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**MALE HATRED IN SAKHRAM BINDER (1972) : A GYNOCENTRIC
VIEW**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this qualitative research is to highlight the tendencies of male hatred in Sakhram Binder (1972); a well-known play of Vijay Tendulkar due to its thematic and dramatic style. For this purpose, the researcher carried out its textual analysis to unwrap the hidden hatred for men. It is clearly observed that women in Tendulkar's plays are always marginalized that they do fight back against male tyranny; but, gradually the fight for rights and freedom turns out into hatred and agony. This play spotlights on Sakhram, a bookbinder who takes in a succession of women who have been thrown out of their homes by their husbands. For interchange of domestic services and comradeship, he offers them shelter, food and living essentials. All his arrangements and dealings with women are interpreted as a cruel master who is aggressive, violent and lusty. The research paper tries to draw out certain emerging aspects about men and women and their relationship after radical influence of post-feminism.

Introduction:

Though human being in literary discourses are treated in general yet women in particular have grabbed the attention of many literary works, literary theorists and it often studied in the context of feminists in the second half of 19th century, there were intensity in movements for the rights of women. Later on, these movements are tagged as feminist movements, which in twentieth century became the most influential and important movement in the circle of cultural and literary studies. Initially, the feminist movement started as 'as an attempt to contend with patriarchy in its manifestation but by the mid of twentieth century, their goals, objectives and areas of influence enormously widened in its range and demands. [1]

Under the radical impact of feminist movement, several feminist writers appeared in

twentieth century to face off with patriarchy. Gradually, this attitude and trend of literary works became more and more pinching and even it started blaming men for all upheaval in the society. That is why, it is considered that “Men are society’s official scapegoats and held responsible for all evil, including that done by the women they have deluded or intimidated; women are society’s official victims and held responsible for all good, including that done by men they have influenced or converted; Men must be penalized, even as individuals, for the collective guilt of men throughout history; and women must be compensated, even as individuals, for their collective victimization throughout history.”[2] In television productions and magazines usually male characters are shown as evil and as a sole responsible of women’s victimization. Men are called low-brow and female are called high-brow.

Literature Review:

First wave, according to modern feminists, starts with the publication of Marry Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of The Rights of Women* (1792), and the main focus was on the basic rights of women. As Marry elaborated it in these words, “it is time to effect a revolution in female manners_ time to restore to them their lost dignity and make them as a part of the human species.”(Wollstonecraft, 1792, p.41). While, the second wave of feminism has its roots with the publication of *The Second Sex* by Simon De Beauvoir (1949).

This movement focused on women rights, their liberty, freedom of employment, equality not only in domestic sphere but in sexual, marriage, birth control, legal and in social domains as well. This movement spread awareness in women regarding their sufferings at the hands of patriarchy. This movement gave right the women over their bodies while rejecting all androcentric views. Simon De Beauvoir writes in her book about plight situation of women in social, political and cultural content that women do not female gender rather they are forced to be women by the society and she further depicts that no one is more arrogant toward women, more aggressive or scornful, than the man who is anxious about his virility. (Beauvoir, 1949).

The third wave of feminism or post-feminism starts from 1970s. Basically, this idea of discriminating people, as women and men, on the grounds of gender, sex, race and superior, inferior has scrutinized particular in third wave of feminism. Sommer (1994) wrote that men have written their history, giving us masculinist account of the past; now women are free to change that version of history to make it more women-centred” (Sommers, 1994, pp.57,58). The fourth movement of feminism is still a charismaticsilhouette. In addition to the logic that many women’s needs had been met, feminism’s alleged silence in the 1990s was a comeback to the successful repercussion campaign by the conservative media and press, particularly against the word feminism and its unsubstantiated association with extremism and male-bashing (Sommers, 1994; Rampton, 2015).

In short, this very idea of developing women-centred world itself shows self-contradiction of feminists’ slogan that they just want equality. The actual war started off when the feminists complained about women exploitation at the hands of patriarchy and when they started demanding to stop exploiting them (women). While on the other hand, women studies courses, text and narration started presenting one-sided view of gynocentric. It is without any doubt that they (women) tolerated and mourned for subjugation and cruelty for a long time in men-centred patriarchy. Now women are practicing the same thing with more bitterness and hatred to create women-centred world. The main aim of Feminism is to present the idea that the treatment of society towards women is not a fair one. It also focuses on why it is so and why they are dejected.

