

## CHAPTER 5

### “A CURIOUS CASE OF GENDER VIOLENCE”

— ‘SAKHARAM BINDER’

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Tendulkar's 'Sakharam Binder' is a three-act play with brilliant use of interpersonal as well as personal conflicts of the characters. The first act consists of twelve scenes. Some of the scenes in the play are quite short. The third scene of the first act has no dialogues and only stage instructions regarding the visual to be presented.

Tendulkar portrays Sakharam's relationships with Laxmi and Champa, his seventh and eighth mistresses respectively, in this play. Sakharam is antagonist of institution of marriage. He prefers to have a contractual relationship with his women. He puts conditions before each woman he brings home. If she accepts his rules and conditions of his house including that of to satisfy his sexual need as her wife, then she is allowed to stay in the house otherwise she can straight way leave.

The first act begins with the arrival of Laxmi, Sakharam's seventh mistress, in his house. She is unable to adjust with Sakharam's hot temper and excessive demands. So Laxmi leaves Sakharam's house at the end of the first act. Though Laxmi's life is full of misery during her stay at Sakharam's

house, she manages to make him religious, soft and domesticated up to certain extent.

The second act deals with Sakharam's relationship with Champa, a sensuous and unconventional woman. This act depicts Sakharam's lust towards Champa. Sakharam once again becomes drunkard. Due to her worst circumstances Laxmi comes back to Sakharam at the end of the second act.

In the third act, Tendulkar portrays the complex psychological effect on Sakharam due to the simultaneous presence of Laxmi and Champa in his life. The presence of Laxmi and Champa at the same time creates chaos in Sakharam's mind. On one hand he was dissatisfied with Laxmi's coolness and religiosity and on other hand Champa's readiness to satisfy anyone even to dog or to corpse after getting drunk, also disturbs him. In presence of Laxmi he becomes impotent in his sexual relation with Chapa.

So, Sakharam orders Laxmi to leave his house. Laxmi discloses Champa's affair with Dawood to Sakharam so that she can manage to live with him. Sakharam murders Champa in his rage. The end of the play is ironic as Sakharam who used to pride himself for the openness of his behaviour is forced to seek help of Laxmi to hide Champa's corpse so that he can escape from punishment. Moreover he gets moral justification from

Laxmi that there is no sin in killing such sinner woman. We find a dramatic transformation of Laxmi into a cold blooded conspirator. The play ends.

Gender Violence is the core element of the play and Tendulkar has skillfully depicted it through the behaviour of all characters. Vijay Tendulkar  
Comments:

“At very sensitive level, violence can be described as consciously hurting someone, whether it is physical violence or psychological violence... violence is something to be accepted as fact. It is of no use describing it as good or bad. Projections of it can be good or bad. ... Violence when turned into something else can certainly be defined as vitality, which can be very useful, very constructive. So, it depends on how you utilize it or curb it at times.”<sup>1</sup>

‘Sakharam Binder’ is one of the most violent theatrical act of Tendulkar which had consciously hurts the religious moralist sentiments and psyche of the society at large, including authority- Censor board. A section of critics, mainly moralists and cultural constabulary criticised this play as vulgar, sensationalism. They had associated Tendulkar’s name with indecent Sexuality and violence. The first performance of the play or say the entry of ‘Sakharam Binder’ on the stage had created a havoc or rebel in Marathi and Indian Theatre. It had shaken the prevailing sophisticated theatre world. The

play was banned by Censor Board because Vijay Tendulkar had given a powerful detonation to all the previously established religious and moralist values, norms, artistic and aesthetic notions of culture and arts prevailing in the society. The great polemical debate and violent protest against the play and counter offensive in defence of play not just by theatre people but by all those who love democracy, freedom of expression unleashed the chain process of conflicts and radicalization of cultural domain and paved the way for better understanding of psycho-socio dynamics of culture, art and dramaturgy in relation to gender, gender violence.

It will be interesting to investigate Vijay Tendulkar's concept of 'Gender Violence' with his own theatrical works and to see how exactly he uses the violence as a device in his own theatrical works and how far this device succeeded in creating desirable constructive vitality in cultural field and society in general. As far as gender violence is concern we have already witnessed the fact that gender violence prevailing in the society. When depicted by Tendulkar in the play and when it lived by the characters like Sakharam, Laxmi, Champa and Dawood on the stage it is obvious to stumble upon invited violent attacks from the society. Tendulkar's theatrical act of violence turned into transformation of power structures of the society. We may be called these happenings as cultural polemics, ideological

debates, conflicts or struggles. If we thoroughly examine Tendulkar's 'Sakharam Binder' and its impact over the prevailing society, we find that Tendulkar succeeded in generating very vital, progressive and constructive social- cultural energy out of theatrical usage of violence – particularly gender violence. Tendulkar says that:

“Violence can be turned in to vital, useful, constructive transformative force; it depends upon you that how you use it or curb it at times.”<sup>2</sup>

So let us understand how he deals with gender violence through cross sectional analysis of this play. Tendulkar uses violence as a theatrical device to deconstruct the prevailing exploitative notions and values which administrates man-woman relationship functioning at basic social unit called 'family' or say 'house' as Sakharam calls it. Tendulkar shows us desirable, vital and useful end of reconstruction of Man- Woman relationship on more equalitarian ground by deconstructing all stereo type phenomenons constructed around gender violence.

