CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The present study is aimed at critically evaluating selected Marathi plays of Vijay Tendulkar and Mahesh Elkunchwar translated in English. The thesis focuses on the socio-cultural elements in these two Indian play writers.

The development of Indian Drama has a long history. It has gone through different stages and crosses big milestones. India has had a rich and very distinguished theatrical cultural tradition for more than a thousand years. Indian theater has originated during the 3rd century BC. Indian Dramas of various languages were influenced by the Hindu religion, the caste system, and literature particularly in Sanskrit, which is the ancient language of India. At the very beginning, history of Indian theater in the earliest stage, theatres were developed and controlled by the ruling classes. Two great religious Sanskrit epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, lead many writers to use it as major sources of material. The Natya Shastra (The Science of Dramaturgy), had written around AD 200, elaborates features of drama, dance, acting, costume elaborately. It is being said that the origin of theatre is from a Hindu god to human beings according to the ancient tale. The earliest plays performed in palaces and temples. Later on theaters were built and took much development, and then auditoriums were divided by four pillars painted white, red, yellow, and blue representing classes, castes. The stage was divided into two parts- the front half used for the performance and the rear part of the stage for dressing rooms. In earlier stage of Indian drama each play was accompanied by musicians and singers. Sanskrit drama was organized
around *rasas* (moods), i.e. furious, peaceful etc. in ancient Sanskrit plays classical language was used with a mixture of verse and prose. That language was known as the learned language spoken by gods, kings and sages. Bhasa, the dramatist of early as the 3rd century AD wrote thirteen plays and lead to others to follow his path of writing, and later on came to forefront the famous dramatist Kalidasa, in the late 4th century, who wrote the famous play in Sanskrit *Shakuntala*. Kalidasa, being known as a court poet and dramatist, had used the *Mahabharata*, as source of his writing to teach and entertain too to the masses. Kalidasa had tried to invent all the ways of survival and lead to think the social and religious moral to the people at that time. Later on according to circumstances many changes took place in the form of theatre and style of writing and thematic contain of the Indian plays. Even the Indian drama found in degradation due to some regional cultural forms of entertainment, like shadow-puppet plays, folk drama, religious performances, local cultural events and regional dances etc. and hence due to the emergence of regional entertaining performances and their popularity among the contemporary people, Indian Drama particularly Sanskrit, got set back during the 7th century. After near about two centuries some stage companies tried to perform, but only regional plays were remained to attract the audience. During 8th to the 15th century, many regional theatres were formed and many performances took place within and outside theatres. Nearly all the plays deal with myths, legends and religion elaborating and encompassing the themes of love and chivalry.

In India, in the earlier period classical Sanskrit plays were performed in temples to please gods by delineating the stories of war between good and bad. Indian Classical plays also based on religious books, events and Hindu mythology. These plays were intended to
entertain and to teach the religion and religious values, by performing in or out side of the temples on different religious occasions. According to the stages, where they used to performed were considered as Temple Theatres. These plays dealt with praise to gods, kings, princes, queens and great heroes of the time. During the period of the invention of drama to the present period, there are innumerable changes and developments in Indian Drama. Many great dramatists has taken much efforts for the strengthening this genre in various Indian languages. There is a long history of Indian play having its own root of origin and the very stages of the developments. Indian Drama is our own invention unlike fiction in Indian English Writing. Many Indian playwrights -Ashwaghosha, Bhasa, Kalidas, Sudraka, Bhavbhuiti, Magha, Dandi and many more from the earlier period has created a remarkable contribution in Indian Drama. Ashwaghosha’s Three Buddhist’s plays lead other playwrights to experiment on drama in Indian context by applying various techniques and religious theme. His plays prove that Indian Drama had fully developed as far Indian context during that period. Another prominent playwright, Bhasa who is known as the first Indian poet had written, Malavikagnimitra, Urubhamasa, Swapnavasavadatta and others.

Another, one of the prominent, is Kalidas a notable playwright has achieved world wide recognition as a dramatist. Later on Bhavbhuiti also had given his significant contribution as a Indian Dramatist by writing Sanskrit plays- Uttararamacharit and Malatimadhava deals with Indian culture and religion.

After the Classical Sanskrit Play there was much gap as far as any performance of the play on the stage. After a long gap, Indian Play came on the Indian stage, but not like previous type. Indian drama came nearly in all the major Indian languages. Various regional languages and the
Indian plays have grown hand in hand. It may not be wrong to say that both, regional languages and Indian plays in those languages helped each other to develop and spread. After the degradation of Classical Sanskrit Theatre, Indian drama began to take place after a long time, but unlike previous Sanskrit play, Indian drama spread all over the country in various languages taking/considering various issues encompassing socio-cultural realities. It`s powerful appearance influences Calcutta`s English Theatre and the traditional Folk Theatres, religious performances etc.

The growth of vernacular languages in India during that time was very fast due to the consciousness of each class and alien groups in every state and every region. All the states was giving importance to their own language, religion, socio-cultural set up and hence instead of accepting others ideology as far as presentation and thematic matters are concerned, they have given importance to their own culture. And hence all over the country there was wide spread of Indian drama in vernacular languages in India. Indian play in vernacular languages attracted the masses and spread largely and fulfilled the aim of entertainment to all and everybody instead of remaining limited for limited any class. Folk drama, the invention of regional tradition developed in different states known differently, but all these various folk play deals with the story of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and other religious books and Hindu mythology. These all vernacular languages imbibed the folk drama and entertained to the large scale till today in some states.

There are famous folk drama Jatra in Bengal and Ramlila in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Bhavai in Gujarat and Braj has their own form known as Raslila.

These folk dramas have their own theaters. Their theatres were not well equipped and technically as powerful as western theatre. And hence
they always remained comfortable to them as far as economy is concern for their performance. Folk dramas flourished all over the countries during fifteenth century. Till eighteenth century folk drama ruled in the Indian literature. After Islamic invasion, folk literature also got some set back due to its attachment to the religion and religious performances. Then came British, who brought English theatre for their own entertainment. There was limited audience to English theatre due to language barrier and limitations of theatre. The new theatre got little response in urban area, like Calcutta, Mumbai and Madras, but it created curiosity among the audience and Indian playwrights. This curiosity invented new chapter in Indian drama. Later on at the very beginning of twentieth century new form of drama is being introduced due to the impact of British Theatre. They had build and invented the British style of theatre to entertain British soldiers, business people, and government officials. British brought English drama through the East India Company. At the very beginning of English theatre, britishers introduced it in the state of Bengal and later on spread to the other metropolitan states like Bombay and Madras, today’s Mumbai and Chennai respectively. They have brought English theatre for their own entertainment. Nand Kumar rightly (2003) comments:

With the emergence of the East India Company on the political horizons of India, English education began to take roots in this land. English schools and other institutions created an atmosphere of reading and writing in English. English education in India not only fostered the critical study of western drama and the classical Indian drama, but also gave rise to the English theatre in India. A glance at the development of theatre in India during and after the British Raj serves to illustrate the point (10)

Therefore British theatre became the model theatre to Indian playwrights and performers. After the advent of British and their theatre, Indian drama has done drastic progress in crafting, technique, stage and performance. At the very beginning of modern theatre under the
influence of British, Indian play began to take new breath accepting regional languages and elaborating history and mythological and legendary stories. These were performed by actors of different castes, races, religions, and occupations. Indian playwrights also invented songs and dances encompassing regional culture and life. There are certain similarities between Modern Indian plays and Western Plays due to the acceptance of Western plays as a model by Indian modern playwrights. Though Indian dramatist accepted Western plays as far as style is concerned, but they seem conscious regarding the delineation of contemporary social ‘cultural’ political and religious situations. Modern plays highlight the realistic situations of regional events, including India's Independence Movement, Gandhian political ideology of the pre-independence period of our country. Indian plays have many variations from Sanskrit plays to Folk Drama, Religious performance to Modern Realistic Drama. Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Prize winner has created a milestone in Indian plays.

