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## JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC STUDIES

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ISSN: 1305-578X

*Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(4), 3224-3228; 2021

### Socio-Psycho Consciousness In Vijay Tendulkar's Ghashiram Kotwal

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#### APA Citation:

Elavarasan, L., & Soundararajan, R. (2021). Socio-Psycho Consciousness In Vijay Tendulkar's Ghashiram Kotwal, *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(4), 3224-3228.

Submission Date: 11/10/2021

Acceptance Date: 25/12/2021

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#### Abstract

Vijay Tendulkar highlights the socio-psychological crises of the individuals along with the socio-political evils of modern society. His plays may not provide a solution to the problems but state the societal problems openly. The interior conflicts of the character give us a better understanding of the society. To understand the very 'self' or 'individual' one can turn towards a doctrine called Social Psychology. The socio-psychological studies allow us to develop a deeper insight into the conflicts of character. The method or technique also helps us understand the basic of human minds and the society. This research paper mainly focused on the psycho-socio consciousness on Vijay Tendulkar's *Ghashiram Kotwal*.

**Keywords:** *Sociology, Humanism, Self-identity, Psychology, Identity-crises.*

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### 1. Introduction

The playwright Vijay Tendulkar is a superb critique of the society. Vijay Tendulkar has very objectively looked at the social psychological crises of the human beings. The plays of Vijay Tendulkar have completely transformed the theatricality of the Marathi theatre. The regional theatre received the national or possibly the international recognition. It must be put into light that this is not a praise but the reality.

The social psychology assists us in understanding the causes of the rise the crises in human being. The crises can, to some extent, be illustrated as any event leads to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or a whole society. The word crisis is deemed to be negative and therefore the socio-psychological crises bring the negative changes in the security, economic, political, societal, religious, and environmental affairs.

According to Oxford Dictionary, the word crisis means "a time of great danger, difficulty or doubt when problems must be solved or important decisions must be made". The definition of the word crisis gives us a view. The view is that during a time of great difficulty or danger, one must decide. The making of a decision is what is important in the life. It can simply be understood as a character deciding. The decision may cause him or her suffer.

These crises occur abruptly. These crises do not give any warning. In society, an individual is the basic actor. Almost all the individuals pursue goals which are the reflections of their self-interest. To achieve these self-interest or goals, he or she goes through a process of conscious decision making and choose the alternative with the highest expected value. Many a time, it is seen that the identity of an individual is simply replaced by an identity of a group. The group may be a caste or a set of people who share the implied identity. Therefore, the problems do not arise only from an economic or a political or religious point of view but also through the group status too.

The plays of Vijay Tendulkar are the complete mixtures of the perfect craft, tone, the theme, the language, and the naturalistic attitude. His structural and stylistic characteristics are widely popular in the literary field. Vijay Tendulkar effectively used the structure and style to his themes and characters. It seems that the purpose of his writings is not the 'self' but the entire society. With the help of his writings, Vijay Tendulkar passed the message of humanity. The message he carried has reflected through the artistic lens all over the world. The themes like violence and sex were rarely discussed in the play, but Vijay Tendulkar put the light on the most significant issues of the mankind. The issues are still prevalent in the society. It must be noted that Vijay Tendulkar also wrote the plays for children. There are eleven children plays that he contributed the literary world. He had also written a few collections of short stories and a few volumes of essays on literature and social and political issues.

The play *Ghashiram Kotwal* is based on history but the chief focus is on the contemporary political scene. Nana Phadnavis and Ghashiram are used only to expose the brutality, innocuous practices to amalgamate power which ultimately leads to their destruction of the powerless by the powerful. The play also explores the sad state of women in society. The father Ghashiram does not hesitate in scapegoating his daughter's modesty for the fulfilment of his political ambition. Nana has mastered the power game and is a representation of lecherous attitude sadomasochism. His erotic dance with the courtesans and sexual life stands example for the same.

The play and the playwright need a real theatre and a live audience, and if he does not get to communicate with them the playwright would die. By and large, this comment does not satisfy the argument. Apparently, it only tries to capture a basic issue which has not only been responsible for the slowness of the growth of Indian English drama, and therefore does not satisfy the curiosity. There seems to be the other way to understand the issue where Prof. Dharan's reading would help us to clarify it satisfactorily.

