand on the other hand cannot tolerate the loss of it and is able to take another decision of killing himself. For Anand the shameful situation he lived becomes a stigma he cannot live with in society. It so happens not only on the pure level of rational thinking but also on the level the way one fantasizes the world around oneself. Theses fantasies which change person to person with no regular method very basically provide human beings with prerequisites for the possible reaction
appropriated by the stimuli from immediate course of time. The fantasies realize the desire in a systematic form and looks after fulfilling them and so to say more elaborately

“rather, its function is similar to that of Kantian ‘transcendental schematism’: a fantasy constitutes our desire, provides its co-ordinates; that is, it literally ‘teaches us how to desire’… fantasy meditates between the formal symbolic structure and the positivity of the objects we encounter in reality – that is to say, it provides a ‘schema’ according to which certain positive objects in reality can function as objects of desire, filling in the empty places opened up by the formal symbolic structure” (Zizek 7).

It appears true when it is seen how human mind intends to seek violence as a tool to fight against any possible danger to the ‘schema’. It of course also depends on what positions one holds in society, what gender the person belongs to, what category in regard to religion, caste, creed, race one represents. For Anand and Lalita’s becomes an action of resistance when the formal order of realizing desire gets disturbed while for Shrimant it becomes counter action with involvement of violence.

Exhibition of sexuality has been one of the ways of the indicators of the repulsive tendencies. The use of sexually abusive language is not aimed at only attacking the other person but it aims at achieving certain desired effects. It challenges the sexual potency of a person, which in a complex way is ambiguous and full of uncertain of its meaning and nature. However there exists a lifelong confusion and doubt about the sexual capability and strength in one’s mind especially before one gets acquainted with sexual experience.
It is here the sexual fantasies play an important role. It has been the result of sum of the culturally constructed ideas of sexuality i.e. manliness or feminine.

There is one more aspect to the violence in the form of suicide committed by Lalu in *Holi*. It mainly connects with his sexual orientation. Jonathan Gardiner, in his essay on “Why are homosexuals committing suicide” writes that the suicide problem in the homosexual community is not because that common people think such behavior as odd or unnatural. Sometimes it is even thought as sinful. He proposes that homosexuals like Anand commits suicide when they are discovered or mocked at because they know the behavior to match the behavior is wrong, and have no self-control to correct their behavior to match what they believe to be right. In the end, when people point this out through ridicule, they are incapable of dealing with the cognitive dissonance and are led to believe that only suicide can help them escape the anguish of that state of mind” (Quoted in Kulkarni 223).

This opinion of Jonathan holds truth at a greater level about the crucial problems of homosexual community. It is not the only culmination. However, they also develop certain psychological tendencies which are not considered normal.

The above discussion brings about the idea of third division of kind of violence and thus the analyses of violence moves ahead of the subjective and objective form of violence. It becomes necessary to investigate the role of other agencies regarding the articulation of violence. It has always been stated and is presented to us as the beginning of civilization was also the beginning of humanism that brought the difference between human beings
and animals. Violence was one of the issues that have been brought to the line of comparison by the philosophers like Descartes. It is the mainstream tradition of thinking that the one of the greatest invention of human mind i.e. language or the symbolic order has always been working as the medium to offer solution to the barbarity of human mind; it brings the order and systematization to irrational behavior. And more basically it is the order of recognition and meaning that helps human understand the world in a certain way.

The role of language is significant in shaping the way we perceive the world and the reality of the world. In fact it is the language itself which is the medium through which every understanding is created and activated. Without the language we simply cease to exist on a certain levels. The language is not self sufficient. It could be called as the mistake on the part of the thinkers who conceived language as “the medium of reconciliation and mediation of peaceful co-existence… In language, instead of exerting direct violence on each other, we are meant to debate, to exchange words, and such and exchange, even when its aggressive, presupposes a minimum recognition of the other” (Zizek 1). While making references to Jean-Marie Muller, Zizek mentions the two ways how renunciation of violence is sought as speaking is the foundation and structure of socialization that happens due to the renunciation of violence and even if it happens it happens due to a radical perversion of humanity when “language gets infected by violence and it happens under the influence of contingent ‘pathological’ circumstances which distort the inherent logic of symbolic communication” (Zizek 2).