Rabindranath Tagore, known as poet, sage, prophet, and a teacher also written remarkable plays in Bengali and later on translated in English and in other languages also gave him a recognition as an Indian dramatist all over the world. Due to his excellent writing in all the genres of literature, and his dealing with contemporary socio-cultural and political issues, he was honoured by Nobel Prize in 1913. His Raja (1910), The King of the Dark Chamber (1914), Raktakarabi (1924), and Red Oleanders (1925) are milestones in the history of Indian drama. In his plays he depicted rural India with its own rich traditional glory. Though the dramas were not performed on the stage but paved a way for Indian drama.
Playwright and director Badal Sircar, actor Tripti Mitra, director Uptal Dutt, and director and educator Ebrahim Alkazi took many efforts for the development of Indian drama. Sanskrit drama too, the earliest formal theatrical genres followed the rules laid down by the *Natya Shastra*.

During the post-independence period, drama had not made much headway as poetry and novel. It had got its own problems, not shared by the other literary forms. Some notable playwrights of the present period are Asif Currimbhoy, Pratap Sharma, G.V.Desari, Gurucharan Das and Girish Karnad. Their plays are successfully staged in Europe and the United States of America. The first Five Year Plan after Independence encouraged the performing of arts as a means of public enlightenment and The National School of Drama was established in Delhi. Institutions were founded in big cities for imparting training in dramatics. The National Drama festival was started in Delhi by the Sangeet Natak Academy in 1954.

According to the Indian view of life, the purpose of drama and theatre was to create a feeling of pleasure or bliss (Rasa) by delineating different situations, mental status and feelings of human beings. The purpose of western drama on the other hand, was to reveal the struggles of life in their various forms. The western drama and theatre entered India as elements of the culture of the conquerors, which, in a well-planned manner deliberately tried to prove that when compared to the western the Indian culture was inferior, trivial and undeveloped.

**Translation in Indian English play:**

Translations paved the way for the growth of Indian drama in English. This enabled the readers to get aware of the different culture and tradition followed in different regions in India. Dramatists like Mohan
Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad became popular not only in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada, but also in all the Indian languages of modern Indian theatre by their innovative works and presentations of plays on the stage. The works of Habib Tanvir, K.V. Panikkar, B. V. Karnath, Ratan Theyyam, Badal Sircar and Girish Karnad celebrate the modern Indian nations, cultural heterogeneity. Their plays exhibited a visible and desperate development, both in terms of performance aesthetics and politics of representation. They differed from their predecessors in the choice of subject matter and dramaturgic practice.

Contemporary Indian dramatists attempted to cross cultural boundaries across time, going back to the past in a metamorphic sense to retrieve ancient traditions by creating them in their dramatic productions and the last few decades have undergone translations from the regional languages in English. This increases the quality of writing drama in totality. The epics and classics when translated in English becomes an important part in Indian English literature. Translated texts when taught to the students, increased their creativity and English translations popularized the Indian tradition among the scholars. Translations of regional drama served as a pillar for the emergence of national theatre into which the streams of theatrical art seem to converge. The translations have forged a link between the east and west, north and south and they contributed to the growing richness of contemporary creative consciousness. From different regions various old forms such as Khyal, Manch, Bhagat, Svang, Nautanke, Tamasha originated manifold forms of music, dance and mimic action are the common features found in them. Some notable playwrights and directors such as Utpal Dutt, Badal Sircar, C.T.Khanolkar, Sadanand Rege, Amol Palekar, Vijay Tendulkar, Satish
Alekar and Mahesh Elkunchwar contributed much to the growth and development of play scripts and trans-historical inter-culturalism. They also juxtaposed various strands of Indian culture simultaneously in their works. The context of some is drawn from Indian mythological episodes, folktales, historical events, and contemporary social situations. Sometimes the stories echoed popular Muslim or the western legend or tales. Some were created with an innovative use of structural elements in their plays in order to suit the contemporary theatre. These created a stir among the audience giving rise to their successful career.

The Kannada theatre and drama came into existence almost simultaneously. Most of the early playwrights wrote for very popular professional troupe. Great actors dominated the professional theatre and both the rural and the urban spectators went to see their favorite stars. Dramatist Bellave Narahari Sastri was the only exception to attract the audience in his own way. In 1882, a troupe of Parsee players called, The Balewala Company, visited the royal court of Mysore. The emergence of two giants T.P.Kailasam and Adya Rangacharya was fortunate. Both studied in England and were influenced by the serious and ironic comedies of George Bernard Shaw and tragedies of Henrick Ibsen. They have left a deep impact on the theatre since their plays made great demands on the audience and required their participation in the action on the stage. Drama came to depend less on the plot than on the total experience provided by the production as a whole. They substituted real men and women and their earthly trials and tribulations with the emphasis on human relations. Then the pioneer Kannada dramatist, Girish Karnad took the charge of Kannada Theatre. He is known as playwright, actor, director.
Karnad is a man of theatre. He has been actively associated with the stage and has written plays with an eye to their production. His first play Yayate (1961), critics hailed him as the morning star of modern Kannada theatre. He described himself as belonging to the first generation of playwrights to come of age after India became independent. Of his nine plays, six are based on myths and legends, two on history and only one on contemporary experience. For Yayati, he was given the state award. In 1972, he received Sangeet Natak Akademi's award for playwriting. For Hayavadana, Bharatiya Natya Sangha honored him with Kamaladevi award. Presidents Gold Medal for the best Indian film for Sanskara, National Award for excellence in direction for Vamshavriksha (shared with B. V. Karunath), National Award for the best script for Bhumika (shared with Shyam Benegal, Satyadev Duby-78), Golden Lotus for best non-feature film for kanakapurandara (89), Homi Bhaba fellowship for creative work in the folk field of theatre (70-72), Karnataka Sahitya Academy for the most creative work for Naga mandala (92), Sahitya academy award for Tale-Danda (94) and so on.

**Indian English drama;**

The growth of vernacular languages and the awareness of Indians to their own culture, curiosity of knowing their own religious, social and tradition lead them to turn towards regional Indian plays. And hence despite the availability of a number of theatres and drama companies, Indian English drama suffered a great setback. Dr. P. V. Prasad remarkably states:

Indian English drama has not been so fortunate as poetry and fiction in Indian English because drama requires specialized skill and talent in selecting a theme which is presentable on the stage and in picking up a technique which appeals to the audience.
Language is the main reason that’s why Indian English drama did not develop in India. The growth of vernacular languages created attraction in the audience for regional plays. English being the second language can’t reach the heart and mind of the common people. Even the writers at times find themselves comfortable only in their regional languages. Another reason for the failure is that the writers have failed to highlight Indian ethos, culture, myth and heritage through a foreign language. Lack of adequate stage in India is also responsible for this setback. Of course, poor remuneration to the actors can also be considered as a reason for this setback. Paucity of Indian drama in English is the one fact, which strikes even a cursory student of Indo-Anglian literature. Indian English drama lacks in both fecundity and excellence of artisanship. Drama is a composite art and it requires for its success various accessories, as stage, actors and audience. Indian theatre was occupied with plays written in regional languages, which were easily intelligible to the audiences. Actors too could easily act various roles in plays written in regional languages. Early Indian English writers could not enjoy this advantage and, hence, the growth of Indian English drama suffered. Secondly, English being a foreign language was not intelligible to the masses and the playwrights too found it difficult to write crisp, natural and graceful dialogue in English, which was not the language of their emotional make-up. Since they did not lisp their earliest utterances in English but acquired knowledge of it at an advanced stage, their dialogue was bound to be stilted and artificial. Commenting on the paucity of Indian English drama, K. R. S. Iyengar writes:

Indo-Anglian Drama: isn't it like talking about 'Snakes in Iceland?' Not quite, but the problem is there, for while poetry, novels, and non-fiction prose can be read in the silence of one's study. Drama can come to life only in the theatre. 4
When Bombay Theatre was founded, priority was given to English plays and not to Indian English Drama. Of course, The Dave Carson Troupe and Original Theatrical Company staged some English plays with Indian background using classical books and Indian mythology but they also could not do much as the audiences were more interested in vernacular languages and not English. The Amateur Club came out with the writers like Ibsen, Chekhov, Camus, Eliot, Fry, Ionesco, Brecht and many more. However, the introduction and presentation of such writers could not do much in the field of Indian English drama. Naturally, for the lack of stage, drama could not develop much in both quality and quantity. R. K. Dhawan puts it in the following words:

