Chapter – 3
Plays of Vijay Tendulkar

Vijay Tendulkar, one of the outstanding Indian playwrights, was born in Mumbai on 6th January 1928. He started writing at an early age, and as a writer, has excelled in many areas like essays, short stories, criticism, screenplay writing and drama. He has carved his place as a leading Indian playwright, movie and television script-writer, literary essayist, political journalist, and social commentator primarily in Marathi. Although, initially labeled as a controversial writer, gradually he emerged as an honest artist. His honesty and skill won him reputation and recognition. For the past five decades, Tendulkar has been a highly influential dramatist and theater personality in Maharashtra and today, he is celebrated as a great Indian playwright. Since the independence – since 1950, to be precise – the name of Vijay Tendulkar has been in forefront of the Marathi drama and stage. His personality both as a man and writer is multifaceted. He is a creative writer with a fine sensibility and at the same time a contemplative and controversial dramatist. Because of his highly individual viewpoint and vision of life and personal life style of writing he has made a powerful impression in the field of literature and drama, and has given the post independence Marathi drama a new idiom. He not only pioneered the experimental theatre movement in Marathi but also guided it. By doing this he has put Marathi drama on the national and international map. He experimented with all aspects of drama including content, acting decor, and audience communication.
Tendulkar was popular with art house filmmakers like Shyam Benegal and Govind Nihalani to produce some of the most remarkable political films in the country. Nihalani, whose early films were scripted by Tendulkar, said: “Tendulkar gave a certain direction to new cinema when we were starting out. His vision and his engagement with the reality of the period gave a direction not just in terms of content but also form. That would be his contribution to Indian cinema.” (cited in Ramnarayan 1992: 34)

Vijay Tendulkar’s plays reflect a magical combination of currency and timelessness, (Gokhale 2009: 32) says Shanta Gokhale. Topicality and timelessness combine to create an enigma around his plays. The fierce controversy surrounding his plays, many of which were censored following their immediate publication, is perhaps an obvious indicator of their currency, their strong rootedness to the socio-political context in which they were written. At the same time, the magnetic quality of the plays, reflected in the frequency with which they continue to be performed in different parts of India and abroad, suggests a certain universal quality.

Commenting on his motivation to write quality plays Tendulkar said, “As a child I grew up watching some wonderful western plays. It instilled in me a passion to create such plays. I like to watch and learn from people who have excelled in their field.” (Tendulkar 1997:5) Asked if he may follow the popular trend to write abstract plays Tendulkar replied, “I have my style and I can get my point across with my style of writing. If someone wants to use abstract plays, it is their choice.
I write plays for myself, not for audience.” (Ibid 06) Describing the role of politics in plays, Tendulkar frankly admitted that more happens behind the curtains than on stage. He believes, “Writers have the gift to express their ideas clearly. It is a big responsibility. They should bring out what they feel, without forgetting their responsibility towards the readers,” said Tendulkar.” (Ramnarayan: 1992: 34-35)

However, before plunging deeper into the fictional world of Tendulkar, it would not be incongruous to have a glance at his life and career as a playwright.

Early life

Vijay Dhondopant Tendulkar was born on 7 January 1928 in a Bhalavalikar Saraswat Brahmin family in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, where his father held a clerical job and ran a small publishing business. The literary environment at home prompted young Vijay to take up writing. He wrote his first story at age six. He grew up watching western plays, and felt inspired to write plays himself. At age eleven, he wrote, directed, and acted in his first play.

At age 14, he participated in the 1942 Indian freedom movement, leaving his studies. The latter alienated him from his family and friends. Writing then became his outlet, though most of his early writings were of a personal nature, and not intended for publication.

Early career

Tendulkar began his career writing for newspapers. He had already written a
play, "Āmchyāvar Kon Prem Karnār" (Who will Love us?), and he wrote the play, "Gruhastha" (The Householder), in his early 20s. The latter did not receive much recognition from the audience, and he vowed never to write again. Breaking the vow, in 1956 he wrote *Shrimant*, which established him as a good writer. *Shrimant* jolted the conservative audience of the times with its radical storyline, wherein an unmarried young woman decides to keep her unborn child while her rich father tries to ‘buy’ her a husband in an attempt to save his social prestige.

Tendulkar's early struggle for survival and living for some time in tenements ("chawls") in Mumbai provided him first-hand experience about the life of urban lower middle class. He thus brought new authenticity to their depiction in Marathi theater. Tendulkar's writings rapidly changed the storyline of modern Marathi theater in the 1950s and the 60s, with experimental presentations by theater groups like "Rangayan". Actors in these theater groups like Shreeram Lagoo, Mohan Agashe, and Sulabha Deshpande brought new authenticity and power to Tendulkar's stories while introducing new sensibilities in Marathi theatre. In his writing career spanning more than five decades, Tendulkar has written 27 full-length plays and 25 one-act plays. Several of his plays have proven to be Marathi theater classics. His plays have been translated and performed in many Indian languages. By providing insight into major social events and political upheavals during his adult life, Tendulkar became one of the strongest radical political voices in Maharashtra in recent times. While contemporary writers were cautiously exploring the limits of social realism, he jumped into the cauldron of
political radicalism, and courageously exposed political hegemony of the powerful and the hypocrisies in the Indian social mindset. His powerful expression of human anger has resulted in his simultaneously receiving both wide public acclaim, and high censure from the orthodox and the political bigwigs.