The close reading of the episode wherein the violent action is performed, suggests the certain kind of failure in human reconciliation. Taking into consideration the whole
discourse of subjective and objective violence, one could also find how the symbolic order also has its share in bringing about the violence in the form of murder that Shrimant commits and suicide committed by Anand and Lalita.

Walter Benjamin wrote “Critique of Violence” raising the question whether any non-violent resolution of conflict is possible. His answer is to the question is positive and he writes, “there is a sphere of human agreement that is non-violent to the extent that it is wholly inaccessible to violence: the proper sphere of ‘understanding’, language” (Quoted in Zizek 1). Language in mainstream thought line, is considered a true resolution for the problem of violence and it has been the accepted idea of function of language that is taken as one of the advantages and characteristics of civilization.

It will not be thus difficult for one to recognize on the superficial level the authenticity of application of the idea to the conflicts in the plays as discussed so far. It is the lack of proper sphere of communication through language that could be said to be a major problem in avoiding the violent way out for the non adjustable situations. Before Shrimant stabs Garbo, it has become impossible for Garbo to get along with the logic of her life with the lack of availability of linguistic resolution which she puts it, “I will not be happy with anybody now… too late for that…mind has grown too calculating…If ever I feel momentary tenderness for anybody, … You know what suffering will follow” (Elkunchwar 57).

What happens at the time of murder of Garbo by Shrimant is to be seen in a certain form where Shrimant loses access to any meaningful culmination of understanding of the situation he gets caught in. When he tells Garbo that he was going to look after her child, she makes it clear that if it would have been done, it would not be out
of compassion but only as cover for his lost manhood. It is here Shrimant’s conflict grown within him is fortified. When he does not find the proper recognition to his intention by Garbo, he flares at her abusive defense and it is the immediate position he could adopt. He says to her, “A whore. That’s what you are. A whore… I’ll fling a few paise at you and make you dance naked for me (Elkunchwar 63).

Before the moment of murder comes, Shrimant once again tell her to come to him and he would take care of her. It was a constant attempt from Shrimant to seek a meaning to the life he is living. To him to be able to tell the world that he is a father of a child, would mean a meaning to hold on to a position in society. It means his establishment in society as a potent male. The death of the child makes him lose the only opportunity and it angers him. His vain attempts to go to prostitute and failure in sexual satisfaction have already put him in frustrated mindset. It is also one of the reasons in which he loses the resolution. It is however also a culture specific creation of notion of masculinity and potency. Being impotent leaves a human being in a restless state of mind and is always connected with death. No alternative is offered in this regard.

Now it is interesting to observe that it is not a straight way out to seek a violent response against certain impossibility of positivity of action. One does utilizes various means before the violent culmination of the course of action. In a social condition, it is not always impossible to seek for a situation that could be called as safe. There are many techniques and methods which are deployed to bring oneself in an advantageous position. They are sought with selection of lying, denial, belief, pretence, hope, procrastination, patience, honesty, reason and ‘willing suspension of disbelief’ and so on. Shrimant stabs
Garbo only when she finishes off the last chance of him possessing her in order to bring a meaningful order to his life and starts going out of the house.

In case of Lalita in *Desire in the Rocks*, it may not be other case. When we realize it is the same state of mind where Lalita reaches giving up for the impossibility of any positive resolution of situation, and says, “Everything inside us is dead. It has smouldered within itself and burned down… Not now. Never again (Elkunchar 120). It is Lalita in the play that put the *wada* on fire thus seeking a violent death of both of them. Before she comes to the terms with suicidal state of mind, she suffers from a series of events in which all the epitomes of her belief get dismantled. Loss of mother and dominating father begin the trouble for Lalita from early childhood. After the death of father, she could not come out of the trauma she always suffered from. Her brother Hemkant was the only solace to her and she found a meaningful existence with him. She is ready to go with him to such a village where there is nothing that comforts her on any level. It only with the thought she has Hemkant whom she has offered her body and mind whole heartedly.