It is a well known fact that the real success of a play can be tested on stage. A playwright need a living theatre to put his work on acid test, evaluate its total effect on the audience and thereby get a chance to improve upon his performance. This handicap has not allowed him to pursue playwriting in a systematic and comprehensive way.5

And it is very clear that stage is important for any play for the performance. The stage inspires playwrights and leads to think how it should be performed, color combinations, and other symbolic representations. It is being said that where there is stage there is drama, and where there is audience there is stage. Regarding the Indian drama, C. L. Khatri states in his one of the articles:

Indian Drama in English is still toddling in the race striving to walk straight at its own strength. It is a regrettable fact that it has not achieved the position that Indian fiction or poetry in English enjoys in the realm of commonwealth literature. It still relies heavily on the translation of regional plays into English. For example, from Kannad Girish Karnad’s Tughlaq, Hayavadan, and other plays from Bengali Badal Sircar’s Pagla Ghora, Baki Itihas, Juloos and the plays of Rabindranath Tagore, from Marathi Vijay Tendulkar’s Khamosh, Sakharam Binder, Ghasi Ram Kotwal, Kanyadan etc. from Hindi the plays of Mohan Rakesh, Dharmvir Bharti and of others have been translated into English to enrich the corpus of Indian drama in English. Surprisingly its reputation is more based on these translations than on original plays in English”. 6
C. L. Khatri elaborately has given a long detail and description of the growth of Indian English Drama in this article. The playwrights Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar, Rabindranath Tagore, Tendulkar, Mohan Rakesh, Dharmvir Bharti are the pillars of Indian English drama. Despite limitations and hindrances, Indian English playwrights have taken great efforts to write plays. Krishna Mohan Banerji wrote the first play, *The Persecuted* in 1831, a social play, which presents the conflict between orthodoxy and new ideas. The play highlights the hypocrisy and blackness of the influential segments in Hindu Society. It is the earliest play on the East-West encounter theme, which has been an important theme in the entire range of Indian English literature. From the viewpoint of technique and artisanship, it is a crude presentation. Michael Madhusudan Dutt translated his play – *Ratnavali* (1858), *Sermista* (1859) and *Is This Called Civilization?* (1871) from Bengali into English. Ramkinoo Dutt wrote *Manipura Tragedy* (1893). Indian English drama thus made a humble beginning in 19th century in Bengal. Commenting on the Indian English Drama, M. K. Naik says:

Owing to the lack of a firm dramatic tradition nourished on actual performance in a live theatre, early Indian English Drama in Bengal, as elsewhere in India, grew sporadically as mostly closet drama; and even later, only Shri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and H. N. Chattopadhyaya produced a substantial corpus of dramatic writing. 7

Later on, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, and H. N. Chattopadhyaya, known as the big three, made an invaluable contribution to Indian English drama. Rabindranath Tagore was a versatile genius who himself rendered some of his Bengali plays into English. All these appeared in *Collected Poems and Plays* (1936). Tagore's English plays are remarkable for precision and well-knit plot, which is not found in Bengali originals. Tagore is better known plays *The Post Office* and *The King of the Dark Chamber* were translated
respectively by Devabrata Mukharjee and C. K. Sen. Tagore's plays have been failures upon the stage because they are extremely symbolic and poetic plays. In the original, they have great musical qualities but even these qualities have been lost in their English transcription. Tagore has tried to impart new values and symbolic significance to ancient Hindu myths and legends. Whatever may be the value of such plays, they are not successful stage plays. However, plays like *Sacrifice* have been very much successful on the stage also. Sri Aurobindo wrote plays directly in English. He successfully imitated the blank verse drama of the Elizabethan cast. In spite of the variety of setting, theme and characterization all plays of Sri Aurobindo are soaked in poetry and romance, recalling the spirit and flavour of the distinctive dramatic type exemplified in different ways by Bhasa, Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti - though, of course, all have Aurobindonian undertones. As both a poet and playwright, H. N. Chattopadhyaya is noticeable for his richness and versatility. *Five Plays* (1937) has a Galsworthian elegance for social awareness and realism. Dialogues are written in stinging prose. All the important plays of Chattopadhyaya have a purpose and are flooded with realism, which is hardly found in Indian English dramatic writing. He is considered as one of the milestones in the history of Indian English drama. The Indo-Anglian play from its beginning to the present day has traveled a long way. The approaches have changed, the techniques have changed, experimentation has increased but still audience is lacking. Practical considerations of finance weigh as much as, if not more than aesthetic ones. Cost for rehearsals, costumes, make-up, equipment and other stage properties have considerably risen. Today staging of a play needs much more preparation on every level; hence, the absence of large audience affects it adversely. No doubt, plays in Hindi and other regional
languages are being staged successfully but the total turnout for Indo-Anglian plays is comparatively less. H. M. William correctly observes,

Despite the remarkable and abiding contribution of Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Chattopadhyaya, Indian English drama has never reached the high status of prose fiction or poetry...up to now in the 20th century would be dramatists have not solved the problem of fusing dramatic stories with dialogue and sense of good theatre, all of which are indispensable to the success of a play on the stage. 8

There is a long history of various translations into other languages of India. During the early nineteenth century, there was a movement of translation to the large extent in our country. Even some English peoples were translating Indian vernacular literature in English. Many works of English literature too translated in other Indian languages. As far drama is concern, many plays of Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali languages were translated into English. Due to their vast scope of audience and English peoples` interest in Indian culture and philosophy, there was a vast history of translation of plays of various languages in English from the early nineteenth century. Nearly all genres of literature, fiction, poetry, short stories etc were translated in English.

Particularly English translations from regional languages influenced the writers and readers to pay special attention to form new writing in English. While practicing the English translations of novels, poetry, short stories and plays, these translators tried at their best to innovate local culture, colour and style of living life instead of following the Western way of writing blindly. Besides these writers also tried to focus on teaching and preaching to the world the Indian culture, philosophy and Hindu religion and it`s past rich tradition.

Intentionally Indian English dramatists have used the words of regional languages instead of following the English words to bring more
realistic and heart touching feelings. Even the speech patterns and the way of speaking is being adopted from the local impact on the English language. Indian English play are not the sub part of the English play, but has achieved its special, separate identity and recognition due to its adherence delineation of Indian psyche and culture.

Indian Drama in English translation has done much innovations and experiments as far as the thematic delineations and technical implications. It has been increasingly turning to history, legend, myth and folklore tapping their springs of vitality and vocal cords of popularity with splendid results. Plays written in various Indian languages are being translated into English and other languages as they are produced and appreciated in the various parts of the country. A closer contact is being established between the theatre workers from different regions and languages through these translations. Thus, regional drama in India is slowly paving a way for a ‘national theatre’ into which all streams of theatrical art seem to coverage. The major language theatres that are active all through the turbulent years of rejuvenation and consolidations are those of Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada.