Basically, feminism works for women liberation. According to some critics, it works for equality while others say, it is used to bring change in the pattern of whole society. Feminists had noble goals in the beginning, like securing basic rights with more

chances of employment, vote casting and equality but when these goals were met and fulfilled, the feminist lobby jumped from basic rights to (third wave of feminism) change the structure of legislation because they did not want to lose pertinence that blatantly lead to discrimination against men.

Ideology is a word which can be used in various ways. Commonly, this term is used to describe any opinion, point of view, philosophy, set of ideas or any school of thought. While academics discuss it through Marxists _that ideology carefully concealed assumptions that often people don't bother to pay attention. It means that ideology is "any organised representation of reality to achieve specific goals" (Young & Nathanson, 2001, p. 217). Same is the case with feminist ideology, but in this case, this ideology has moved one step forward and taken the shape of dualism. Dualism indicates two things; those who internalize the good noble and ascertain it with themselves and those who externalize the cause of evil and recognise it with some other group of human beings. In short, this dualistic approach has been adopted by feminists and they argue that 'we' are good and 'you' or 'they' are bad.(Young & Nathanson, 2001)

This dualistic approach has brought polarization between two genders instead of bringing them close or equal. The basic problem is with the word 'difference' which is often used by the feminists with its negative connotation either superior or inferior. In the earlier, feminists assert that they (women) are different from men but now with the advent of industrialization, modernism, feminism and sexism, they declare that they are superior to men even. In fact, women are not only superior but innately superior to men because men are messy, sexually obsessed, insensitive and uncommitted clods who just want sex and nothing else. Ideological feminists openly or implicitly claim that they are superior to men from all perspectives, psychology, morally, physically, biologically, intellectually and spiritually. This mentality is now pervasive everywhere even in academics and in popular culture. "What men are capable of doing...it's not necessarily that men are pigs, it's just men are capable of being idiots. And I think, more dogs than pigs" (Young & Nathanson, 2001, p.29).

Textual Analysis:

Sakhram Binder (1972) is one of controversial plays by Vijay Tendulkar who is well known as a staunch feminist and a writer of society. This landmark drama was banned after it debuted in 1974, as it probes the darkest junctions of human nature like hatred, aggression, violence, and cruelty along with many others issues. The play opens up with a lady Laxmi whose status in Sakhram's life is of seventh women. Sakhram Binder is presented as a man who does not believe in marriage. He just stays in temporary relationships with women and each of his relation lasts for few months. In this play, male characters are shown as molesters and rascals while women are portrayed as bold, aggressive and beautiful. Champai is one of the examples who do not care of anyone neither of her ex-husband nor Sakhram. Her conversation with Sakhram shows that Tendulkar's women characters are ready to take stand against male chauvinism:

SAKHARAM. And you'll have to make the food yourself. That's a woman's job, and women must do their own jobs. That is the rule around her.

CHAMPA. Rule! Is this a school or a court or something? (Tendulkar, 1972, p. 161)

The attitude of Champa towards Sakhram is quite bold even she does not pay attention towards his demands and words. When he asks for a cup of tea, she straight away says no to him because she thinks it is not her duty. When he argues that it is wife's job and duty. She replies to him that he can call the other ladies she never made a cup of tea in her whole life. She does not take pressure off him.

What's it? What's going on? Eh? Oh. It's you. I thought it was that corpse, my husband. What's the matter? Is the food ready? Why did you wake me?

Oh yeah? I see. So that's what's on your mind. I'm glad I woke up. Now look here, I may have walked out on my husband, but I 'm not that sort of woman. See? I left him because I had my honour to save. (Tendulkar, 1972, p.162)

The above lines clearly imply the defensive role of women who are ready for every extreme in their own defence. They are ready to kick out the traditional concept of woman who are considered as weak, submissive and slave.

