



USE OF SYMBOLS IN VIJAY TENDULKAR'S *GHASHIRAM KOTWAL*

VANDNA VASAVA

Research Scholar
Sardar Patel University
Vallabh Vidyanagar.
(GJ) INDIA

ABSTRACT

Vijay Tendulkar is the playwright who has been famous for the treatment to the character that he gives and in doing so the symbols are the obvious parts that he relies heavily on. The symbols used by Tendulkar in the play Ghashiram Kotwal are mostly taken from the world of animals. These symbols are really interesting and that is the reason why they help the readers analyse the situation and the mind-set of the playwright. When we come across these symbols, we can feel that these symbols have been taken from the world that is around us and therefore we can say that the playwright has used them in this play in its connotative way. Let us try to understand them in the following argument.

Key words: Symbols, World of Animals, Iago, Lord Ganesh, Nana, Connotative, Prey, Hunger, Sex.

INTRODUCTION

We can certainly notice that the play *Ghashiram Kotwal* has been richly interposed with beautiful and suggestive symbols. The play right has skilfully employed these symbols in this play and they have been accurate and judicious as they reflect the society and people in its totality. Just like the plays of William Shakespeare, this play has also displayed the symbols in the manner by which we can understand that they have been used not as a dress of thought but the thought itself. Vijay Tendulkar has used most of the symbols from the world of animals is teasing. Animals display the cruelty and savagery of the actions symbolically done by human beings. When we come across thesesymbols, we can feel that these symbols have been taken from the world that is around us and therefore we can say that the playwright has



used them in this play in its connotative way. Let us take a look at one of the examples of this as we can see it in the below mentioned statement, “Ghashiram: I am a Kanauj Brahman, but I’ve become a Shudra, a criminal, a useless animal... Now I am a devil. You have made me an animal; I’ll be a devil inside, I’ll come back like a boar and I’ll stay as a devil. I’ll make pigs of all of you.” (Tendulkar, 27)

The above-mentioned sentence looks like the speech of Iago, the famous villain of Othello who has been described as a devil in the guise of a saint. He himself has said that “I am not what I am.” This sentence of Iago can also be taken for our Main character Ghashiram Kotwal because he seems to have so many qualities of Iago. on the other hand, we can also compare his character with the novel *He who Rides The Tiger* written by Bhabani Bhattacharya where we have a central character in Kalo who has been ill treated by the upper class society and thus he has taken an oath to take revenge on those people in the guise of a saint. Both these characters Ghashiram Kotwal and Kalo are similar as both of them have to bear the brunt of the higher-class society and its people. This is one of those examples where we can find the connotative use of the language by the playwright. The other example is as follow: “Nana looks unblinkingly at a pretty girl. She is beautiful, shy, and innocent. Nana walks towards the girl. The girl goes to bow at the Haridasas’s feet, falls at his feet.” (Tendulkar, 35)

This statement is altogether different from that of the other statements here the playwright has described different kinds of animal imagery as it can be seen images of lust and hunger the line “Nana looks unblinkingly at a pretty girl” has sexual and physical insinuations. The statement is shown in a kind of way that its source the plight and predicament of a female who has been compared to the mouse which is trapped and the one that cannot do anything as it is in its destiny that it should be delivered soon by the cat. Like mouse, the female sex in our society has been treated in the manner which is not acceptable but still they have to face such ill-treatment. the irony that is seen in the scene is that the girl who has been shown is even praying to the Lord Ganesh even the Lord Ganesh could not save her nor can help her in the matter of saving her chastity and at the end that innocent girl is misused just before the Statue of Lord Ganesh. However, it has been noted that both the sexual music and the chants of the religions have been inter-mingled with each other buy this skilled and great playwright. The major reason behind this is to show the corrupt priest of the society and also to expose the true nature of our people who have been using us on the name of the religion. Most of these religion heads have been the Saints only from outward but in fact they are devil from inside. This judicious intermingle of two diametrically opposed views also present ‘contrast’ in the play which is an important tool modern literature in English. T. S. Eliot has written a lot over this issue.

“She runs like a frightened deer.” (Tendulkar, 28)

VANDNA VASAVA

2Page



“If the hunter is ready, the prey will be found.” (Tendulkar, 29)

“Put your sword back in its sheath, Majesty. The prey is far away.” (Tendulkar, 30)

“I have given my beloved daughter into the jaws of that wolf.” (Tendulkar, 31)

Like previously the playwright has again use the image of the ‘frightened animal’ and the same Mouse image has been extended by him by using some of the very interesting and appropriate imagine a stick variation which make them even more fascinating. The playwright has now use the image of a frightened deer who has been put against the lion and therefore it has been in loss before the fierce lion which leaves no option to it but to desperately Run in a haste with all its might. Nana has been described and portrayed as a kind of fierce animal like tiger or a lion and there have been the usages of so many images the show this. The image of prey and hunter and the servant speaks a lot. The servant one speaks that his master should put his sword back in its sheath. This sentence has the connotative implication as the centre has been described as a sexual or vulgar sentence. The servant sentence means that nana is a person who is actively involved in first sexual inter courses now it is the time that Nana should stop this and role his desire for sexual hunger for at least some period. The image of wolf has also been used for the character of nana and it is used for the lust that he possesses and it also interprets the same image of hunger and prey. Apart from this there have been so many images of animals being used by the playwright only to show that the human being is one of the fiercest animals all around the globe.

Thus, all these are the symbols used by Tendulkar in his play *Ghashiram Kotwal*. These symbols are really interesting and that is the reason why they help the readers analyse the situation and the mind-set of the playwright.

REFERENCES:

1. C. Coelho, *The Cult of Violence and Cruelty in Modern Theatre: A Study of Athol Fugard and Vijay Tendulkar*, Indian Literature Today, ed. R.K. Dhawan, Delhi, Prestige, 1994.
2. Tendulkar, Vijay. *The Play is the Thing*, taken from Sri Ram Memorial Lecture, Lecture-1, 1997.
3. Arundati, Benarjee. Introduction, *Five Plays by Vijay Tendulkar*, Bombay, OUP, 1992.
4. Vijay Tendulkar, *Interview*, The Indian Express, March 27, 1983, Magazine Section.
5. Shailaja, B. Wadikar. *Power as a Theme in Ghashiram Kotwal*, Vijay Tendulkar’s *Ghashiram Kotwal, A Reader’s Companion*, Ed., by M. Sarat Babu, Asia Book Club, New Delhi, 2003.