The plays mentioned so far, both under the Pre-Independence and the Post-Independence phase were originally written in English. Among the plays translated into English, there are a few, which were first written in the regional languages and subsequently translated into English by the authors themselves. Though, strictly speaking, these works cannot be called fully English plays, they can be mentioned under the topic, in view of the fact, that at least some of them are transcreations and not simply translations. Rabindranath Tagore, Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar, and Girish Karnad have remained the most representative of
the Indian English drama not only in Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Kannada respectively but also on the pan-Indian level.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), the poet, novelist, socialist, a philosopher and an educationist is the winner of the Nobel Prize for literature (1913). He belongs not only to Bengali but the world literature due to translations of his works in many languages. Indeed, he belongs to all India and the whole world. By virtue of his being a versatile genius, he won worldwide commendation and recognition. Deeply influenced by Classical Sanskrit literature and also by his learning of the West, he created almost a renaissance in Bengali Literature. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar rightly remarks:

He was a poet, dramatist, actor, producer; he was a musician and a painter; he was an educationist, a practical idealist who turned his dreams into reality at Shantiniketan; he was a reformer, philosopher, prophet; he was a novelist and short story-writer, and critic of life and literature; he even made occasional excursion into nationalist politics, although he was essentially an internationalist.9

‘Sannyasi’ or ‘The Ascetic’ (1884), ‘Nature’s Revenge, a drama in verse’ (1884), ‘The King and the Queen’ (1889), ‘Sacrifice’ (1892), ‘Malini’ (1895), ‘Gandhari’s Prayer’ (1897), ‘Karna and Kunti’ (1897), ‘The King of the Dark Chamber’ (1910), ‘The Post Office’ (1912), ‘Chitra’ (1913), ‘The Cycle of Spring’ (1916), ‘Mukta Dhara’ (1922), ‘Red Oleanders’ (1924), ‘Natir Puja’ (1926), and ‘Chandalika’ (1933) in these plays, Tagore has dealt with philosophical, religious, political, social issues and in some of them presented Indian myths and legends.

**Marathi plays translated in English:**

Marathi literature has much rich tradition having many stages of developments from Jatra performances to present well advanced and equipped theatre as far as Marathi play are concern. From road shows to
one act play deals with religious legends, seasonal festivals particularly rural areas still is being enjoyed by Tamasha. Religious teaching plays deals with Ramayana, Mahabharata etc. deals with presentation of moral and religious values. A large number of Marathi works of creative fiction has been translated into English. Ian Raeside, Lecturer in Marathi at the University of London, has translated a collection of modern Marathi short stories written by Gangadhar Gadhil, Arvind Gokhale, P. B. Bhave, Vyankatech Madgulkar, D. B. Mokashi, D. M. Mirasdar, Malatibai Bedekar. He has also translated Garambicha Bapu by S. N. Pendse as the Wild Bapu of Garambi. Shuba Slee's translation Seven Sixes are Forty-three of Kiran Nagarkar's novel Saat Sakkam Trechalis published in Australia by University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland in 1980 has made a milestone in translation at the outset of world Kumud Mehta has translated P. S. Rege's Avalokita. Recently, Sudhakar Marathe has translated Bhalchandra Nemade's epoch-making novel Kosla as Cacoon for MacMillan India Limited.

Sudhakar Marathe has supplied chapter-wise footnotes at the end of the book to explain certain Maharashtrian dishes such as 'bhakri', 'bhajis', 'amti', 'shrikhand', 'shira', 'bhel', 'batatawada', 'basundi', 'laddu', 'shev-chivda', 'khichdi', etc.; relations such as 'maushi', 'aee', 'dada', 'bhai', etc.; musical instruments such as 'tabla', 'sanai'; religious practices and figures such as 'namaskars', 'shloka', 'samadhi', 'varkaris', 'kirtanas', 'aarti', 'bhagat', 'shraddha', 'shaligram', etc.; articles such as 'pat', 'lungi', 'rangoli', 'gulal', 'kumkum', etc.; festivals such as 'pola', 'yatra'; institutions such as 'math', 'balutedars', 'tamasha', etc. Inclusion of such footnotes of course could bother the reader as he is forced to go to the end of the book each time to know something more about the Marathi word.
This could be for a long time, Marathi drama had not been sufficiently represented in English translation. Shanta Shahane and Kumud Mehta translated Vijay Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder* into English in 1973. Published in 1989, Three Modern Indian Plays included only one of Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence, The Court is in Session* translated by Priya Adarkar. This situation of poor representation of Marathi drama in English translation underwent a change during the next decade. Oxford University Press has published *Five plays* of Tendulkar translated by Priya Adarkar in 1992. Today, much of recent Marathi drama written by G. P. Deshpande, Satish Alekar, Shanta Ghokale, and Mahesh Elkunchwar has been substantially translated into English.

Interestingly, some plays like *Ghasiram Kotwal* were taken to be performed abroad. The doors for the transmission of Marathi fiction and drama through the medium of motion pictures seem to have been opened by the news of the Oscar nomination for the national award-winning Marathi movie *Shwas* (Breath).

In the present study, Marathi dramatists, Vijay Tendulkar and **Mahesh Elkunchwar** whose plays are translated in English, in general, are particularly selected.

The well known Marathi play writer, Mahesh Elkunchwar was born in October 1939 into a landowning family in the small village of Parwa in the Vidarbha in Maharashtra. He took his postgraduate degree in English from Nagpur University and became a professor of English and taught at Dharampeth Arts, Commerce and M. P. Deo Memorial Science College, Nagpur (Maharashtra). Mahesh Elkunchwar became interested in writing for theatre after performance of Vijay Tendulkar’s *Mi Jinkalo Mi Haralo* in English ‘I Won, I Lost’ in 1965. He retired in 1999 as Head department of English.
Mahesh Elkunchwar’s play, *Wada Chirebandi*, would not be out of position to mention a famous novel in English by Manohar Malgaonkar who deals with the similar theme and issue, which was related not with the feudal lords but the former Princely States in India. The Princes suddenly found themselves at the receiver’s end. They were stripped off all their power, privileges, status and wealth. Many of them found it very difficult to cope with the new situation. Similarly, echoes of social transition are also found in one more contemporary play dealing with the similar situation as *Wada Chirebandi*, that is, *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov. The veteran director, Vijaya Mehta who has directed *Wada Chirebandi* for the theatre group, Rangayan, has already pointed out the close resemblance between Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard* and Elkunchwar’s *Wada Chirebandi*.

Elkunchwar’s plays have gained national and international critical attention, and his growing body of work has become part of India’s post-colonial theatrical canon. This led to the exercise of looking for the parallels among the Indian and the Western literature took off without conscious efforts. It should be noted that Vijay Tendulkar’s another play *Ashi Pakhare Yeti* has explained with skill as a social point of view. Much later he wrote the script for Hindi movie directed by Amol Palekar namely *Thodasa Rumani Ho Jaye* (Let Us Be Little Romantic). Now the issue arises whether the Indian play dramatists in question happened to come in contact with the literary works of these dramatists. The answer should be an emphatic - yes.

Vijay Tendulkar during the period of struggle, he has done many odd jobs to earn his existing. He has done one of the jobs that are translating English Literature in Marathi for the American Embassy. The issue was usually aimed at confrontation their policies and philosophies
etc. During above mentioned period Tendulkar must have come in contact with American literature. Being himself a hopeful playwright, he must have been drawn to modern American plays and British plays apart from his assigned job; he must have accepted translation of some American plays he liked. Tendulkar translated Edward Albee’s *The Zoo Story*, The One-Act play in Marathi entitled *Janawar* (A Brute) and T. William’s *The Streetcar Named Desire* as *Wasanachakra* in Marathi. This proves Tendulkar’s close contact with both the American dramatists in question.

In case of Mahesh Elkunchwar, at the beginning his childhood he has been reading all sorts of Indian literature as well as Western. Later on, he selected as English literature for his UG and PG levels. Then he became lecturer of English literature. He retired in 1999 as a Head, Department of English. He has interested in literature therefore he started to write plays. Besides the English literature, Tendulkar has shown keen fascination for English movies, which they would watch more and more again. In case of both, Elkunchwar and Tendulkar, English literature and visual art, both have deep impact upon them and therefore positively contributed in determining their careers as dramatists.

Teaching of drama is a special challenge to the teacher. A teacher has to make the dramatic situations and atmosphere through his power of imagination. It is true that audio-visual aids can be used in the class rooms. But just making the class watch to the video available to them is not enough. Much more is needed on teacher’s part to make them share the pleasure of drama and the nuances relevant to enjoy and understand the same. When modern Indian dramatists are studied and discussed, the first famous name comes to mind is that of Vijay Tendulkar. Other well-known dramatistss are Girish Karnad, Mahesh Elkunchwar, Satish
Alekar, Mohan Rakesh, C. T. Khanolkar Badal Sirkar and Mahesh Dttani and so on. The style and technique between Vijay Tendulkar and Mahesh Elkunchwar is similar. Moreover, the themes, techniques of plot, the choice of subject matters and places and characters are equal to convey the same ideas. Therefore, the present research is going to focus on the socio-cultural element of translated plays of Vijay Tendulkar and Mahesh Elkunchwar.