This play is acclaimed by feminists, though apparently, it highlights male dominance, his cruel attitude towards women and his ruthlessness, but at a deeper level, women who are shown as victims, are evil too. It is Laxmi, a character in the play, who poisons Sakhram's mind about Champa, and Sakhram murders Champa. It is quite ridiculous that women who plan and scheme against men are presented as innocent while those who become the victims of their plotting and scheming are evil and usurpers.

Sakhram: Maybe I'm a rascal, a womanizer, a pauper, why maybe? I am all that. And I drink. I'm the master here. I womanize, I'm drunkard and I'm ready to announce that the whole world. Sure. . . (Tendulkar, 1972, p.126)

Now, Sakhram Binder, is presented as a rascal, a womanizer and pauper. He claims that all the men are the same. They are rascals. Laxmi adds that all the men who live in this place have the same blood and habits. This is clearly an exaggeration because all men are not the same but this exaggeration suits to the present race of feminists who want to prove men as demons.

Sakhram is used as mouth piece of the fourth wave of feminism who is admitting all that, these women blame men for. The statement by Sakhram Binder itself portrays men as cruel and exploiters. "They slink out at night, on the sly. And they put on an act all the time. They'd like us to believe that they, re an innocent lot!" (Tendulkar, 1972, p.126) Here, it is quite clear according to the Feminist lobby, that all men are the same. They just pretend themselves innocent and saintly but in reality, they are brutal in their acts. "We're not saints. We're men. I tell you, worship and prayer can't satisfy the itch" (Tendulkar, 1972, p.127).

The above remarks that men are not saints but men; it abruptly diverts the minds towards the slogans of fourth wave of feminism which blatantly condemns men and their existence in society. He admits that men keep women just because of their flesh, as they cannot satisfy their (men) lust. There is no end to it. Laxmi hates her child as well just because he is male.

LAXMI [Bending down and laughing loudly.] you little rascal, you're trying to trick me, are you? I put you out, and you steal in again. You want me to feed you all the time? you're getting spoilt, aren't you? No you won't get anything now. I told you, didn't I? No. nothing. Don't look at me like that. Get away from here. Get away. Didn't I tell you to move off? Pawing me all the time. Go on. Don't come anywhere near me. Can't you hear? [laugh as if tickled] oh don't! now watch out! I'll really hit you if you get into my lap. Go away. Get away, you, you leech! I'm not going to give you anything today. You've become a regular pest. Get off me first. [she giggles] get off me, you hear? Oh, dear why're you after my blood, you? (Tendulkar, 1972, p.136)

She calls him a little rascal. She blames him for his desire to feed. She blames him for pawing her all the time. She threatens to hit him if he sits in her lap. She calls him a leech and a pest. She asks him why he is after her blood. Now consider these for a moment that how she is talking to her little child; but, this hatred has no limits; hating men leads to hating male children. This proves that these women are not fighting against evil; they are

fighting against men for power. They hate men, enslave them want to rule them. They want revenge. When talking to Sakhram about all the atrocities he commits, Laxmi says, “A dead hen doesn’t fear the fire! Nothing more terrible can happen to me (Tendulkar, 1972, p.147). She is no more afraid, no more fearful. She is in competitive mode.

When Sakhram asks her not to provoke him, she does not afraid and says fearlessly, “I’ve never heard a kind word here. Always barking orders. Curses. Oaths.” (Tendulkar, 1972, p.153) She is no longer afraid, no longer innocent victim; competes and decides to leave him saying, “I won’t be seeing you again” (Tendulkar, 1972, p.153) The same thing is repeated in Kanyadaanin where Jyoti uses the very word ‘demon’ about Varun, as she says,

Bestiality is something which cannot be separated from him. In the beginning, like an idiot, I used to search for that Arun who is above and beyond this beastliness. Arun is both the beast and the lover. Arun is the demon and a poet. Both are bound together. (Tendulkar, 1972, p.564)

Laxmi is not the only one who is no longer afraid of her husband. Even Champa is no longer afraid. She does not need Sakhram. She can defend herself:

SAKHARAM. While you’re staying with me, you don’t need to be scared of anybody. Sakhram Binder is here to deal. . . .

