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DRAMATIC STATURE OF VIJAY TENDULKAR

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Abstract

Vijay Tendulkar, a keen observer of human psyche, is a great Marathi dramatist. There is a close connection between drama and Tendulkar and it seems as if they were meant for each other. He is a master craftsman and his writings are the product of the zeitgeist. It is he who turned Marathi stage into national theatre. His name ranks with the names of Titanic writers like Badal Sircar, Mohan Rakesh and Rabindernath Tagore, etc. He forms a trio along with his contemporaries Mahesh Dattani and Girish Karnad. This trio brought a revolution in the history of Indo-Anglo drama. Without the mention of their names, the subject of the drama cannot be broached. Tendulkar's dramas reflect a balance between the techniques and the themes and leave the audience pondering over something because he provides no solutions to the problems rendered in his dramas. His dramatic stature is beyond measures and one can only feel awestruck after going through his works which are full of terseness and jerky rhythms. His writings have brought him laurels and placed him on the pedestal of eminence. His plays have piercing impact on the audience. The cardinal questions, he raises in his dramas, remain unanswered.

Key Words: Zeitgeist, pondering, craftsman, awestruck, terseness

Introduction

Undoubtedly, Tendulkar received a literary pedigree and he started his career as a journalist. He wrote the first story at very tender age. He bade fair to be a writer in his childhood. He has earned a venerable place among India's greatest playwrights for bold and unconventional approach in his dramas. He has presented a repository of dramas and all the dramas reveal the trials and tribulations of life. Whenever there is talk of unconventional drama, the name of Vijay Tendulkar comes at the top. He is a master craftsman in Marathi dramas and his dramas have been translated in diverse national and international languages. It is all because of his

contribution that the name of Marathi, dramas is now on the national map. Tendulkar's dramas are dramas of paramount significance since they possess all the dramatic features which instantly connect the audience to him. A prominent feature of his dramas is naturalness. He conforms to the rules of the dramas stipulated by Aristotle. He presents his characters as they are, not as they should be.

M.H. Abrams has rightly opined,

"Naturalism aims at presenting accurate imitation of life as it is and prefers the average, the commonplace and the everyday over the rarer aspects of the contemporary

scene. A naturalistic play is realistic both in subject and manner. The characters are chosen from the middle class or the working class and are usually people without exceptional endowments. The literary figures such as Emile Zola, George Moore, Theodore Dreiser and Eugene O' Neill are connected with naturalism”

Vijay Tendulkar is the most naturalistic playwright and there is nothing superfluous in his creations. He is a blunt and outspoken writer of his age and his writings reflect whatever the experiences he underwent while glancing at life with naked eye. There are 28 full length plays and a good number of one act plays to his credit. His dramatic range is vast. All his dramas are gripping and the reader drifts along with the characters as if he is on a journey. It is Tendulkar who has enriched the theatrical experience of his audience with the dramatic feast he serves to them. He is a realist to the hilt. He has presented nothing unreal. He has made dexterous use of dramatic techniques. It is the choice of themes and the treatment of his characters that make him realist in the eyes of his audience. He has the art of enthralling the audience and they feel spellbound and captivated throughout the whole play whatever the play is being staged. Tendulkar is a dramatist with a constructive vision. He wishes the regeneration of the society. He has presented a galaxy of characters and all the characters in his plays are from day to day life. The characters, he presents are totally convincing characters and it is the skill of this dramatist to present such characters. The handling of characters by him is undoubtedly praiseworthy and dexterous. He has presented both flat and round characters.

Silence! The Court is in Session, Sakharan Binder, Kamala, Ghashiram Kotwal, Kanayadaan and The Vultures are his globally staged plays. In all these dramas, the dramatist has touched the ills and issues, prevalent in the society. He has revealed the issues like gender bias, subjugated condition of women, male chauvinism, as well as bestial and depraved male mentality etc in his dramas. He has painted themes of tortures, exploitation and inequality of women on his dramatic canvas skillfully. He has brought to light the fact that women

despite widespread education are not safe and secure and are treated as feeble creatures in Indian society. The play, *Silence! The Court is in Session* reveals the ganging up of male colleagues against a female teacher. They accuse her of infanticide. During a mock trial, her male counterparts torture her savagely and charge her with adultery and infanticide. This inhuman treatment of her makes her realize that she lives in male dominant society. Being compelled, she has to voice her concern against the male dominance found in the patriarchal system. Similarly, the play *Kamala* is the revelation of the fact that for name and fame a journalist who is the male protagonist goes to the extent of buying a woman in the market to present her in a press conference. The play also unearths the fact that despite widespread education, woman flesh trade is still prevalent in our country. The play *Kanayadaan*, is a study of the fact that whenever the oppressed ones get chance, they become oppressors of the first rate and inflict pains on others by going badly vindictive. And in *Sakharan Binder*, one may see the pitiable plight of women in our Indian societies. The play reflects how women are deserted by their husbands and they have to find shelter at someone else's house for their livelihood. It also showcases the fact that these deserted women have to become mistresses for bread and butter. On the other hand, the play reveals the bestial, lusty and hypocritical mentality of men who abuse such women and take unjust advantage of their compulsions. Thus the dramatist has brought to light harsh reality of the Indian societies.

Methodology

I have adopted analytical methodology in my research paper. I have read the plays of the dramatist between the lines. Before chalking out this research paper, I have read a lot about this writer. This research paper is the outcome of both intensive and extensive studies of the works of Vijay Tendulkar. I have consulted critical works written about him as well.

Conclusion

The wide range of Tendulkar's plays reveals that his dramatic stature is very high. There is nothing hyperbolic in it that his upbringing in the

literary environment made him scale great heights in the sphere of drama, a literary genre. The awards such as the Maharashtra State government reward (1956,1969 and 1972), Sangeet Natak academy award (1971), the Filmfare Award (1980 and 1983), Padmabhushan (1984), Saraswati Samman (1993), the Kalidas Samman (1999), the Maharashtra Gaurav Puraskar (1999), the Jansthan Award (1999) have been conferred on him. In addition to it, he has added to many feathers in his cap by winning many more awards for the commendable works he rendered. He has a great dramatic stature in history of Indo Anglo drama.

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