Whenever the discussion opens for Modern Indian Drama, the first name will comes in mind that of, Vijay Tendulkar. His famous play *Shantata! Court Chalk Ache!* It was originally written in Marathi, literally brought about revolution upon the scenario of Indian drama. He gave a new face and a new meaning to Indian English drama. Many other Indian dramatists followed him as a guide for their plays. One is among them, who emerged significantly, is Mahesh Elkunchwar. His first famous full-length play is *Waadaa Chirebandi.* This play was afterwards translated in many other Indian languages including Hindi and English.

Mahesh Elkunchwar is an Indian playwright with more than 20 plays to his name, in addition to his theoretical writings, critical works, and his active work in India’s *Parallel Cinema* as actor and screenwriter. Today, along with Vijay Tendulkar he is one of the most influential and progressive playwrights not just in modern Marathi theatre, but also larger modern Indian theatre.

Born to a feudal family in Parwa village in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, at the age of four he had to leave his parents and leave a city where he grew up a lonely child and hardly interested in studies, and raised outside of Indian urban centres. As films and theatre were taboo in his family, he saw his first play when he moved to Nagpur for his matriculation. Here he studied at Morris College, and went on to do M.A.
in English from Nagpur University. While still college came the turning point in his life, when one day he went to watch a film and unable to get movie ticket, he ended up watching a play. That play was a veteran theatre director Vijaya Mehta's production of Vijay Tendulkar's *Mee jinkalo mee Haralo* (I Won, I Lost) in 1965. Deeply influenced by the play, he went to watch play again the following day and decided to write plays. He devoted the next year to reading plays of all kind.

Elkunchwar taught English literature at Dharampeth Arts, Commerce College, Nagpur and M. P. Deo Memorial Science College, Nagpur, until retiring as its Head in 1999.He was a guest professor of screen play-writing at the Film and Television Institute, Pune in 2000-2001.He taught as a visiting professor at the National school of Drama, New Delhi for a number of years. He has experimented with many forms of dramatic expression, ranging from the realistic to symbolic, expressionist to absurd theatre with theme ranging from creativity to life, sterility to death and has influenced modern Indian theatre for more than three decades.

Elkunchwar emerged onto the national theatre scene with the publication of his one-act play *Sultan* in 1967 in noted literary magazine *Satyakatha*. This play was immediately noticed by Vijaya Mehta; she went on to direct four of his early plays, including *Holi* and *Sultan* in 1969 and 1970 for *Rangayan*. A number of commercial lists followed such as *Holi*: 1969, *Raktapurpa*: 1971, *Party*: 1972, *Virasat*: 1982 and *Atmakatha*: 1987. Considered a successor to Vijay Tendulkar, Elkunchwar’s plays are written in Marathi, the Indian language that is spoken by approximately 90 million people. The plays have been subsequently translated into multiple Indian and Western languages (including English, French and German).
In 1984, his play *Holi* was made into the film *Holi* by Ketan Mehta, for which he wrote the screenplay. In the same year, Govind Nihalani directed a film, *Party*, based on his eponymous play. A lesser known fact about him is as Mahesh Elkunchwar, the essaysist. His collection of essays 'Maunraag' has broken new grounds in this genre and was considered the book of the decade in 2012. An uncanny blend of autobiographical and meditative, His essay shows his erudition and a vivid imagination.

Elkunchwar’s plays have gained national and international critical attention, and his growing body of work has become part of India's post-colonial theatrical canon. He has been honoured in India with:

- *Rudravarsha*: The Savage Year: [1966]
- *Sultan*: one act: [1967]
- *Zumbar*: one act: [1967]
- *Eka Mhatarachya Khoon*: An Old Man’s Murder: [1968]
- *Kaifiyat*: one act: [1967]
- *Ek Osad Gaon*: one act: [1969]
- *Yatanaghar*: The Chamber of Anguish: [1970]
- *Garbo*, [1970]
- *Vasanakand*: The Episode of Lust: [1972]
- *Party*: 1976
- *Wada Chirebandi*: Old Stone Mansion: [1985]
- *Pratibimb*: Reflection: [1987]
Vijay Tendulkar was a leading Indian dramatist, movie and television writer, literary essayist, political journalist, and social commentator primarily in Marathi. He is best known for his plays- *Shantata! Court Chalu Aahe* [1967], *Ghashiram Kotwal* [1972], and *Sakharam Binder* [1972]. Many of Tendulkar’s plays derived inspiration from real-life incidents or social upheavals, which provides clear light on harsh realities. He provided his guidance to students studying playwright writing in US universities. For over five decades Tendulkar had been a highly influential dramatist and theatre personality in Maharashtra.

Vijay Dhondopant Tendulkar is a real name, who was born on 6 January 1928 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.

Vijay Tendulkar began his career writing for newspapers. He had already written a play, *Amchyavar Kon Prem Karnar* (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 theatre. Tendulkar’s writings rapidly changed the storyline of modern Marathi theatre in the 1950s and the 60s, with experimental presentations by theatre groups like Rangayan. Actors in these theatre groups like Shriram Lagoo, Mohan Agashe, and Sulabha Deshpande brought new authenticity and power to Tendulkar's stories while introducing new sensibilities in Marathi theatre. He wrote the play *Giahade* (The Vultures) in 1961, but it was not produced until 1970. The play was set in a morally collapsed family structure and explored the theme of violence. In his following creations, Tendulkar explored violence in its various forms: domestic, sexual, communal, and political. Thus, *Gidhade* proved to be a turning point in Tendulkar's writings with regard to establishment of his own unique writing style. Based on a 1956 short story, *Die Panne* (Traps) by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Tendulkar wrote
the play, *Shantata! 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.

In his 1972 play, *Sakharam Binder* (Sakaram, the Binder), Tendulkar dealt with the topic of domination of the male gender over the female. The main character, Sakharam, is a man devoid of ethics and morality, and professes not to believe in outdated social codes and conventional marriage. 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 badly want freedom from their enslavement.

In 1972, Vijay Tendulkar wrote another, even much more acclaimed play, *Ghashiram Kotwal* (Officer Ghashiram), which dealt with political violence. The play is a political satire created as a musical drama set in 18th century Pune. It combined traditional Marathi folk music and drama with contemporary theatre 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’.[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vijay_Tendulkar] With over 6,000 performances thus far in its original and translated versions, *Ghashiram*
*Kotwal* remains one of the longest-running plays in the history of Indian theatre.

Vijay Tendulkar wrote screenplays for the movies *Nishant* [1974], *Akrosh (The Cry)* [1980], and *Ardh Satya (The Half-Truth)* [1984] which established him as an important Chronicler of Violence of the present. He has written eleven movies in Hindi and eight movies in Marathi. The latter include *Samana (Confrontation)* [1975], *Simhaasan (Throne)* [1979], and *Umbartha (The Threshold)* [1981]. The last one is a groundbreaking feature film on women's activism in India. It was directed by Jabbar Patel and stars Smita Patil and Girish Karnad.

In 1991, Tendulkar wrote a metaphorical play, *Safar* and in 2001 he wrote the play, *The Masseur*. Metaphysics is a traditional branch of philosophy concerned with explaining the fundamental nature of being and the world that encompasses it, although the term is not easily defined. Traditionally, metaphysics attempts to answer two basic questions in the broadest possible terms: *What is ultimately there? What is it like?* A person who studies metaphysics is called a *metaphysicist* or a *metaphysician*. In regarding to this Metaphysical play is a play which throws light upon the issues related to mind which are not understand by comman reader. He wrote another two novels: *Kadambari: Ek* and *Kādambari: Don*, about sexual fantasies of an ageing 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 *Sakharam 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, *SwayamSiddha*, in which his
daughter Priyā Tendulkar, noted Television actress of Rajani fame, performed in the lead role. Thus, Tendulkar died in Pune on 19 May 2008, battling the effects of myasthenia gravis.