Many of Tendulkar’s plays derived inspiration from real-life incidents or social upheavals. Thus, the rise of Shiv Sena in Maharashtra in the 1970s was reflected in his Ghashiram Kotwal. The true story of a journalist who purchased of a woman from the rural sex industry in order to reveal police and political involvement in this trade, only to abandon the woman once he had no further need for her, is detailed in Tendulkar’s Kamala. The real-life story of an actress whose acting career got ruined after her same-sex affair became public knowledge inspired Tendulkar to write Mitrachi Goshta. Tendulkar has translated nine novels, two biographies, and five plays by other authors into Marathi. Besides that, he has written a biography; two novels; five anthologies of short stories; 16 plays for children, including Bale Miltat (1960) and Patlachya Poriche Lagin (1965); and five volumes of literary essays and social criticism, including Ratrani (1971), Kowali Unhe (1971), and Phuge Sobânche (1974). In short, Tendulkar’s writings have contributed to a significant transformation of the modern literary landscape in both Marathi and other Indian languages. In 2005, a documentary titled ‘Tendulkar Ani Himsa: Kal Ani Aj’ (Tendulkar and Violence: Then and Now) with English subtitles (produced by California Arts Association -
CAIAA - directed by Atul Pethe) was released. In 2007, a short film about Tendulkar, Ankahin (Director Santosh Ayachit), was released. Tendulkar has also contributed by penning screenplays for the movies *Nishānt* (1974), *Ākrosh* (The Cry) (1980), and *Ardh Satya* (The Half-Truth) (1984), established him as an important "Chronicler of Violence" of the present times. He has written eleven movies in Hindi and eight movies in Marathi. The latter include *Sāmanā* ("Confrontation") (1975), *Simhāasan* ("Throne") (1979), and *Umbartha* ("The Threshold") (1981). The last one is a groundbreaking feature film on women's activism in India.

Awards

Tendulkar won Maharashtra State Government Award in 1956, 1969 and 1972 and Maharashtra Gaurav Puruskar in 1999. He was honored with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1970, and again in 1998 with the Academy's highest award for "lifetime-contribution", the Ratna Sadasya. Known for some of the best screenplays of Hindi cinema such as *Ardh Satya* and Shyam Benegal's *Manthan*, he also received Padma Bhushan award in 1984 from the Government of India for his literary accomplishments. In 1977, Tendulkar won the National Film Award for Best Screenplay for his screenplay of Shyam Benegal's movie, *Manthan* (1976). He has written screenplays for many significant art movies, such as *Nishānt, Ākrosh*, and *Ardh Satya*.

In 1991, Tendulkar wrote a metaphorical play, "Safar", and in 2001 he wrote the play, *The Masseur*. He wrote, next, two novels, *Kādambari: Ek* and *Kādambari: 
Don, about sexual fantasies of an aging man. In 2004, he wrote a single-act play, His Fifth Woman—his first play in the English language—as a sequel to his earlier exploration of the plight of women in Sakhārām Binder. This play was first performed at the "Vijay Tendulkar Festival" in New York in October 2004. In the 1990s, Tendulkar wrote an acclaimed TV series, Swayam Siddha, in which his daughter, Priyā Tendulkar, performed in the lead role. His last screenplay was for Eashwar Mime Co. (2005), an adaptation of Dibyendu Palit's story, Mukhabhinoy, and directed by theatre director, Shyamanand Jalan and with Ashish Vidyarthi and Pawan Malhotra as leads.

“Tendulkar’s plays have dealt with the themes that unravel the exploitation of power and latent violence in human relationships”. (Dubbe, 1993-94: 17-26) The world at large -- particularly western Europe -- had saluted Tendulkar way back in the early 1970s after his most overtly political play Ghashiram Kotwal did the international rounds following a controversial run in India. That admittedly was a one-off glimpse of the playwright's creative universe. But it was only a few years ago that critics and theater-lovers alike began undertaking a more holistic appraisal of Tendulkar’s oeuvre. The appraisal took varied forms. There was, for instance, the publication of The Tendulkar Omnibus (a collection of his most representative writings) edited by fellow playwright and director Makarand Sathe, followed by an hour-long video documentary titled Tendulkar and Violence: Then and Now produced by the California Arts Association in which the playwright discussed his views on violence and its depiction. However, ‘the Tendulkar festivals’ where several of his original Marathi plays were performed in various
languages - including English - in India and abroad, speaks volumes about his
genius and popularity.

Undoubtedly, he is one of the most influential playwrights in the country. *Ghashiram Kotwal*, with a tally of more than 6,000 performances worldwide is believed to be the longest-running play in the history of Indian theater. His popularity can be ascribed to his innovative ideas and presentations. For instance, a brutalized character in *Gidhade* is shown wearing a blood-stained sari to signify a forced abortion.

In *Ghashiram Kotwal*, he has used history as a backdrop to mull on the politics of power. The rise of a political ideology (such as fascism) in response to conducive social and economic circumstances, and how the masterminds behind this rise exploit and then discard people as pawns in a power game-these form the crux of the play's enduring statement. The final lynching of Ghashiram by the Brahmin lumpen is its climactic tour de force. It is always tempting to psychoanalyze the psychoanalyst. In fact, Tendulkar's concerns as a writer probing the depths of deviant minds can be ascribed to his small-town upbringing in a lower middle-class Saraswat Brahmin family in Kolhapur, where he had to contend with an insane uncle, among others; an elder sister who died an old spinster and the years spent in a gutter-ridden chawl in Bombay where he lived with his growing family in penurious circumstances, and saw life unvarnished by middle-class mores. Apart from being a pioneer, he was gracious enough to mentor younger
playwrights. After pushing open the door himself, he, in a manner of speaking, held it ajar for other lesser writers.

Many critics have labeled Tendulkar's entire work as a commentary on human violence, which is partially true. Tendulkar has, in fact, over the last few decades, scanned the life-world of contemporary Indians in order to identify the sources and nature of the violence that have come to pattern it. Even when violence is not ostensibly his theme, it casts its shadow on his characters - their cultivated or panicky reactions to it, their numbing fear of their own selves. By bringing their world close to ours through his creative powers, he has shaped the way we look at ourselves. Tendulkar's perspective on violence is bifocal. In works like *Giddh* (staged in 1971; written in 1961) and, lesser directly, in *Shantata, Court Chalu Ahe* (1968), *Kanyadaan* (1983) and *Ghasiram Kotwal* (1973), violence tends to become an end in itself. It is the easiest way left for many ordinary citizens to cope 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 through 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. Tendulkar's violence, therefore, is sometimes tinged with - as the psychiatrist would diagnose it - the psychopathic. It carries the impress of an empty interpersonal world and a maimed conscience. He often invokes a milieu where the individual is caught in a crosscurrent of social forces that he or she does not understand. Buffeted by these forces, the individual finds the traditional concept of evil diffused,
fragmented or invalidated at every step. Evil lurks everywhere, yet it rarely takes tangible form, and when it is tangible, the victim’s survival frequently demands his silence.