Social Psychology is a combination of apparently two different disciplines, the first is Sociology and the second is Psychology. It is certainly necessary to understand the concept socio-psychology; one must co-relate them as well as separately look at these terms. It can be understood as a unit or as a whole. The first term social means a social life of a person. A person interacts with various kinds of people or groups of people in his or her life.

The play *Ghashiram Kotwal* is a historical play. It is divided into two Acts. The each Act divided in small scenes. The play interprets the major theme of complexity, religiosity, sexuality, corruption and tragedy of political power. The native significance of the play begins with the title itself. The story of anonymous protagonist belongs to the history of Peshwas. It is a story of conflict between Ghashiram Savaldas a north Indian Brahman from Kanauj and Nana Phadnavis, the Chief Minister of Peshwas in Maharashtra. The characters of the Nanasaheb, Phadnavis, Ghashiram, Gauri and their situations are all historical. The play *Ghashiram Kotwal* is a tragedy of power. A story shows an ideal person suffering due to his own faults. But the Tendulkar has tried to make a play not a piece of antique history but a reflection of ever operative mystery of life.

The play deals a tragedy of power and powerless behind manifestation of historical characters. The Ghashiram Savaldas is a poor Brahman from Kanauj. He comes to Poona for livelihood along with his wife and daughter. Since he gets no dignified employment to suit his caste, he becomes a servant in courtesan Gulabi's house. In addition to the housework that he does for her, he also sings and dances

when people come to enjoy her erotic songs and the dance. Nana Phadnavis is an elderly person having several wives but no children. He is a lusty person. He was not satisfied with his own wives hence he comes to listen Gulabi's folk song. One day, Nana visits Gulabi and hurts his ankle while dancing, Ghashiram appreciates him. Nana feels flattered and pleased and offers him a necklace of pearls and leaves. Gulabi snatches the necklace from him and sends him out with the help of her thugs. Ghashiram feels hurt and insulted.

Thus, Gulabi who once rescues Ghashiram persecutes him later and Ghashiram who remains in the position of the Victim feel helpless and powerless. The first disappointment in Ghashiram's life comes when he comes to Pune for making his fortune. But he suffers from unexpected humiliation at Pune. One day Ghashiram goes out. He feels tired and hungry. When Peshwa arranges a great feast in honor of Brahmans, he also visits there. But the soldiers do not allow him. Unfortunately some thief has stolen money in Pune. The soldiers beat Ghashiram severely and arrested and imprisonment because he is wrongly accused thievery. Nobody listen his words, which was true. He tried to give true and honest explanation and clarification but no use. Ghashiram worried about his reputation. He worried about his wife and daughter that what they think about him.

He was imprisonment for few days and release with warning.

“Get lost hey! thief monkey. If you so much as put a foot in the holy city of Pune. You will loose your head. Go away. Take your ugly face and go for away. Don't come back to Pune. Nor even your shadow should fall on the city of Pune. Get lost go.”

He feels immensely humiliated and tormented. This humiliation faced by Ghashiram generates powerful feeling of revenge. He expresses his anger and feeling of revenge. He says:

“But I'll come back to Poona. I'll show my strength. It will cost you! Your good days are gone! I'll come back like a boar and I'll stay as a devil. I'll come back like a boar and I'll stay as a devil. I'll make pigs of all of ours. I'll make this Poona a kingdom of pigs. Then I'll be Ghashiram again, the son of Savaldas once more.”

His mistreatment by the people forces him to take challenge to take revenge against the people of Pune. He was motivated by powerful vindictive desire he thinks of ways and means of achieving his goal and he was not bother about any moral principles. He hatches a plot of temptation in order to take revenge. He doesn't think twice as using his daughter as manipulation part of taking revenge against insulting treatment given to him by people of Pune. It was difficult for a new person to get settled in a new city like Pune and satisfy his hunger for revenge and hunger of power. Ghashiram knows that Nanasaheb chief minister of the Peshwa king has a notorious weakness for women.