As a well known dramatist, Tendulkar won Maharashtra State government awards in 1956, 1969 and 1972; and Maharashtra Gaurav Puraskar in 1999. He was honoured with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1970, and again in 1998 with the Academy’s highest award for lifetime contribution, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (Ratna Sadasya). In 1984, he received the Padma Bhushan award 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 Nishant, Akrosh, and Ardh Satya.

A comprehensive list of awards is given below:

- Sangeet Natak Akademi Award[1970]
- Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay Award [1970]
- National Film Award for Best Screenplay: Manthan[1977 ]
- Filmfare Best Screenplay Award: Aakrosh[1981]
- Filmfare Best Story Award: Aakrosh[1981]
- Filmfare Best Screenplay Award: Ardh Satya[1983]
- Padma Bhushan [1984]
- Saraswati Samman[1993]
- Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship [1998]
- Kalidas Samman [1999]
• Katha Chudamani Award [2001]
• The Little Magazine SALAM Award [200]

**Novels**

• *Kadambari: Ek* (Novel: One) [1996]
• *Kadambari: Don* (Novel: Two) [2005]

**Short Story Anthologies**

• *Dwandwa*: Duel: [1961]
• *Phulapakhare*: Butterflies: [1970]

**Plays**

• *Gruhastha*: Householder: [1947]
• *Shrimant*: The Rich: [1956]
• *Manoos Nawache Bet*: An Island Named Man: [1958]
• *Thief! Police!*
• *Bale Miltat*: [1960]
• *Gidhde*: The Vultures: [1961]
• *Patlachya Poriche Lagit*: Marriage of a Village Mayor’s Daughter: [1965]
• *Shantata! Court Chalu Aahe: Silence! The Court is in Session*: [1967]
• *Ajjgar Ani Gandharwa*: A Boa Constrictor and *Gandharwa*
• *Sakharam Binder*: Sakhrm, the Book-Binder: [1972]
• *Kamala*: Kamala: 1981
• *Madi* in Hindi
• *Kanyadan*: Giving Away of a Daughter in Marriage: [1983]
• Anji
• Dambadwicha Mukabala: Encounter in Umbugland
• Ashi Pakhare Yeti: Thus Arrive the Birds
• Kutte
• Safar/Cyclewallah: The Cyclist: [1991]
• The Masseur: [2001]
• Pahiye Jatiche: It Has to Be in One’s Blood
• Jat Hi Poochho Sadhu Ki: Ask a Fakir’s Lineage
• Majhi Bahin: My Sister
• Jhala Ananta Hanumanta: Infinite Turned Hanumanta
• Footpayricha Samrat: Sidewalk Emperor
• Mitrachi Goshta: A Friend’s Story: [2001]
• Anand Owari: A play based on a novel by D. B. Mokashi
• Bhaau Murar Rao
• Bhalyakaka
• Mee Jinkalo Mee Haralo: I won, I Lost
• His Fifth Woman: [2004]
• Bebi
• Mita ki kahani: Mita’s Story
• Ghashiram Kotwal: Ghashiram, the Constable: [1972]

Translations
• Mohan Rakesh’s Adhe Adhure: originally in Hindi
• Girish Karnad’s Tughlaq: originally in Kannada
• Tennessee Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire: *originally in English*

Tendulkar’s major plays presentes that the central theme as violence to all of them and provides to unite them into a kind of unified body. He deals with this phenomenon as he looks it in different sections of society - men and women, young and old, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, castes on the upper as well as lower rungs of the social hierarchy. His searching vision has discovered its manifestations in different areas of one’s life: familial, social, personal, professional, political and cultural. Vijay Tendulkar’s depiction of violence as something omnipresent can be seen broadly in the shapes of psychological, sexual, physical and verbal forms in different realms of human relationships. All the different kinds of violence often interconnect and also combine with each other to form a complex set of tactics to harm the victimizer.

In his plays physical violence is the most visible form, carried out through the use of physical force in order to impose pain in the body of the victim. Physical force can be applied in the form of pushing, beating, shoving and hitting with slaps, kicks, blows or with stick or weapon. In literature physical violence like any other form is also related with the question of power. Those who have superior physical force and positions of power utilize it as a means to force the weak and the inferior into respect and subservience to their will and power. This may also be used by the executor to claim his perceived loss of mastery and status. It frequently expresses his frustration, anger and misery resulting from his actual or perceived failures.

Vijay Tendulkar has represented this form of violence so bravely and freely. It sometimes has surprised his conventional audience who are not ready to believe this ugly truth. We have an example of play,
Sakharam Binder, the eponymous hero, is how men use wicked force against women in various ways. Sakharam always beats Laxmi, his sixth wife or woman, black and blue with kicks, blows, and with belt and even strangles Champa to death. In the play The Vultures has a many scenes which have been found disturbing for the physical violence they depict. While pretending a fight among brother, Ramakant and Umakant push their father off the chair, throbbing his head. They scare him by throwing liquor’s bottles on each other and uncouthly shock the audience by the way Ramakant and Umakant break the leg of Manik, their sister.

Ghashiram Kotwal also has a many scenes portraying brutal violence. Ghashiram is himself beaten up first by the criminals at Gulabi’s place and then again at Dakshina ceremony by soldiers. It introduces the aspect of vicious form of violence that dominates the whole play. Ghashiram’s own used violence, as a Kotwal, against Poonaites on the roads, particularly the ordeal of the innocent Brahmin, whose finger nails are pulled out and hands are burnt with red hot iron ball and then cut off, are truly scenes of gruesome physical violence. The violence of the mob in stoning Ghashiram to death marks the climatic point of the cruelty presented in the play. There are a many occurrences related to violence which are not performed on the stage, but they are reported to the spectators through the dialogues, gestures and behavior of characters or the use of such tools as lights and sounds. The beating of the gardener and abortion of Manik’s unborn child because of Ramakant’s kick at her womb in The Vultures are many examples of such occasions of off-stage violence. Related to this is the form of sexual violence often used against women. This form of violence is signifies sexual relations established or attempted without taking the permission or willingness of the other. It may be in the form of forced rape, prostitution, in or outside
marriage, resulting in hurt or violation of the body or self-respect of the woman which may also result in unwanted and forced abortions and pregnancies. Molestations and harassment of women with words, gestures or implications of sexual overtones are also some other forms of its manifestations which Tendulkar has represented in his plays one by other.

Tendulkar’s play *Sakharam Binder* reveals a specific psychopathic thought of his male hero towards females, coupled with an erotic curiosity in coercive sexual behaviour. He rapidly indulges in violently exploitative sexual orgies with his women. In *Sakharam Binder* Shinde is tries to force his wife, Champa, into prostituting and thus violates her sense of honour. He is also the one who receives brutal pleasure by sexually torturing his wife.

In next play of Vijay Tendulkar *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Ghashiram’s behaviour of giving his daughter, Gauri, to Nana Sahib for get hold of power for himself. His behaviour in the way her unwanted pregnancy is aborted leading to her death is the best examples of women’s sexual exploitation. Rama and Manik’s forced abortions in *The Vultures*, brutal kicking and beating of pregnant Jyoti by her husband, Arun in *Kanyadaan* and in *Silence! The Court is in Session* the decree to Miss. Benare to abort her illegitimate child, reveal how women become more defenseless to sexual abuse in their pregnancies. Tendulkar’s vision is not limited to abuse only in heterosexual relationships but also discovers and discloses it in interpersonal relationship usually considered uncharacteristic and socially unacceptable. For example in *A Friend’s Story* Mitra becomes a kind of predator to Nama. When she frustrated at that time she feels shamed and uses to violence against herself by committing suicide.
Vijay Tendulkar has presented on to the stage sexual and physical violence in their various forms and shapes as they are in the real life. Tendulkar offers that sexual and physical acts of hurting and harming others are almost perpetually accompanied by oral attacks. Verbal abuse can prove to be very hurting and virulent in the form of hurtful words, language of ridicule, verbal threats of using bad words (abuse), injury or torture directed to the victim or at her family. Contemptuous tone, coldness and stinging talks, words of angry and curse outbursts are some of the common tool used by the victimizer to humiliate and hurt the victim. Examples of verbal violence in its many forms can be found in major play of Vijay Tendulkar.