Vijay Tendulkar has received both bouquets and brickbats in a playwriting career that has spanned five decades. His first plays *Grihastha* and *Shrimant* appeared in 1955. In his heyday, from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, brickbats were more frequent. His plays such as *Gidhade* (1970), *Sakharam Binder* (1972) and *Ghashiram Kotwal* (1972) offended the self-appointed moral brigade who branded him a subversive writer who courted controversy and peddled sex and violence. Smug notions of morality received a beating in his plays, which exposed middle-class hypocrisy in a clinical, naturalistic manner, something no other playwright in Marathi had attempted before him. Tendulkar is internationally known as a path-breaking theatre writer. But from newspaper columns to short stories to novels, film scripts and television programmes, he has done it all, bringing to each genre the searing honesty that has been the hallmark of his writing. A conversation with Tendulkar spans an entire spectrum of subjects. He comments on the apathy of the government and the bureaucracy after the 26/7 deluge in Mumbai, the latest books he read, the latest films he saw (he is an avid watcher of international cinema and is present at all the film festivals in Mumbai), all in a quiet, understated style far removed from some of his sharp, explosive writing. "I had to struggle for survival very early in life," he says, "due to a lack of any formal qualifications" (Dubbe, 1993-94: 44-46)
Another reason for his success lies in the astonishing range of his plays, be it the victimization of the individual by society in *Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe!* or the moral collapse of a family in *Gidhade*, or the ruthlessness of the media in *Kamala*, provides a director a very large thematic canvass to choose from. At the same time, the lack of moralizing gives the plays a very open-ended feel, leaving ample scope for directorial interpretation.

Major Plays of Vijay Tendulkar:

Symbol of Slavery: *Kamla*

Tendulkar’s play *Kamla* was inspired by a real life incident published in the *Indian Express*. A person called Ashwin Sarin, actually bought a girl from a rural flesh market and presented at a press conference. Using this incident as a launching pad, Tendulkar has raised certain value system of modern, success oriented generation who are ready to sacrifice human values in the name of humanity itself. The central character of the play is a self-seeking journalist, Jai Singh Jadhav, who treats the woman he has purchased from the flesh market as an object that can procure from him a promotion in his job and a refutation in his professional life. Jai Singh buys, Kamla, an Adivasi woman, at the flesh market of Luhardaya beyond Ranchi for two hundred and fifty rupees. Jai Singh's enthusiasm is directed towards sheer sensationalism. He creates sensationalism at the express of Kamla. He sells a woman that poor and illiterate woman. Jai Singh Jadhav discards Kamla is an orphanage for woman and washes off his
hands for his safety, after she ceases to be an advantage to him. Jai Singh Jadhav exploits not only Kamla but also his wife, Sarita. It is through Sarita, Tendulkar exposes the Chauvinism intrinsic in the modern male who believes himself to be liberal minded. Jai Singh- through his treatment of Kamla, makes Sarita realize that she is also a slave a lovely bonded labourer to him. She observes how he refuses a bath to Kamla and takes her in clumsy clothes to the press-conference for his professional profit. Jai Singh uses both the woman, Kamla and Sarita as pawns in his game of chess. Jai Singh the Persecutor, persecutes his victims- Kamala, Sarita and Kamala bai. His role shifts to that of the victim and he is persecuted by his proprietor, the persecutor. Kamala according to Catherine Thankamma, “reveal that in the patriarchal set up marriage is not only a mean of regulating sexual and reproductive behavior but also a means of upholding male dominance.” (2009: 82) A woman is considered useless if she is not able to conceive a child. For instance, when Sarita tells Kamala that she does not have children, Kamala comments:

It was an expensive bargain, memsahib … the master bought you, he bought me, too. He spent a lot of money … We'll keep the master happy … I'll do the hard work and I'll bring forth the children … you … put on lovely clothes and make merry with the master … Fifteen days of the month, you sleep with the master, the other fifteen days I'll sleep with him. (Kamala : 35)
Like Kamala, Tendulkar’s Laxmi also create an example of gender stereotyping. She is thrown out of her house by her husband, yet she considers him as her God. In portraying the women characters, Tendulkar stands on par with the writers like Mahasweta Devi. He is one of those dramatists who use their medium in the service of their favourite socio-political ideology. He is not out to propagate any particular philosophy of life. Tendulkar’s plays are open to diverse interpretation and cannot be tied down to a single line of thinking.

*Silence! The Court Is In Session*

Based on a 1956 short story, *Die Panne* (Traps) by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Tendulkar wrote the play, *Shāntatā! Court Chālu Aahe* (*Silence! The Court Is In Session*). It was presented on the stage for the first time in 1967, and proved as one of his finest works. Satyadev Dubey presented it in movie form in 1971 with Tendulkar’s collaboration as the screenplay writer. *Silence! The Court Is In Session* by playwright Vijay Tendulkar, was originally written in Marathi as "*Shāntatā! Court Chālu Aahe*". It was staged for the first time in 1967, and has been translated into several languages and adapted by various theatre troupes over the years. The play is a social satire on middle-class society, particularly its treatment of women. The play consists of middle-class characters. The social issues discussed, in it are not quite organically integrated into its plot but “expounded in the dramatic give and take of a sustained debate among the characters.” (Dharan 2009: 93)
The play begins innocuously enough with what appears to be almost a desultory conversation among the artists of a dramatic troupe, as they arrive group-by-group in a village where they are supposed to perform a show from their repertoire. First to arrive are Leela Benare, a member of the troupe, and Raghu Samant, a local resident. The shy and awkward Samant is quite nettled by Leela Benare’s open-hearted admiration for him. “Let’s leave everyone behind … and so somewhere far away –with you.” (SCS 55) And again, “You’re a very pure and good person. I like you.” (SCS 56)

This open complement contrasts not only with Samant’s graceless and embarrassed acceptance, but also with Benare’s sarcastic comments on the Kashikars and others later on. She reduces Mr. Kashikar to “Prime Objective” with reference to his hypocritical idealism and Mrs. Kashikar to her biological functionality – “Hand-that-Rocks-Cradle”, the raison-de-etre, as it were, of her place in their married life. Rokde, Sukhatme and Karnik and Professor Damle are more mercilessly derided. Rokde is a helpless drudge of the Kashikars and Sukhatme, “an Export on the Law” is such a great barrister that “even a desperate client won’t go anywhere near him! He just sits alone in the barrister’s room at court squatting flies with legal precedents!” (SCS 59) Karnik is only “Hmmm!” “Sci-en-tist! Inter-failed”. Damle prides himself on his great book – learning, but the Intellectual, “runs away”, when there is a real life problem. When Samant listens to these comments he exclaims, “Oh! It does sound good fun!” Earlier, when Benare explains the nature of the show the Troup is going to
present, we get the first mention of the play being fun, which, in the light of later events, acquires a tone of dramatic irony.

