

The Vultures: A Reflection of the Covetous and Ferocious Image of Human Beings by Vijay Tendulkar

Dr. Balasaheb G. Gaikwad,
Assistant Professor of English
Br. Balasaheb Khardekar College, Vengurla.

HHH.....

Abstract

This paper is envisioned to explore the covetous and ferocious image of men and women characters portrayed by Vijay Tendulkar in his play *The Vultures*. The use of the bird name for the title, *The Vultures*, signifies violence and greed in the nature of man. Hence, the title of the play discloses the playwright's deep understanding of human beings, and their relationship to each other, and how human beings are innately greedy, violent, and cunning. Vijay Tendulkar was an eminent and controversial playwright, columnist, scriptwriter, and political analyst of the 60s. Vijay Tendulkar always desired to portray the innately dark nature of men and women in his plays, and essays. Hari Pitale, Ramakant, Umakant, Manik, Rama, and Rajninath, the characters who are more or less very cruel, wild, vicious, venomous, and brutal in the play. Not only men but also women involved in this.

Keywords: Vultures, Hari Pitale, Ramakant, Umakant, Manik, Rama

The present paper is intended to depict the issue of the covetous and ferocious image of men and women in the Play *The Vultures* by Vijay Tendulkar. He was born on the 06th of January, 1928 in the publisher's family, Maharashtra, India. Since childhood, the habit of watching Hollywood movies influenced him to think scientifically and reasonably. It also helped him to be broad culturally, socially, and politically in the conservative society of India. So, the neglected issues in contemporary literature became the major source of Vijay Tendulkar's drama. In other words, the issues like exploitation of women from males, poverty, violence, and hunger for power are mostly highlighted in his works. Though, as a playwright, he began writing in the pre-independence period the huge fame and publicity received by him in the post-1960s. The projection of contemporary society harshly and rationally stirred the traditional audience of the Marathi Theatre. Almost in all plays, He raised his pen against the injustices and exploitations made with the ordinary people in the name of traditions and customs. Hence, it made him produce his unique status and establish drastic changes in the regional

literature of India. Eventually, by writing the plays, Vijay Tendulkar, as a playwright, achieved great recognition and success at the horizon of national and world literature. The injustice with the ordinary people, patriarchal and conservative culture of Maharashtra are the prime subjects of Tendulkar's plays. Besides this, exploitation and suppression of women traditionally, and regional politics in India discussed by him in his plays. However, the covetous and ferocious human beings are predominant in the play *The Vultures*.

Vijay Tendulkar produced the play *The Vultures* in 1970 and published it in 1971. Its publication shook the old-fashioned audience of Marathi Theatre. Though intensified scenes and dialogues of the play were censored and condemned initially in Maharashtra, the play was highly appreciated by critics and scholars. The vices of the characters reflected in the current play are regularly found in all spheres of Indian society. Especially, exploitation of women, illicit relationships, drinking wine, and deceiving people for the sake of money are the common factors of Indian families. Therefore, the considered issue for the present research paper is not bound to the specific people and period of the society in Vijay Tendulkar's *The Vultures*. In the context of India, it has been found everywhere. This innate nature of human beings is highly portrayed and criticized in the play *The Vultures*. The characters Pappa Pitale, his elder son Ramakant, daughter Manik, his second son Umakant, his illegitimate son Rajaninath and his daughter-in-law Rama, (wife of Ramakant) are the major images of covetous and ferocious nature and behaviour of human beings. They cross all the boundaries of humanity, morality, and ethics for the sake of money. They also forget their blood relationships with each other while getting property share, drink, sex and other materialistic achievements. So, the play displays, Tendulkar is highly inclined towards the urban middle-class people and their socio-cultural relationships in his plays. He gives stress to the wild, savage, and cunning nature of contemporary society in his literary genres. To portray the vulturous nature of human beings, dramatist openly uses scenes of illicit relationships which were not acceptable to the traditional

audiences of regional theatre.