Both are interested in depicting the predicament of women, rural life and pervert or sexual behavior, consequences of new social order. The upset social hierarchy is at the root of the plays by both the dramatist. He used Obsession themes of death, abnormal personalities, and pervert sex are observed in the plays of Elkunchwar. Tendulkar’s plays similarly focused on sex and violence and social issues. He has dealt with social issue of predicament of women and also with the problem of changed social order which is the outcome of modern period and the political reforms wiping out the boundaries of caste, class and religion poor and rich etc.

These dramatists’ characters are generally rebels in the real world. Therefore they choose to live in the world of fantasy, dreams and illusion. They do not find relief in either of the worlds, as a result, they turn vicious and either destroys themselves or others, who come in contact with them. They fail to surmount the world of reality; they try to find solace in cruelty and brutality. Such a close likeness between the works of these two dramatists with respect to various aspects of drama has
prompted me to undertake a close analysis of the selected works of these two dramatists.

The translated plays are close resemblance with each other in some respects. Tendulkar’s plays are highly acclaimed, studied and debated. *Ghashiram Kotwal, Sakharam Binder* and *The Vultures* are not focused for certain reasons. It is true that sex, death, violence, cruelty and perversity have been the recurring themes of the plays by the two dramatists. They both have equally interesting area. It is found in human relationships, which has been considerably changed in the post World War period. The focus of Tendulkar’s vision of society and relationships remains mainly upon sex-oriented relationships and to some extent upon the relationships or tensions arising out of generation gap. Shailaja Wadikar describes him as a dramatist,

...who verifies faith in human values, presented without any attempt at moralizing and philosophizing about them. Since the book by her own admission is a brief, cursory analysis of a range of issues, some vital aspects of Tendulkar’s concerns and their artistic treatment, deserving a more detailed and in deep study, have fugitive her inquiring sight. Though she does make references to social and psychological factors responsible for aggression and violence in the behaviour of Tendulkar’s characters, she fails to focus the forces and drives functioning in the psyche of characters like Sakharam. Even the variety of ways characters answer to violence in their lives doesn’t discover in his study. [Wadikar: 2008. P. 9]

As a result of this, human complexities, challenging the understanding of the mind of the audience and readers and making his characters more interesting and authentic, go almost unappreciated by Shailaja Wadikar. It is tried to analyze the dramatist’s treatment of such questions as individual and society, contemporary politics, man-woman relationships, social tensions and conflicts and modern men and women’s alienation.
The study of women’s problems in present research has been one of the remarkable areas of interest. Dharan N. S. is one of the critics, who said regarding women-centered works:

Feministic ideology which pits women in direct fight with prejudiced male oppressor, finds its full and free expression. [Dharan: 1999. P. 49]

He further said that through these plays,

Tendulkar projects a point of view that is peculiarly feminine – tending to be even feministic… [Ibid: 28]

He has kept ignoring the depth and complexity in Tendulkar’s using of various issues. He ignores the fact of certain contradictions in the role of Miss Benare, resulting from her position as a woman in patriarchy. Vijay Tendulkar has dramatised the sufferings and social domination of all those who are weak, even men like Balu Rokde, showing thus that his thoughts and vision are too wide to be cramped into the small structure of any particular ideology. Like Dharan, Veena Noble Dass too presents Tendulkar as a feminist and declares in her article, *Women Characters in Vijay Tendulkar’s Plays*, that he has succeeded in depicting them another way and raised the status of Indian woman from a weak person to a powerful one. Talking of Rama in *The Vultures*, she is very emphatic in stating that:

Tendulkar has portrayed a very bold woman in the character of Rama… who doesn’t believe in her fate but would do anything to change her life. [Das: 1994. P.14]

One may also observe that Tendulkar has also presented a woman like Manik. Manik is as much crueler like her brothers. The whole essay appears as simplistically with Tendulkar’s treatment of the life of women in his plays. Like N. S. Dharan, Veena Noble Dass too forget that
Tendulkar is related primarily with the larger social and human situations portrayed as much through his male characters as the female.

The portrayal of women in Tendulkar’s *Silence! The Court is in Session* and *Sakharam Binder*, too doesn’t look like to be much odd in its scope and approach from that of Veena Noble Dass. The social context has been presented by Tendulkar as a powerful force in determining the life and character of his women. In her discussion she fails to analyse the male characters and their relations with women, as a result of which her assessment of women in these plays appears to be a bit lopsided. For example, she doesn’t place Champa’s character, described by her as stern, sensual, self-seeking and indiscreet, in the context of her experiences as a daughter and as a wife. That is why Geeta Kumar tends to see her as a woman with rather negative traits, something which doesn’t seem to support her own assertion that there is an underlying current of sympathy towards the women characters created by him. Geeta dwells at some length on the character of Benare and Laxmi to instantiate her statement about Tendulkar’s sympathy with women figures. But, here too, she seems to oversimplify matters by ignoring the dynamics and complexity of responses to their situations. This trend of looking at Tendulkar from a feministic perspective has continued and the article of Vijay Kumar Sinha, *Feminist Concern in Vijay Tendulkar’s Plays* also emphasizes the same, though in a slightly different way. He stresses as:

Tendulkar deals with feminist concern in a remarkably distinct way. A good number of his dramas translated into English highlight the bias against women. [Sinha: 2008. P. 173]

Thus, Vijay Kumar Sinha has focused on the prejudice against women, resulting in seriously diluting the focus on the strengths of Tendulkar’s women.
Tendulkar seriously raised questions of women before the society through his translated plays. A well known writers and critics called him feminist, they are Kalindi Deshpande, Catherine Thankamma, D. S. Deshpande, Maya Pandit and Neelam Mansingh firmly said that Tendulkar’s plays betray his patriarchal bias. The writers’ discovery is based on the argument that Tendulkar has offered only stereotype images of feminine behaviour of women. Kalindi Deshpande’s essay entitled *Capitulation to Conservatism: Vijay Tendulkar’s Women Characters* explicitly reveals the argument of this group of Tendulkar’s readers. She categorically states as:

> Almost all his women characters meekly submit to the injustice, violence and harassment done to them. They seem to be helpless and have no other alternative but to go through the way that life has chosen for them. [Deshpande: 2009. P.91]

Her statement suggests that she doesn’t attach much importance to the struggles of Tendulkar’s women for their survival and pride. It is difficult to agree that women like Miss. Benare and Vijaya submit submissively to their lot. Miss. Benare stands out as a woman who asserts his individuality and struggles to achieve and preserve her human dignity. And Vijaya is the one who even subjugates all male bigots and proves her strength and superiority over them. She further observes:

> Tendulkar, by giving an existential fatalistic twist to a woman’s suffering, tries to wriggle out of his responsibility of putting a woman’s suffering in a social context and interpret it accordingly. [Ibid, P. 91]

Tendulkar’s plays plainly show that his women are results of the typical patriarchal, cultural and social world. Women are also locked up in a fight against its coercive and constrictive power. Women like Miss. Benare, Kamala, Sarita, Laxmi, Champa, Mitra and Jyoti and their
characters and plights become realistic to the audience and evoke their sympathy and identification mainly because of their social contextualization. If the women are viewed in loneliness of the social surroundings they have been put in, much of their appeal as complex individuals and humans gets lost to us.