The events that follows her realization of Hemkant’s mind that he has messed up the idea of art with life and given away the dead child to the beggar to bury it; she jabs the sharp pieces of glass into her mouth making her mouth bleed; she becomes a whore and allow people to misuse her body and puts the mansion on fire. Her statement about the impossibility of resolution becomes very clear from her statement, “It’s like a patch of leukoderma that has spread over the whole body. A few days of shame, but when the whole body is covered, what shame can there be? Sin once. Then it’s over. That’s not how it is. Sin never ends” (Elkunchwar 115). What she means from ‘sin never ends’ is
unavailability of any logical, meaningful resolution to her problem of unholy love she has with her brother.

It is essential here to recognize as long as she knew and believed in the idea that if is the true love between the two, it does not matter what social structure of relation they belong to. Lalita’s was the psyche that already sought shelter under immediate object of desire that helped her to forget the tormenting memory of past she lived. Her brother was for her the only person she trusted and knew loved her most. It had already appropriated the illegitimacy of incest relationship. However it could last only till the destruction of the belief.

Lalita’s religious belief that she has sinned that she has engaged herself in impure love; self punishment would be the only way out to repent the sin prove key in her directions of actions. These occupy her mind and when it also does not satisfy her completely, she comes to a certain state of mind where impossibility of linguistic resolution becomes reality. The same is the case with the violence that takes place in the plays like *Holi* and *Party* on a level where a mob of students is involved in the first case and secondly it is system that triggers the death of Amrit. In both the situations the impossibility of communicative resolution is null.

Though this mainstream thought line seems to be firmly logical, there are certain standpoints from which it is not always very difficult to recognize the language plays in our life on various levels right from the bringing about the concept of reality to the making it realize in itself and doubt about it (if at all one can) in language itself. Zizek continues it saying,
When we perceive something as an act of violence, we measure it by a presupposed standard of what the “normal” non-violent situation is – and the highest form of violence is the imposition of this standard with reference to which some events appear as “violent”. This why language - itself, the very medium of non-violence, of mutual recognition, involves unconditional violence (Zizek 2).

Zizek summarizes the standpoints regarding the relation between language and violence, assumed by the philosophers like Fredrick Jameson, Freud, Lacan, Heidegger, Plato, Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and so on. It however comes to an unresolved understanding of problematic of plurality of views on the issue. He notes how Lacan at times has to borrow and rely on certain ideas of thinkers like Kierkegaard or Heidegger in order to bring about a balanced discourse on the ‘truth’ of role of language in violence. The crux of the conflict regarding the role and responsibility of language in violence relies on the idea of violence that exits in language and violence as a biological reality. Zizek in this regard states the views of Lacan that,

[i]n a human being, desires lose their mooring in biology, they are operative only insofar as they are inscribed within the horizon of Being sustained by language; however, in order for this transposition from the immediate biological reality of the body to the symbolic space to take place, it has to live a mark of torture in the body in the guise of its mutilation (Zizek 5).

As the conflict is harbored between the symbolic and the real, Lacan and Heidegger have difference on the nature and role of jouissance and its relation with
being. Realizing the complexity of the issue and the difference between the “two deaths” Lacan has to come to the terms with challenging philosophy itself with due recognition saying *jouissance* as something which, “although it is far from being simply external to language, resists symbolization, remains a foreign kernel within it, appears within it as a rupture, cut, gap, inconsistency or impossibility” (Zizek 7). Like the issue of desire and sexuality, the issue of violence is crucial in the plays of Elkunchwar. These issues always bear plural nature of significance. Purnima Kulkarni looks at the play in different view as she says that subalterns speaks in the play. According to her, Elkunchwar’s, “like Brecht, purpose of drama is to teach us how to survive by familiarizing them with the social problems and simultaneously distancing them from the emotions of the characters” (Kulkarni 223). The didactic part of this statement could be doubted but the skills and certain influences Elkunchwar succeeds in offering through his dramatic world are of high value.
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