CHAMPA. Scared? Who, me? And scared of whom? My husband? [spits] what can he do to me? If I’d stayed with him longer, I’d have shown that corpse what I can do! But I got fed up living with him. (Tendulkar, 1972, p.157)

This new woman is no more a victim and no longer afraid. She is preparing herself to rule over man to reverse the roles. Champa is a woman who is what women are struggling to become. She orders Sakhram and when Sakhram asks her for anything, she responds him rudely that she is not the working type of girl. She is made to rule. She asks him not to behave like a dog and orders him to fix some dinner.

Oh yeah? I see. So that’s what’s on your mind. I’m glad I woke up. Now look here, I may have walked out on my husband, but I ‘m not that sort of woman. See? I left him because I had my honour to save. The swine wanted to make a whore of me. Now you just behave yourself. Don’t go around like a dog behind a bitch. you’ve come and ruined my sleep as it is. Now run along and fix some dinner for us, will you? (Tendulkar, 1972, p.162)

She calls him a pig and says she will “stuff some chilli powder into you!” (Tendulkar, 1972, p.167). When Sakhram asks her not to boss over him, she does not care and asks him to take tea. He threatens to beat her if needed and she says she will wait and see to it when it comes to that. She says, “Night is when god rules everywhere. In the day, men reigns. And men are sinful. Men are cruel and mean...” (Tendulkar, 1972, p.197) This makes it clear that men are considered demons that are ruling. These lines imply that women like Champa, are waiting for the dawn, a dawn of revolution when women would be the ruler of the world. The same thing is repeated in his play Kanayadan.

Seemingly, Laxmi appears to perform the role of devoted, ideal wife, who obeys each command of Sakhram. But at the end of the play, she exhibits the innate violence of her personality. Sakhram becomes confused after killing Champa, but Laxmi soothes him. For her it is not a murder rather Sakhram has killed a sinner. Laxmi who appears throughout the play as an embodiment of virtues, observer of morality, does not find Sakhram’s act as a crime. In fact, it is she who excites him to murder her. The dead body of Champa does not terrify her as she herself starts digging up the grave for Champa and suggests to him to bury

her. Sakhrām who has been appeared very violent and bold, become terrified and Laxmi tries to console him by saying, “She was unfaithful to you. You are a good man. God will forgive you” (Tendulkar, 1972, p.139). So, if we peep into the psyche of Laxmi, she also appears violent, aggressive just like Sakhrām but nobody reimburses any attention to such devilish aspect of her personality.

Even the character of Champa also exhibits the trait of violence. She is similar to Sakhrām. Like him, she also drinks, abuses and beats her husband FozdarSinde. By beating and insulting him, Champa shows her contempt for him. So, through the depiction of such characters and their nature, Tendulkar demonstrates the basic and essential complexity of human nature which is neither black nor white but varying shades of grey.

Conclusion:

All such thoughts and approaches of women are considered because they are victims, whereas the real facts are ignored and as a result male-hating is projected. This male hatred is increasingly spreading in the roots of the society. Real facts do not matter what matters is just the twisted thoughts, propagandas and negativity. In current scenario, facts are twisted to show women as ‘innocent victim’ and men as ‘perpetrator of evil deeds’ and this is done quite masterly and dexterously by some feminists.

It is quite common in our society that men are associated with everything which is corrupt and sleazy while the women, being victims, are solely attached with everything which is pure and idealistic. (Spreading Misandry 91) They (women) are justified in treating men as demon because they have suffered a lot at their (men’s) expense. So, they are right to consider all men as harassers, rapists, molesters or predators of one kind or another.

(Spreading Misandry, Dehumanizing men, chp.6 ,162.

In an article, the writer Tristan Greene, claims that, “As a feminist, I confess that I am not happy about this... I say I want equality, but I actually, want special treatment. I say I think women are strong... I say feminism is not about hating men... but actually it is.” There is a dire need to solve the pervasive problems or issues of the term dualism which is very much the characteristic ideological feminism becoming a source of spreading hatred among people, groups, and no one is either immune or enslaved to this way of thinking. This attitude applies to all equivalently whether Muslim, Jews, Israelites, Arabs, Christian, Black, whites, Capitalist, Men, and women. Similarly, no one (group or individual) should be dignified innately good or bad.

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