Samant: Sometimes to do with the court….

Benare: Quite right. Not a real court, a fake one, a make believe one!

Samant: In other words, some fun to do with a court. (SCS: 59)
Thus very early in the play, the element of ‘fun’ is established. That this element is inextricably bound up with seriousness, we learn when Kashikar, the president of the troupe arrives and is annoyed by some unforeseen difficulties that crop up. When Sukhatme asks him not to worry, he bursts out, “How can I not worry, we owe something to the people, Sukhatme. A performance is no laughing matter.” (SCS: 59)

The discussion veers round to the absence of the fourth witness, Rawate, who is sick and therefore has not showed up for the performance. They decide to make do with a local man, Samant, has neither seen a court in his life nor acted in a play. Sukhatme, in such a theatrical exigency assures him that he will prepare the local person quite easily. As the play progresses, the readers/spectators are surprised to find Ms. Benare caught unaware, “Prisoner Ms. Benare, under section NO. 302 of the Indian Penal Code, you are accused of the crime of infanticide. Are you guilty or not guilty or not guilty of the aforementioned crime?” (SCS: 74) Ms. Benare, who, as the surprised audience/readers learn later on, had to undergo an abortion, owing to her affair with Professor Damle, realizes
that her gossip-mongering associates have, under the garb of a mock-trial had
trapped her. She tries to defend but all her arguments fall deaf on the ears of
men in the court. Benare’s views are rejected by all of them, and it seems like a
pre-planned conspiracy.

However, even before she can answer her charge, Samant returns with packets
of cigarettes and *pan* and there ensues a *pan-chewing* and spitting contest,
which adds a new dimension to the ongoing scene. Amidst all the fun and hilarity,
when Sukhatme begins the prosecution’s argument on ‘motherhood’, Ms. Benare
pointedly asks how he being a male, speak about the sacredness of
‘motherhood.’ Then, Mr. Ponkshe, a famous scientist is summoned as the first
witness, but he is made to take his oath by *Oxford English Dictionary* rather than
on the *Geeta*, for Mr. Rokde had picked up the fattest book from Mr. Kashikar’s
house that came to his hand, and that turned out to be the dictionary. The actual
testimony is carried out in a lighter note:

**Sukhatme:** Mr. Ponkshe, is she married or unmarried?

**Ponkshe:** Why don’t you ask the accused?

**Sukhatme:** But if you were asked, what would you say?

**Ponkshe:** To the public eye, she is unmarried.

**Benare:** (interrupting) and to the private eye?

**Kashikar:** Order! Ms Benare, self-control ...(To Sukhatme) You may continue.
I'll just be back. (Rises and goes to the inner room where the toilet
is.) (SCS 81)
The court scene goes on like this manner but ironically, like any tormentor, Sukhatme, in his malignity, forgets that what is ‘great fun’ for him has turned out to be third-degree torture for Ms Benare.

As Kashikar pronounces his final judgment on the case, some faces appear at the window that has come to see the real show. The ‘First Face asks very innocently “Has the show begun? The Leaving Courtroom? (SCS 119) The innocence of this question enlivens all the more the cruelty of what has been witnessed before. The last scene intensifies the irony:

Mrs. Kashikar: She’s taken it really to heart. How sensitive the child is!

Kashikar: You’re telling me. She’s taking it much too much in heart. After all it was...

Sukhatme: Just a game! What else? A game! That’s all.

Ponkshe: A mere game!

Karnik: Benare, come on, get up. It’s time for the show. The show must go on.

Mrs. Kashikar: (Shaking her) Do get up Benare. The show must start on time. Come on, now. Look, it was all untrue. It would hardly be true. Would it? (SCS 120)

The play, thus, shows how a woman is tormented in a male-dominated society. The deeper implications are to expose the way how inferior, mediocre persons trap superior individuals and fulfill their innate burning itch of publically denouncing them.
Thus, in *Silence! The Court is in Session*, Tendulkar has depicted the plight of a young woman, who is betrayed by the male dominated society. A traditional male dominated society cannot relinquish its paralyzed values and customs. The society does not like to perceive or receive any social change. Tendulkar presents a treatment of those ugly ways of society in this play. It is a bitter satire against the social ills and an interesting attempt to criticize the follies that prevail in our society.” (Singh, 2009: 34) Tendulkar has criticized the middle-class morality that throttles the tender desires of Benare, a middle class woman, to mother a child in the play. Tendulkar seems to leave the play without suggesting any solution to the problem. None in the play is ready to sympathize with Benare. Only Mr. Kashikar, the judge, feels that they are going too far in their mock-trial but, then, he immediately silences his conscience. After all the Court is in session and everyone is expected to keep silence! Tendulkar covertly pleads for sympathy for the victims of the society through this flash of humanity for a moment in the heart of Mr. Kashikar.⁶Silence! The Court is in Session is not a propaganda play. It grapples with several problems of the Indian society—such as the degradation of the judiciary system, pretentious institutional social service organizations, and forceful male supremacy in Indian society, in a masterful way. However, the fact is that we look at the world and our friends, relatives, et al., and value their roles only from their utility towards our ends. Conventional morality is only an imaginary issue.

With a drama woven into a drama, the play revolves around theatre group about to perform a play in a village. As the plot thickens, the comforting mist of 'pretend'
starts to dissolve revealing the frustrated, bitter and jaded lives of the performers. A few years ahead of its times, Silence... exposes the dark side of middle class morality, where judgments are passed by the minute and silence is often the only recourse left to the defendant.