Vijay Tendulkar has represented the ugliness and brutality, horror and hollowness of these forces underlines by insinuation the need of a more humane and responsive system of importance and attitudes in life. Through the sufferings and struggles, resoluteness of mind and firmness of will displayed in changeable degrees by Tendulkar’s women, he clearly affirms his belief in human potentials to stand up and fight for a justice and better deal in society. The whole essay of Deshpande Kalindi gives us certain not reconciled statements. Some limitations of Kalindi’s studing of Tendulkar are appreciable also in Women that Patriarchy Created: The plays of Vijay Tendulkar, Mahesh Dattani and Mahashweta Devi, an article by Catherine Thankamma. She feels:

The disturbing fact about Tendulkar’s treatment of women… is the world view that gets projected. Very often one gets the impression that the driving force is sensationalism and not social commitment. [Thankamma: 2009. P. 80]

Her entire argument is based on the theory that by showing women solely as victims and men as repressive and exploitative, treating women only as subjects to be exploited not as individuals with feelings and wishes of their own, Tendulkar tends to support the patriarchal world view.

The effects of social realities, which Tendulkar portrays on his men, deserve as much notice as does his dramatization of the role of patriarchy in conditioning women’s existence. In addition, her charge that Tendulkar requires social commitment also appears to be the result of her not taking a holistic view of his plays. Definitely, Tendulkar clearly states
that he does not use theatre as a means of propaganda but he emphasises
that the listeners can obtain several messages from it. Tendulkar’s
depiction of victimization of women certainly lays open to critical
scrutiny the patriarchal ethos with its unwholesome effects on both the
sexes, something which Thankamma fails to appreciate.

Maya Pandit furthers the view that Tendulkar’s women are—

basically projected as victims of a family system which they cannot
challenge and change. [Pandit: 2002:79]

She thinks that this sense of doom and failure appears as the most
significant conclusion regarding family in his later plays. She concludes
as:

The selfcritical awareness of the earlier plays like Shantata and even
Kamala and the faint glimmer of the hope of a political action for
change was present there but with Kanyadaan and even Ghashiram
Kotwal, the vision becomes dark and pessimistic. [Ibid:P. 25]

Maya Pandit’s describes of Tendulkar’s treatment of women in the
context of patriarchal ideology of family is interesting, enlightening and
well-argued, underlining the increasing note of glumness in his plays. Her
essay analysis and reveals that she remains preoccupied with analysing
Tendulkar’s portrayal of family as an ideological state tool, destroying
women by dispossessing them of all their rights as individuals and
humans.

Tendulkar’s major plays presentes that the central theme as
violence to all of them and provides to unite them into a kind of unified
body. He deals with this phenomenon as he looks it in different sections
of society - men and women, young and old, rich and poor, educated and
illiterate, castes on the upper as well as lower rungs of the social
hierarchy. His searching vision has discovered its manifestations in
different areas of one’s life: - familial, social, personal, professional, political and cultural. Vijay Tendulkar’s depiction of violence as something omnipresent can be seen broadly in the shapes of psychological, sexual, physical and verbal forms in different realms of human relationships. All the different kinds of violence often interconnect and also combine with each other to form a complex set of tactics to harm the victimizer.

In his plays physical violence is the most visible form, carried out through the use of physical force in order to impose pain in the body of the victim. Physical force can be applied in the form of pushing, beating, shoving and hitting with slaps, kicks, blows or with stick or weapon. In literature physical violence like any other form is also related with the question of power. Those who have superior physical force and positions of power utilize it as a means to force the weak and the inferior into respect and subservience to their will and power. This may also be used by the executor to claim his perceived loss of mastery and status. It frequently expresses his frustration, anger and misery resulting from his actual or perceived failures.

Vijay Tendulkar has represented this form of violence so bravely and freely. It sometimes has surprised his conventional audience who are not ready to believe this ugly truth. We have an example of play, *Sakharam Binder*, the eponymous hero, is how men use wicked force against women in various ways. Sakharam always beats Laxmi, his sixth wife or woman, black and blue with kicks, blows, and with belt and even strangles Champa to death. In the play *The Vultures* has a many scenes which have been found disturbing for the physical violence they depict. While pretending a fight among brother, Ramakant and Umakant push their father off the chair, throbbing his head. They scare him by throwing
liquor’s bottles on each other and uncouthly shock the audience by the way Ramakant and Umakant break the leg of Manik, their sister. Ghashiram Kotwal also has a many scenes portraying brutal violence. Ghashiram is himself beaten up first by the criminals at Gulabi’s place and then again at Dakshina ceremony by soldiers. It introduces the aspect of vicious form of violence that dominates the whole play. Ghashiram’s own used violence, as a Kotwal, against Poonaites on the roads, particularly the ordeal of the innocent Brahmin, whose finger nails are pulled out and hands are burnt with red hot iron ball and then cut off, are truly scenes of gruesome physical violence. The violence of the mob in stoning Ghashiram to death marks the climatic point of the cruelty presented in the play. There are a many occurrences related to violence which are not performed on the stage, but they are reported to the spectators through the dialogues, gestures and behavior of characters or the use of such tools as lights and sounds. The beating of the gardener and abortion of Manik’s unborn child because of Ramakant’s kick at her womb in The Vultures are many examples of such occasions of off-stage violence. Related to this is the form of sexual violence often used against women. This form of violence is signifies sexual relations established or attempted without taking the permission or willingness of the other. It may be in the form of forced rape, prostitution, in or outside marriage, resulting in hurt or violation of the body or self-respect of the woman which may also result in unwanted and forced abortions and pregnancies. Molestations and harassment of women with words, gestures or implications of sexual overtones are also some other forms of its manifestations which Tendulkar has represented in his plays one by other. Tendulkar’s play Sakharam Binder reveals a specific psychopathic thought of his male hero towards females, coupled with an erotic curiosity in coercive sexual behaviour. He rapidly indulges in violently
exploitative sexual orgies with his women. In *Sakaram Binder* Shinde is
tries to force his wife, Champa, into prostituting and thus violates her
sense of honour. He is also the one who receives brutal pleasure by
sexually torturing his wife.

In next play of Vijay Tendulkar *Ghashiram Kotwal*, Ghashiram’s
behaviour of giving his daughter, Gauri, to Nana Sahib for get hold of
power for himself. His behaviour in the way her unwanted pregnancy is
aborted leading to her death is the best examples of women’s sexual
exploitation. Rama and Manik’s forced abortions in *The Vultures*, brutal
kicking and beating of pregnant Jyoti by her husband, Arun in
*Kanyadaan* and in *Silence! The Court is in Session* the decree to Miss.
Benare to abort her illegitimate child, reveal how women become more
defenseless to sexual abuse in their pregnancies. Tendulkar’s vision is not
limited to abuse only in heterosexual relationships but also discovers and
discloses it in interpersonal relationship usually considered
uncharacteristic and socially unacceptable. For example in *A Friend’s
Story* Mitra becomes a kind of predator to Nama. When she frustrated at
that time she feels shamed and uses to violence against herself by
committing suicide.

Vijay Tendulkar has presented on to the stage sexual and physical
violence in their various forms and shapes as they are in the real life.
Tendulkar offers that sexual and physical acts of hurting and harming
others are almost perpetually accompanied by oral attacks. Verbal abuse
can prove to be very hurting and virulent in the form of hurtful words,
language of ridicule, verbal threats of using bad words (abuse), injury or
torture directed to the victim or at her family. Contemptuous tone,
coldness and stinging talks, words of angry and curse outbursts are some
of the common tool used by the victimizer to humiliate and hurt the
victim. Examples of verbal violence in its many forms can be found in major play of Vijay Tendulkar.

To sum up, both dramatists belong to the second half of the 20th century. It is true that the political, social, cultural or spiritual backgrounds for the Indian dramatists are certainly similar. In spite of the differences, the combined result of all these issues as reflected in their literary works which is similar. The research has been done on each of the dramatists as independent studies and also under various heads such as Modernity in Marathi Drama, Plays Dealing with Psychological Problems and so on. But the present research is focus simultaneously on Vijay Tendulkar and Mahesh Elkunchwar. It has been inspired by the striking similarities between both of dramatists.
References-


4. Ibid: p.28


8. Ibid :91

