

Psychological Study Of Sakharam's Fury & Anger

Meenu Hooda

M.A., M. Phil (English)

E-mail: meenuhoodamanu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT :

At the mention of postcolonial Indian drama, we can hardly choose not to mention the name of Vijay Tendulkar who perhaps was one of the most compelling writers. He delineates his characters with a sense of theoretical richness and deep psychological realism which startles the audience and readers with subtle nuances of harsh realism. Tendulkar's prolific pen boasts of having penned down 30 plays, 7 one-act-plays, 4 short stories, 2 novels, 6 collections of children's plays and 17 film credits for screen play writing. His writings are playfully scattered over a span of five decades. But in terms of observing socio-cultural reality, no Tendulkar play comes close to furious and angry reaction of a low class protagonist Sakharam who's ferocious about everything and everybody.

This paper is an attempt to understand the complex reasons behind Sakharam's being so shrouded with fury.

INTRODUCTION :

'Sakharam Binder' is a study of complex psychological realism and impulsive outbursts of anger and fury. Written in an immensely naturalistic way, the plot is set in the backdrop of a lower middle class Indian society.

A foul mouthed and cruel lower class fellow, Sakharam tries to dominate every woman he brings in to live with him without any wedlock. He brings home females who are left out either by society or by their own depravity. Though he

himself doesn't give them any respectable place yet demands reverence in return. He searches for cast-off women so that he can bring them home to avail sexual return after providing them food and shelter. The element of emotional fulfilment remains unfulfilled and unrealized. This vacuum has some serious psychological factors which drive him crazy and impulsive. His violence and fury pervade the entire plot.

1972 was the year when 'Sakharam Binder' took Indian theatre with storm because of its rich details of social, cultural realism. Indian social fabric was undergoing tremendous chaos and bewilderment. Indian youth in general felt cheated since its dreams remained unfulfilled by government as well as public sector. Vijay Tendulkar has stated:

"I've not written about hypothetical pain or created an imaginary world of sorrow. I am from a middle class family and I have seen the brutal ways of life by keeping my eyes open. My work has come from within me as an outcome of my observation of the world in which I live. If they want to entertain and make merry, fine go ahead but I cannot do it, I have to speak the truth."¹

"Sakharam Binder" as a drama gets its driving force in the deep rooted multilayered psychological conflict in the mind of its protagonist. Sakharam remains detached from social norms of society and this deprivation creates mental conflict and fury in his personality. He becomes one compulsive ruthless creature who changes the supremacy of even Almighty. He asks all the female counterparts to treat him as god and owner of the house where only his will is supreme. The text overall is a psychological account of his hurt ego and his outburst of anger and fury.

OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH :

The objective of present research is to peep into psychological factors that make Sakharam Binder a ruthless, angry, furious and violent male masochist. Another objective is to evaluate different socio-cultural and religious facts that can

dictate over psyche and development. Literary research differs from a conventional one in a sense that it is not based on facts and figures only but is an instrument to see through those facts and figures to reach a certain human judgment and evaluation. Sakharam's character is treated as a highly complex one. Whatever appears on the surface can be highly deceiving. Only a systematic and comprehensive study can test the true worth of Sakharam's state of mind behind his anger and violence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

A lot of effort has been invested regarding research methodology that would not only suit the topic of discussion here but would also help in analysing the chosen topic in a more comprehensive way. Literary topics can be tricky in the sense that data based study hardly justifies the element of human nature which is the basis of literature. The research methodology adopted in writing this topic is content analysis and discussion. The plot, its incidents and other minute details have been studied meticulously before reaching a conclusion. A conclusion can be hard to reach in a literary topic hence discussion has been adopted as a tool in this research.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

1. "Tendulkar's sakharam Binder : Psycho Social Scrutiny of Male Domination & Violence" by Dr. Rajneesh Pandey.

This paper throws light on the psychological aspects which sow the seeds of aggression, self destruction and violence in males. It highlights the influence of social environment in shaping an individual's personality.

2. "Harshness, Aggression & Sensuality in Vijay Tendulkar's works" by Rajkumar & R. Mummatchi.

This paper underlines the endless deterioration and severity in the social strings relentlessly invading the man woman relationship. It is shown how sex & ethics seem to create a sense of fate out of which there's no escape for man

& woman. They are subjected to a sense of self indulgence & dissolution bordering on hopelessness.

3. "Sakharam Binder: The Impotent Fury of a Male Masochist" by N.S. Dharan.

Here Tendulkar, through his character, Sakharam, exposes the sufferings of the lower middle-class males in Indian society. Sakharam flees away from home due to the ill-treatment meted out to him by his father. His mental, emotional, psychological and social conditioning mould him into a rough-minded and frustrated man and eventually a male masochist.