**Ghashiram Kotwal**

“Ghashiram Kotwal, which deals with political violence. The play is a political satire created as a musical drama set in 18th century Pune.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghashiram_Kotwal) It combined traditional Marathi folk music and drama with contemporary theater techniques, creating a new paradigm for Marathi theatre. The play demonstrates Tendulkar's deep study of group psychology, and it brought him a "Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship" (1974–75) for a project titled, "An Enquiry Into the Pattern of Growing Violence in Society and Its Relevance to Contemporary Theatre". Ghashiram Kotwal With over six thousand performances thus far in its original and translated versions remains one of the longest-running plays in the history of Indian theater. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghashiram_Kotwal)

It is, in a way Tendulkar’s response to the rise of a local political party, Shiv Sena, in Maharashtra. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vijay_Tendulkar) It is a political satire, written as historical drama and based on the life of Nana Phadnavis (1741–1800), one of the prominent ministers in the court of the Peswa of Pune. Its theme points a finger to how men in power give rise to ideologies to serve their purposes, and later destroy them when they become useless. It was
first performed on 16 December 1972, by the Progressive Drama Association in Pune. Jabbar Patel's production of the play in 1973 is considered a classic in Modern Indian Theatre.

Vijay Tendulkar's controversial, albeit extensively staged play *Ghasiram Kotwal* showcasing the oppression and cruelty of rulers in pre-independence. The play begins with an invocation to lord Ganesha. Then the Brahmins of Pune introduce themselves and we can see the morally corrupt state of affairs in Pune. The story lines runs like this: The Peshwa Empire was run by the ageing, but extremely ruthless Nana Phadnavis, on behalf of the minor Sawai Madhorao. The Brahmins who have the run of the city are a licentious lot; their days are equally divided between bhajans and lascivious tamashas, temples and gambling dens, pious wives and dancing girls. Into this city, fabled for its prosperity and its powerful Brahmins, comes a poor Kannauj Brahmin from Aurangabad. Ghasiram, a Brahmin from Kanauj, finds himself falsely accused of theft and slighted by the Pune Brahmins. He swears revenge on the city. He snares Nana Phadnavis, the Peshwa's chieftain and magistrate of the city using his young daughter Lalita Gauri. In return, Ghasiram demands to be appointed the kotwal and is put in charge of the law and order of Pune. He now wastes no time in getting even with his former tormentors. But little does he realize that Nana is merely using him to keep the Brahmins in check; Ghasiram will become a convenient fall-guy for Nana once he has accomplished his mentor's dirty job. Ghasiram will become a convenient fall-guy for Nana once he has accomplished his mentor's dirty job. As Ghasiram becomes the scourge of the city Brahmins,
Nana savours Gauri’s innocent charms. Then Ghasiram learns one day that Gauri has died mysteriously, and Nana is marrying for the seventh time. Insane with rage, the livid father confronts Nana, only to be reminded that his daughter’s life was a small price to pay for power and privilege. By this time the city Brahmins have united in a bloodthirsty demand for Ghasiram’s death. Nana signs the death warrant as casually as he had granted Ghasiram the kotwal. The final scene has Ghasiram being mobbed by the irate crowd where, semi-crazed, he asks for death. As crowds gather round Ghasiram’s lifeless body, Nana appears to herald the end of an age of terror and proposes festivities to mark the purging of the city. Ghasiram Kotwal also operates at an allegorical level, commenting acerbically on the political institutions of present-day India where scores of Ghasirams are made and marred each time the political die is cast anew.

Style

The play is notable for the use of the “Tamasha” form in Marathi folk theatre. Singing and dancing are used here to good effect. "Abhangas" (devotional songs) are mixed with "Lavnis" (lyrics).

The playwright, Vijay Tendulkar, is contemporary; the play is set in the late 18th century and has the lineaments of a classic folk tale. Falsely accused of being a thief, a stranger is turned into an outcast. He bribes the corrupt local ruler into appointing him police chief, or "kotwal," and pursues a path of vengeance against the innocent as well as the guilty. Because Ghashiram Kotwal is merciless, his enemies accrue and his own fall from power is foredoomed.
Tendulkar's view of the society under scrutiny is deeply cynical. The police chief outlaws all pleasure in the interest of his own distorted concept of morality. He is both individually horrific and indicative of his times. One knows that when he is deposed, someone equally evil will rise in his place. As translated by Eleanor Zelliot and Jayant Karve, the play is pregnant with portent and favors such melodramatic statements as "the city trembles at his name." At the same time, there is a simplicity in the style of storytelling, as a narrator (Norris M. Shimabuku) leads us through the mythic journey, playing the role of sardonic tour guide.

The enduring appeal of Tendulkar's plays is most obviously exemplified by his play *Ghashiram Kotwal*. Set in late 18th century Pune, the play documents the degeneration of the socio-political fabric during the last days of the Peshwa rule. First performed in 1973, the play was initially banned for its alleged anti-Brahman stance and for its portrayal of Nana Phadnavis, the central character, in a historically inaccurate light. The production was subsequently revived by the Theatre Academy, Pune, which went on to perform the play more than 500 times in the following years. Translated into several languages, Ghashiram is regularly performed at theatre festivals across the country. It has also been performed abroad. Regarding the relevance of the play, Tendulkar says, "I never approached Ghashiram as a historical play. The impulse to write the play was provoked by the contemporary political situation of the time, specifically the rise to power of the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. But it has been interpreted differently with changing political situations including the Emergency. Performed with
sensitivity and intelligence, a play can be infinitely renewed to suit the current milieu. Take the case of Shakespeare, who remains the most widely performed playwright despite the passage of time. But the openness of the play to interpretation is not intentional on the part of the playwright. Rather, it is innate to the play. Though Ghashiram was a product of my reflections on the rise of the Shiv Sena, I was ultimately interested in examining the situations which lead to the creation of Ghashiram-like forces in society. The Ghashirams of the world die, but the situations, which give birth to such forces, recur and are personified in the character of Nana Phadnavis. Beneath the superficial changes in history, the larger dynamics of power are cyclical. That is why such a play continues to evoke interest." (Bhise 2009: 146)

The combination of currency and timelessness which characterizes Ghashiram also manifests itself in Tendulkar's social plays, which, like his political plays, continue to inspire new productions despite their controversial content.

In Ghasiram Kotwal, Tendulkar uses many of the elements of folk theatre. However, what is more also relevant is the overall tone, ambience and atmosphere of the play and the way he uses and adapts these features. “He combines the ready wit of the Tamasha with the mime and music of the Dashavatar plays. The humour of the Songadya lay in his quick repartee and in his use of words with double entendre.” (Bhalla 2009: 133-134) Such a characteristic is an integral part of Tendulkar's play. For instance:

Sutradhar: Wait now, wait now.
Hold your horse. Must you go.