Ghashiram has a beautiful daughter called Lalita Gouri wants to use her as a bait to attract Nanasaheb and get some power. In a hurry he did not think about the consequences. He offers his own 16 year young girl Gouri to Nanasaheb and in returns gets appointed as the Kotwal of Puna. The womanizer Nana accepted this. Vinita Bhatnagar says: “Gauri has few lines in the play and certainly none that hint at her own perception of her experience. But Ghashiram's guilt is voiced at various parts of the dramatic text .Thus even in the triumphant celebration of his power, Ghashiram worries over the fate of his daughter”. She was afraid of Nanasaheb's behaviour and his erotic argument. She escapes from there. Nana is a crooked politician. He has double advantage in appointing Ghashiram as Kotwal, one is sexual. And another is political. He can enjoy his daughter as well as use him as a thorn to remove thorns or control the Brahmin of Pune.

Hence it shows that he wants to make the marriage of his daughter by using his power His daughter becomes the victim of the corrupt power game. Nana enjoys sexual pleasure with her. She becomes pregnant and at the time of abortion she dies. Ghashiram visits Nana to inquire about the where about

his daughter Lalita Gauri whom he had not seen for ten days. In response to the inquiry Nana gave very casual answers. When Ghashiram insisted Nana told him even more casually that she had been sent to Chandra the midwife. Ghashiram was shocked by this information. Ghashiram visits to Chandra makes him realize that his daughter had died. He regretted whatever had happened in his blind desire of revenge through unlimited power and authority. However, he is not prepared to take responsibility and blame for whatever had gone wrong.

This is his cowardice. He puts the entire blame for daughter's death on Nana and wants to take further revenge for the loss of his daughter. The conflict between them begins after the death of Ghashiram's daughter. This conflict is nothing but the conflict of power and powerlessness. Nana is powerless in front of his lust for Gauri. The power equation changes after the death of Gauri. Gauri's death made Ghashiram furious. Ghashiram tries to overthrow the power and the authority of Nana by not bowing in front of him. Nana tames Ghashiram and overpowers him by making him bow in front of him.

After this incident, Ghashiram realizes that his power is meaningless in front of Nana. Ghashiram acquired power that makes him corrupt and arrogant that he forgets the responsibility of his authority as a Kotwal. He tries to overpower over power Nana Phadnavis. He has forgotten that Nana was the Chief Minister of Peshwa. The mutual relation between Nana and Ghashiram spoils. This creates conflict between power and powerlessness. In the first episode Ghashiram was powerless and Nana powerful. After the death of his daughter Ghashiram becomes crueler. He becomes a man eater and punishes man on slight mistake and even kills them. Ghashiram forgets his limits of authority. According to mob's intention Nana crookedly and order of quickly signs the order of death punishment.

According to the order of Nana mob shaves the head of Ghashiram and put vermilion over it. Ghashiram is made to sit on a donkey and taken through the city. The mob throws stones at him and a belated realization of his sin and repentance come to Ghashiram's mind. Finally the angry Brahmin murders him. The retribution hatched out to Ghashiram proves the formula that he who rejects the moral order of the universe gets regarded by it ultimately. The play ends with the death of Gauri and rebellion of the Brahmins against the Kotwal. Nana ends the oppressive use of power and declares a three day celebration for the end of stigma on society. Ghashiram's sorrow and inspiration is a lesson to the audience against going to extremes for achieving unlimited power and authority. It is a demonstration of sorrow and suffering that awaited a person who had achieved through the wrong means. The play is a social satire. It projects the society that defends corrupts Nana and punishes the Ghashiram.

## **2. Conclusion**

Thus the play is a powerful satire on the power politics. Mr. Tendulkar once stated "My creative writing, including plays and films I have written, have mostly dealt or tried to deal with my contemporary social reality. As a social being, I am against all exploitation and I passionately feel that all exploitation must end". Thus Ghashiram Kotwal, owes its power and vibrancy to its delineation of contemporary socio-political reality. He tries to present all mechanisms of politics with which power goes on like treachery, sexuality, immorality, violence, and even religion. The play is study of power politics and a common man's search for identity and subsequent disillusionment. Nana and his ruling mechanisms symbolise power politics and Ghashiram's rise and fall symbolise a common man's search for identity in the world of power.

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