DATA INTERPRETATION & ANALYSIS :

The dramatic action of 'Sakharam Binder' is predominantly savaged by his incoherent anger which seems to be a product of his identity crisis. Right from childhood Sakharam has been depicted as a cast away who runs away from home at an age of eleven after receiving barbaric treatment from his father. Though he is a Brahmin yet is subjected to live the life of a Mahar because of the social fabric. These sectors are chiefly responsible for his impulsive and aggressive behaviour. Too much suffocation leads to his rebellious nature which is visible throughout the play. During 1970's the middle class values and existence were at a stake. Unrealized desires and dreams of youth created havoc and chaos with no solution at hand. Sakharam is a typical product of the contemporary society he dwells in. His own experiences make him a better and independent decision maker without any sense of social or religious obligation. He has complaints against everything including social and religious institutions. He is particularly bitter towards women whom he treats as disposable commodities and lashes out at them at slightest provocation. R.K. Kaul asserts: "There is latent in human psyche a taste for crime, sexuality and savageness".²

Sakharam has survived on his own in a society that doesn't contribute to his survival in any way. He lives life on his self made philosophy without caring for established social norms. Sakharam has no emotional connection with any human.

All his relationships with opposite sex are based on satisfying his transitory carnal desires. In the beginning he leaves Laxmi despondent and miserable by clarifying on what terms he would allow her to stay in the house. Sakharam indirectly exploits the helplessness of women by striking a strange bargain with them. In return to his providing shelter they are expected to satisfy his physical itch. Mr. Sharat Babu Comments:

“The cruel, prejudiced treatment of Sakharam by his parents has caused him to behave rebelliously in order to overcome his powerlessness and joyfulness”.³

Sakharam’s bullying nature has many complicated traits which are best suited for rigorous psychoanalysis. Brijraj Singh has stated so aptly:

“Sakharam is a brutalized and aggressive bully who drinks, takes drugs and whores and is ready to turn violent at the least provocation”.⁴

The question of survival and unsympathetic social factors make him a true sadist. He often remarks in an unthoughtful manner and his statements are often fought with fury and disdain. He cares the least about hurting other’s deep sentiments. For instance when Laxmi asks for the pictures of gods he comments impulsively that he is more interested in chillum and ganja than in God. When Laxmi expresses her faith that husbands ought to be whipped in public for the way they treat their wives. On one hand he criticizes the tyranny of husbands but on the other he himself behaves like one.

Surrounded by insecure nature he tries to dictate terms to Champa when she enters the house. He deliberately asks her not to talk to Dawood. Towards the end he goes to an extent to strangle her after knowing about alleged affair with Dawood. His insecurity and subsequent element of his anger may be a product of the fact that he received no unconditional love or affection from female folk. Tendulkar was once asked about the play being highly controversial in which sex and violence reign supreme whereas there could be a balanced amalgam of both.

Tendulkar answered: "Nobody would write a play to show sex and violence. For this purpose blue films and cabaret shows are enough. I have created here - four characters in this play and everyone is an individual with a distinct background. These characters are outcast. Such people have always pent up fury, very strong grievances against society. Their anger looks for an occasion to burst out but it does not find an outlet and gets misdirected. All these characters particularly Sakharam Binder, are of this type".⁵

Lack of goal in life keeps him involved in his own imaginary world where only he exists. He has been deprived of social or financial security which does not subside throughout the play. Tendulkar tries to represent his understanding of human existence through the character of Sakharam who knows well to survive through dominating values.

Sakharam's views on life may be against law or ethics, against social and religious institutions. But his psyche is typical representative of 20th century materialistic world where values are generally sacrificed for self attainment. Whenever his self-esteem is at stake, he tries to counter the situation by domination and outbursts of anger. Sakharam's sense of dominance and violence is not restricted to his social life alone. He exploits women in bed also without being sympathetic towards them. His anger and fury dictate his sexual behaviour. When Laxmi's religious course and prayers interfere with his sexual fury he seems to lose all his potency and vigour in bed. He hastily sends off Laxmi to avoid another embarrassing episode in bed. Sakharam's manliness is further tested when Laxmi comes back and Sakharam discovers Champa's affair with Dawood. His male ego is triggered to an extent that he strangles Champa. Sakharam's fury and violence is too susceptible to be manipulated easily. Perhaps his upbringing, years of depravity and isolation makes him barbarian who wants to confront the entire world where all were his enemies.

CONCLUSION :

Thus we can adhere to the fact that the element of social and psychological anxiety pervades the character of Sakham in entirety. A desolated mind can hardly embrace peace & ease. Hence the interpersonal and intra-personal relationships pertaining to Sakham are shrouded with agitation. It is also affirmed that Sakham's anger, fury & violence is not baseless and ingenuine. It has some deep rooted, justifiable psychological and socio-cultural reasons behind it.

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