Or again:

Nana: Our grandeur's gone if she's not had …

Servant: Put your sword back in its sheath, Majesty. The prey is far away. (30)

The folk elements add to the intensity of the theme. Seemingly centre issue of the Brahmin and Maratha animosity, is in fact, a prop or a backdrop. The background of eighteen century decadence and internal suspicion and hostility was the right setting for the story of Ghasiram. The story of Ghasiram is in a sense, a story of one aspect of mankind. It is used to highlight decadence and hegemony of a society.

_Sakharam Binder_

In his 1972 play, _Sakharam Binder_ (Sakharam, the Binder), Tendulkar dealt with the topic of domination of the male gender over the female gender. As the title suggests, the play revolves around Sakharam and his curious life-style. Sakharam, is a man devoid of ethics and morality, and professes not to believe in 'outdated' social codes and conventional marriage. He makes the rule of his house clear from the outset, “This is not a royal palace. It is Sakharam Binder's house.” (2003: 125) Later, he tells a frightened Laxmi gloatingly, “I have been like this right from birth. Born naked, I was. My mother used to say… He is a _Maher_ born in a _Brahmin_ home.” (127) “This opening harangue,…” according to V. M.
Madge, “is a crucial part of the text in that it not only tells what sort of a man Sakharam is but also contains seeds of a dichotomy in his character, of which he is blissfully unaware.” (2009: 121) He also tells Laxmi how he expects her to behave, “I like everything in order here. Won’t put up with slipshod ways. If you are careless, I shall show the door, ... I am the master here. ...A house must be a home, you understand?” (125)

He accordingly uses the society for his own pleasure. He regularly gives ‘shelter’ to abandoned wives, and uses them for his sexual gratification while remaining oblivious to the emotional and moral implications of his exploits. He justifies all his acts through claims of modern, unconventional thinking, and comes up with hollow arguments meant in fact to enslave women. Paradoxically, some of the women which Sakharam had enslaved buy into his arguments and simultaneously also badly want freedom from their enslavement.

Sakharam Binder thinks he has the system by the tail. That system is the de facto enslavement of women in postcolonial India, despite the promises of democracy and modernity. Sakharam, a bookbinder, picks up other men’s discarded women -- castoff wives who would otherwise be homeless, destitute or murdered with impunity -- and takes them in as domestic servants and sex partners. He rules his home like a tin-pot tyrant, yet each woman is told that she is free to leave whenever she likes. He will even give her a sari, 50 rupees and a ticket to wherever she wants to go. "Everything good and proper, where Sakharam Binder is concerned," he says. "He's no husband to forget common
decency." (128) What he doesn't anticipate are the moral and emotional complications of this arrangement, which prove heartbreakingly ruinous to everyone involved. As the play progresses the unconventionality of the protagonist is established. The extremity is shown by his comment on Champa, “Nothing much to look at this time. Must have been all right once upon a time. But there is no spark left in her now.” (129) The play's main conflict is set in motion when Laxmi returns after Sakharam sent her packing, and convinces Champa to let her stay. It is not the plot, however, but the depth and the subtlety of Bernard White's portrayal of Sakharam that injects variety, surprise and fascination into this almost three-hour play. Mr. White vividly captures the strange and complex pathology of Sakharam, who seems to want to please his "birds" even as he bullies them and who speaks like a freethinking crusader for women's rights one minute and like a philistine scornful of their devotion to him the next. Sakharam's tragedy turns out to hinge on his budding social consciousness, his arrested enlightenment. He can see -- almost -- an idea of equality and shared humanity that transcends individual appetite, but nothing in his life (including the women) ever encourages him to follow its logic. “Like Brecht's Mother Courage, he exploits a corrupt system for personal advantage, and then discovers that the price of playing the game is everything he hoped to protect. Unlike Brecht, though, Mr. Tendulkar never judges his protagonist but concentrates instead on painting him with unsettling compassion, perceptiveness and thoroughness. His play deserves to be much better known in the United States than it is.” (Kalb 2004: 08)
The play is open ended in the sense that after the murder of Champa, it is not clear what would be the plight of Laxmi after the death of Champa.

*Kanyadaan*

A considerable amount of attention is being paid at the present time to the problems of domestic violence and domestic abuse. The campaign against these social atrocities has intensified partly because of what appears to have been a noticeable increase in violence against women. These have included a sudden rash of murders, attempted murders, murder suicides and other violent attacks against females carried out by their male counterparts.

*Kanyadaan* by Vijay Tendulkar studies a case of spousal abuse and interrogates many of the issues mentioned above concerning this domestic problem and reasons why victims and their relatives allow it to continue. The play deals with a wife who begins by ignoring or explaining away obvious signals that her fiancé would be a wife-beater, marries him in spite of her observations, leaves him when he assaults her, but returns when he comes pleading. She then sticks by him amid sustained brutalization, allows him to exploit her, refuses the help of her family and even exiles herself from them. But the play’s treatment further complicates a complex issue, doing more than highlighting a social ill, as theatre is wont to do. It dramatizes a house divided against itself, a vivid case of gender politics, national politics, ideology and tradition. Among the interesting things about the drama is the window through which it looks at this case of a drunken husband who willfully and openly exploits and batters his wife. The window looks
out from a house of the politics of India, the “profoundly humanist standpoint” of a socialist ideology, and more than it is a story of a politician’s daughter who falls victim to domestic violence, it is the tragedy of her father. These interlocking issues are played out in Vijay Tendulkar’s *Kanyadaan*, and makes the play one of his most powerful human dramas. The story of a daughter’s transformation into a wife and a mother, the play is charged with significant social and moral questions, which are deeply thought provoking, and to which there are no easy answers.

Basically, the play is about Yadunath, an MLA and his wife Seva. The story is set around the period of Emergency during the turbulent years of 70s. At the end of the second scene, the protagonist talks over a phone, “Don’t tell me she is going to impose Emergency. Okay, if you hear anything more let me know, will you?”