The theme of the play turns around all the members, including men and women, of the Pitale family. Vijay Tendulkar has kept his focuses to explore the covetous and ferocious nature of these family members from the beginning to the end of the play. Even the sounds and voices in the background of the play helped to diminish the unmitigated appetite of the Pitale family for wealth and their vulturous nature. So, each member of the family finds an opportunity to deceive others and grab his or her property share shamelessly. Whatever the wealth was accumulated by Pappa Pitale in his life had been earned by deceiving his younger brother Sakharam. "The Hari Sakharam Company" a construction company was a joint venture of the Pitale brothers' Pappa Hari and Sakharam. A few years later, Pappa Pitale grabs that firm from his brother Sakharam deceitfully. Even in court, Skahram could not prove his claim for the construction firm so he lost his Rights. But, in old age, Whatever Pappa Pitale Sows with his brother Skharam he reaps the same from his two sons Ramakant and Umakant, and a daughter Manik. Though the ample amount is earned by Pappa in his construction business and it has been equally distributed among the three children of Pappa after retirement. They are not satisfied with this distribution. Each one looks doubtfully to others. They just find an opportunity for grabbing the amounts. Along with this, Pappa Pitale's children are also waiting for his death so that his property share can easily be snatched by them. They feel that he has become a burden on them. Therefore, they do not like to show any respect to their father, instead, they prefer to humiliate him by using bad words like "a mangy dog would have made a better father" (213). Yet, due to the past criminal history, Pappa Pitale stands very firmly against harassment done has been done by his children. The extreme cruelty of the Ramakant, Umakant, and Manik is displayed when they make Pappa drink heavily and admit them details of the personal shares deposited in the Punjab Bank. Apart from this, the children of the Pappa Pitale do not believe in each other, they always ready to fight with each other for sake of property shares. It has been found in the play that the interpersonal relationships of the Pitale family is based on greed, violence, and selfishness. Therefore, as a family, they do not have love and affection for each other. They also lack unity and loyalty for the family relationship. Hence, they do not like to show respect for others. They just think for themselves, and for that, they wait for an opportunity to take the money of other family members. Dramatist, Vijay Tendulkar, thinks that man is innately covetous and ferocious. The theme of the play is based on

the playwright's experiences and observations made in his childhood life. In the interview, Vijay Tendulkar was asked about the theme of *The Vultures*, he said that: "In Gidhade, the cruelty is great because it deals with an exceptional family. As for what you call perversion, let us accept that human existence is full of it. We shut our eyes to it.....I know many people who enjoy torturing their wives; it can be physical or mental. They are outwardly decent folk and you don't suspect they have this dark side. So, when I deal with masochism or homosexuality, I am drawing your attention to something near you". So, the play throws light on the dark side of human nature. The play *The Vultures* shows that not a single person is exempted from the shortcomings of covetous and ferocious. It is equally found in men and women of the society. Manik, the sister of Ramakant and Umakant, is a whimsical, and capricious woman character who believes in grabbing money, smoking, and drinking liquor. She hates Rama and always found that she treats her violently. She is not a conventional woman who likes to be remaining among the four walls. Instead, she goes to parties, drinks liquor with her brother, and supports the plot made against her father by her brothers Ramakant and Umakant. She violently curses her brother Ramakant when he kicks on her womb. She demands her property share aggressively from Ramakant. Along with this, an illicit relationship of the Rama, a wife of Ramakant, with Rajninath is dramatically portrayed by Vijay Tendulkar in this play. Rama and Rajninath are the only characters who are not violent and greedy about wealth and power. However, Rama's desire for a child from Rajninath makes her that she cannot run away from the inherited vices of human beings. The decision of becoming a mother from step brother-in-law destroys Rama's simplicity and honesty and proves that human being is innately covetous and cunning.

To sum up, the play *The Vultures* depicts that human being is innately covetous and ferocious for wealth and power. Selfishness, and greediness are the unavoidable characteristics of man. He possesses these qualities naturally and unconsciously. To fulfill the desire for power and wealth, human beings accept illegal or unethical ways like exploitation, suppression, and violence. He forgets all the social and legal restrictions imposed by society. While exploring the dark side of human nature, Vijay Tendulkar does not make any discrimination like man and woman. He firmly depicts that greed and violence are the inseparable features of human personality.

Works Cited

- 1 *Adarkar, Priya. Translated The Vultures/ Vijay Tendulkar, Delhi:*

- Hind Pocket Books, 1974.
- 2 Tendulkar, Vijay. *Five Plays*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- 3 Tendulkar, Vijay. In *Conversation with Gowri Ramnarayan: Interview, Vijay Tendulkar's Plays: An Anthology of Recent Criticism* (Ed), V.M. Madge, Delhi, Pencraft International, (2007), p. 50
- 4 Nelaballi, William. "Human Vultures: A Study of Vijay Tendulkar's *The Vultures*" *SVU Journal of English Studies*, Vol 11, ISSN-2230-7923, June 2012.
- 5 Zagade, Sanjay Haribhau. "Exploration of the female psyche in Vijay Tendulkar's *The Vultures* (Gidhade)", *Langlit, An International Peer Reviewed Open Access Journal*, Vol. 3 Issue-1, ISSN 2349-5189, August 2016.
-