(540)

He is rather too proud of his Dalit son-in-law but his wife thinks of him otherwise:

Seva: You can’t stop me… The truth is that your dalit son-in-law, who can write such a wonderful autobiography, and many lovely poems, wants to remain an idler … He wants his wife to work. And with her money, he wants to drown himself in drink, and have a hell of a time with his friends. On the top of that, 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 higher caste. It appears that this is monumental mission he has set out to fulfill. (543-4)
In response to that Nath also confesses that he is also unhappy regarding the contrast between what Arun says and does. Although he dislikes and condemns the book, he praises the book in public. “Incidentally, what he says at home is symbolic of the way of similar Dalit autobiographies in Maharashtra being treated by scholars and leaders of Nath’s persuasion,” opines Nutan Gosavi. (2009: 164)

A young woman from a politically active family that regards itself as progressive and liberal decides to marry a socially inferior, but talented man. Tendulkar explores the texture of modernity and social change in India through the forces his marriage unleashes. This gripping play, which is also laced with a gentle humour, is charged with an undercurrent of violence, uncertainties and anger, and concerns itself with questions that are crucial to all societies grappling with change and social barriers. The play is about a girl born into a political family with progressive views who marries a Dalit man because she sees angst in his poetry, and promise in delivering him from his devilish tendencies. Her father’s lofty ideals have inculcated in her a spirit which tries to find the good in people, and strive to change them. However, after getting married to him, she soon realizes that the devil and the poet-lover are one and the same person, they cannot be separated, neither can he be cleansed of the vices (drinking, wife-beating) that are a part of him. In fact, there is a strange malice in him, a sadistic desire to punish her for the suffering his ancestors have gone through the ages. Finally, the father, who has taught her the lofty ideals of humanity and socialism, is defeated — he finds himself powerless before the predicament of his daughter, and has to praise his son-in-law’s autobiography, applause spewing from his
mouth and poison dripping from his eyes. His daughter tells him how his great ideals, his hope in human innocence is faulty, and how she is a victim of his faith in pursuing this promise.

*Kanyadaan*, in this way, sheds light on the sensitive issue of spousal abuse and through a story of a wife caught in the web of domestic violence, shows the reader the minute intricacies of such situations that cause the victim from protesting against or reporting the abuse, and hence, allow the abuse to continue. The thesis of the book revolves around the notion that perhaps the incorporation and implementation of the caste system in marriages is the safest bet to increase the chances of the success of the marriage. The poignant account of a young girl being subjected to ill treatment by her husband who is of a caste different to hers leaves the reader pondering upon the legitimacy of the modern day liberal views of stamping out the caste system from marriage traditions. Tendulkar introduces us to a girl belonging to a sophisticated family that is revered for its strength in politics. The girl, as we see her, has been brought up to respect and appreciate modern approaches to culture. She decides to marry a man who is not from her caste. We see that the girl gets inspired by the man who is a poet and she finds herself helplessly enchanted by his poetry. But the book does not center on the girl as much as it does on her father.

The Degeneration of Human Individuals: *Gidhade (The Vultures)*:  
*Gidhade (The Vultures)*, produced in 1970 and published 1971, was actually written fourteen years before. It was with the production and publication of
*Gidhade* that Tendulkar name became associated with sensationalism, sex and violence conservative section of Maharashtrian society were stunned by the open display of illicit sexual relations and scenes of violence. The play is a ruthless dissection of human nature revealing its inherent tendencies to violence, avarice, selfishness, sensuality and sheer wickedness. For instance, Rama, at the time of her marriage is described as ‘she was like a doe/ an innocent doe untouched/ as loving as the earth. (203)

Rama was brought to the house of the Pitaless. Rajaninath sings:

But it was no home,
Not a home, but a hole in a tree
Where vultures lived
In the shapes of men (204)

The degeneration of human individuals belonging to a middle class milieu is exposed through the interaction among the members of a family. Ramakant and Umakant’s greed viciousness, their sisters Manik’s gross sensuality all add up to naturalistic depiction of those baser aspects of human that one would like to silt one eyes to the Kamala devi Chattopadhyay award for the play and it was translated in fourteen Indian languages. The play gained so popularity that it was staged all over India in different versions. The horizons of Marathi drama widened and this started a healthy exchange of drama in different languages.

Dharan describes the play as, “the most violent of Tendulkar’s plays. It reminds one of Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*. It is replete with violent imagery,
consisting of blood, eeriness, and mad raving. Both Hari Pitale and Manik thirst for revenge. Both succeed in their mission. While Pappa succeeds in driving Ramakant to the streets, Manik succeeds in causing Rama’s abortion. The dialogue is composed of words which seem appropriate in the mouths of the characters who utter them. On the whole, the play is, no doubt, naturalistic in its portrayal of domestic violence caused by greed.” (Dharan: 78)

_The Cyclist:_

As an intended last play, _The Cyclist_ is different from Tendulkar’s large body of work. It is a skillfully crafted, uninterrupted piece about the adventure of life told through a cyclist’s journey. As an experimental playwright, Tendulkar’s every play, in its form and structure, is different from the previous one. He picks this complex theme and tackles with a simple form and language. The play is remarkable for its episodic structure and naturalistic dialogue. Life’s complexity can perhaps be best understood when told in simple terms. In this, Tendulkar joins other great journey writers such as Homer (_The Odyssey_), Voltaire (_Candide_), Ibsen (_Peer Gynt_), and Beckett (_Waiting for Godot_). The Cyclist is not about one but three journeys: geographical, an historical journey of the bicycle, and a psychological exploration. A young man is about to start a "world trip" on his bicycle. There is no specific geographical location in which the play is set, but a place from which he is trying to get away. He dreams of distant lands, oceans and mountains, wanting to see exotic places, meet interesting people. The geographical journey is at the same time the story of the development of bicycle
itself -- the cycle as a symbol of progress, opening new horizons for the society despite all the obstacles placed in its way to stop its advancement. The adventure gets darker and darker as the journey progresses, the Cyclist facing difficult elements both natural and human. It unravels man's dehumanization through a series of encounters which, though often extravagantly comic, tend to become illogical and bizarre as we move deeper into the play. In journey narratives, the obstacles encountered are generally surmounted; in The Cyclist the process is reversed, the expectation of certainty whimpering into nothingness. It's only in the later part of the Cyclist's trip that we come to find out that this is essentially a metaphysical journey -- a journey of the mind. Buried deep in the play is the grand existential question: "where I came from, where I am going"? -- Life's journey in search of elusive truth.

The play generates a train of events manifested on stage through a series of slapstick situations. Tendulkar lets his character Cyclist play straight, whereas those he encounters on the way come in a group as hoodlums, in pairs as the Lords of Earth and Sun, or single as Sage, or Actor. These latter are written in exaggerated manner. Perils of the journey are mixed with uneasy laughter. Tendulkar has described his plays as about the reality surrounding him: "I write to let my concerns vis-a-vis my reality -- the human conditions as I perceive it." (cited in Dharan 1999: 96) The reality in The Cyclist, however, with its layered journeys, gets elevated to a level transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. For example, all the characters in the play have been consciously given symbolic names, e. g. X,Y, Z. or such titles as Ma, Pa, Lion, Ghost, etc.
And even the central protagonist the Cyclist is neutrally called the Main Character. Tendulkar has said that it is the content of his work that determines the form. He is precise about directions for staging the play. The script points to a minimalist setting -- an exercise bike as the sole prop. The bald patch on the Cyclist's head, which viewers see in the last scene, is to ensure that the play is about an adult and is not mistaken for any children's fantasy. Again, the use of coarse language at the beginning, in a violent crowd scene, reinforces the playwright's intent about the adult nature of the play. Most directions are embedded in the dialogue which in its naturalistic idiom is marked by short sentences, often half finished. In The Cyclist, unlike most of Tendulkar's other plays, there is no strong female character. Instead, it's a Mermaid (a woman with a fish's torso) who eventually strips the Cyclist to his flesh and bones, having swallowed his wet clothes. Mermaid's seduction of the Cyclist is that of Oedipus, a composite of mother, girlfriend, and an enchantress. Referring to the pointless search for meaning in his plays, Tendulkar has said, it's a "jungle in which you can always enter, but has no way out." Unlike his other plays, which often have a pall of gloom over them, The Cyclist was written in an upbeat frame of mind. Despite all the travails and troubles that the journey brings, the Cyclist does not give up. As he remarks: "A journey is a journey. It has to be completed. Mine will not be affected by any loss or pain." (cited in Gokhale 2009: 31) The Main Character has the will to overcome obstacles. And even when the Cyclist's determination dissipates and the situation is hopeless, his cry for help is rewarded. Pa appears out of nowhere as a shining light with his clichéd advice to
get him out of his pickle. The best solution Pa can offer in one Zen-like moment of revelation -- (when everything fails) "Do nothing, sometimes that's all you need to do." (ibid: 32) The journey has to be completed even when we don't know its ultimate destination (except one’s mortality).

There are two options. It could be an open-ended journey to a place different from where one started; or it's a completed journey that culminates with a return home -- to the place one began. In Eastern philosophy, the path is more significant than the destination. Injured and exhausted, stripped of his clothing, the Cyclist lays naked beside his bicycle in the end. He curls in a womb-like position and falls asleep. It is not clear whether he will be up the next day to continue his adventure. Tendulkar has declined comment on the play except to say that it speaks for itself. In my correspondence with him (which spans a decade), he made only one remark comparing the situation in India in 1999 to the play: "Life here is as in the Cyclist. It will never change. Each day we ride our old, dilapidated wheel-less cycle and go places. Breathtaking static activity.” (Tendulkar 1997: 23)

To sum up, Tendulkar courageously exposed the hypocrisies in the Indian social mindset is the actual point to be noted. He used powerful expression to reveal the orthodox society. Although highly criticized, he was far ahead of his times to give wings to his flights of imagination with its solid heels on earth. The best thing about his plays was that they could be related to the real life of a middle class man. Many of Tendulkar's plays derived inspiration from real-life incidents or social upheavals. The way he galvanized theatre through his
provocative explorations of morality, power and violence, deserves a standing ovation! The reason behind his huge success was the accurate and sensitive portrayal of the social issues of the time.

Tendulkar successfully gives the readers a clear insight into the lives of his individual characters and evokes empathy for them all, as they seem to be victims of their own trappings. Her portrayal of women characters range from the socially depraved characters who are so close to the real life. Tendulkar's strengths are evident and there is tenderness and realism in his depiction of the central character he focused upon. Justification Vijay Tendulkar happens to be one of the most prolific Indian playwrights who have enriched the Indian drama and theatre by picturing the varied problems of native life in Maharashtra. The main reason for our attraction for him is that he does not copy from or imitate the Western dramatists and thrust it on the native audience. Vijay Tendulkar successfully ventures in unveiling the social turpitude and the holocaust in which the fain interests of the fairer sex are almost strangled.

Tendulkar's multi faceted creative genius, who experimented and explored the potentials of the dramatic genre, Tendulkar's plays have a massive impact on the tender and fresh minds of the worldwide avid readers. Themes Tendulkar is a towering and Glowering Indian dramatist and all his play are sharply focused and illuminating. Through his writings he attacks the society hypocrisies. Thematically, his plays have ranged from the alienation of the modern individual to contemporary politics from social-individual tensions to the complexities of
human character, from the exploration of man woman relationship to reinterpretations of historical episodes. The themes of gender relation, sexual norms, institution of marriage and issues of conventional morality have been featured prominently in his plays. Tendulkar through his writings has exposed the theme of man's existential Loneliness. There is a streak of naturalism and humanism in all his plays. All his convey a social message through his writings he wanted to make society a better place to live in. Tendulkar exposed alienation of modern individual to contemporary politics. He also exposed men's dominance over women, his portraiture of overt and covert violence in human-beings and above all his deep and abiding consciousness of women's vulnerability in Indian social hierarchy. Tendulkar's central concern is the relationship between individual and society. In play after play he has made effective presentation of the latent violence and lust in middle class life, the consequent devastation and the essential loneliness of man. He depicted the indomitable and grit of human sprint. We find the idea of the social and aesthetic concerns in all plays. His primary compulsion is and has always been humanistic. Man's fight for survival, the varied moralities by which we live, the social position of women, these are his binding concern. In his plays he portrays the human lives which are stagnated in the mire of personal frustration, sexual innuendoes. He tried to expose the essential artificiality of the society. All his plays have a direct, one to one relationship with society. This prolific writer has also exposed. The patriarchal setup of marriage means of not only regulating sexual and reproductive behavior but also a means of upholding male dominance. All his efforts were just to make
society a better place. He always emphasized the importance of making better homes, better family and better society.

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