We can see that 'Sakharam Binder' is presented in a naturalistic way; it shows all ugliness and offensiveness of life and it shocks the middle class society. That is why Arundhati Banerjee while commenting about the play 'Sakharam Binder' says:

“In the portrayal of the lower strata of the society, Tendulkar’s plays signify a definite departure from the main stream Marathi drama that mostly dealt with the more privileged section of the society. One of the reasons why there was such reaction against ‘Sakharam Binder’ was its burning naturalism. Here was a raw chunk of life with all its ugliness and crudity which was more than a shock to refined and prudish middle- class audience. Such direct confrontation with “vulgar” reality was difficult for them to bear”<sup>3</sup>

It is true that Tendulkar introduces the life and characters of lower strata and it is also true that life they live on the stage with all its ugliness and crudity is burning, shocking and unbearable for those who are accustomed to see the lives of privileged section of the society. But one interesting, most remarkable and worth noticing departure made by Tendulkar in this play is the fact that Sakharam, comes from most privileged Brahmin caste of the society, he is Brahmin by caste and lives the life of the binder, rejecting all religious-moral values, including values of previously considered most holiest and significant concepts of sexual marital relationship, family and norms of purity of caste. With opening scene only while bringing 7th deserted and homeless woman Laxmi at his house Sakharam makes violent blast on existing social morality by introducing

him, his notion of house and its codes of conducts with all his newly constructed identity and self dignity. He says:

“May be I am a rascal, a womanizer, a pauper. Why may be? I am all that..... In this bloody world men are all the same. They slink out at night, on the sly. And they put on an act all the time. They would like us to believe that they are an innocent lot! ‘You hold your tongue and I’ll hold mine!’ Damn them all!... What is there to hide? And from whom? From our father?... I know that I am foul-mouthed. I have been like this right from birth. Born naked, I was. My mother used to say, he’s Mahar born in Brahmin home.....” (Pg 126-127)

He further says:

“There you are! Not born a Brahmin and yet you’ve a Brahmin’s ways! And me! Born in a Brahmin family, but I am a Mahar, a dirty scavenger. I call that a bloody joke! I ran away from home when I was eleven. Got fed up with my father’s beatings. Nothing I did ever seemed right. You’d think I was his enemy or something.” (Pg. 127)

This is the first blast he makes on the existing Brahminical stereotypes about caste that Brahmins are good and are responsible for all the morals of society and Dalits are born scavengers, dirty lot. Sakhamam tells this is nothing but a bloody joke, he is born in Brahmin family and does all the



dirty deeds, he is rascal, and he is womanizer. He tells Laxmi that you are not Brahmin and yet you are virtuous. There is nothing like born good or bad qualities of human behaviour. They are developed by social construction. In the process of socialization, all these values imposed by those who remained in power to suppress the powerless. More over those who have been oppressed, they themselves internalized these values and think that they are bad, sinful by birth, and oppressors are good, holy and blessed by god.

Sakharam, a book-binder was a Brahmin but rejects all the 'code of conduct' of that caste and lives his life according to his own desires. Tendulkar points out in his article "Muslim and I":

"Sakharam is unmarried male, unmarried because of his meagre income as a book binder in a printing press and also because of his complex personality which is basically of a loner. He is a man who has always lived outside the established norms of decent society and has learned to challenge them in words as well as in action. He needs a woman in his house for sex as well as for taking care of the household chores. For this he picks up a married woman who is in the dumps, who has been driven out by her husband- lock, stock and barrel. He takes her home to live with him till one of the two decides to end the "contract" and calls it quits. In his relationships he observes a code of conduct and insists that it should be observed by the women till

they cohabit. He makes his code of conduct known to every new woman he brings home before she formally makes her decision to stay.”<sup>4</sup>

“Dhumil” a poet expresses similar satire of hippocratic morality through one of his poetry:

“Hum Dahine Haath Ki Naitikata Se is Kadar Majboor Hai Ki,  
Dahina Haath Khata hi Rahe aur Umra Sari bit Jay Par \_\_\_\_\_  
Sirf Bayan Hath hi Dhoya Kare.”<sup>5</sup>

Vijay Tendulkar has explode this right hand morality of the society, by picking Sakharan from upper caste family who openly denounce god, his own caste, and religious he also condemn moralities linked with man-woman sexual relationship. These moral cultural values of society are based on the conservative notions about caste, gender, class, race, religion, literacy so on so forth. These so called conventional notions impose good-bad, superior-inferior values over these social divisions. It says Brahmins are Gods of the earth, good, superior, knowledgeable by birth and all non Brahmin castes are awful, inferior, and ignorant and ill-mannered forever.

The concept of patriarchal society is similar to this perception. Men are superior, strong, brave and rational, protectors, creator of universe and ruler of family and the world. Women are weak, inferior, valley of the sin,

meant to be beaten up, guarded by man and so condemnable and meant to remain as slave for eternity. Likewise, Whites are superior, blacks are inferior, literates are superior illiterates are inferior, mental labour is superior manual labour is inferior all goodness-badness, beauty-ugliness, will follow accordingly the conventions.

The qualities imposed upon the social categories have many objective bases but it was conventionalized and constructed by those who are in power. We may call them cultural stereotypes. Vijay Tendulkar makes Sakharam representing the upper caste and portrays as non-religious, anti caste-anti family, and opponent of sexual morality imposed on a human for sexual relations through system of marriage. In the play Sakharam mentions his Brahmanism either sarcastically or simple dialogues. It is sound and clears that Tendulkar want that Sakharam represents Brahmanism and scratch the conservative and conformist values of society.

If Sakharam would have not been Brahmin or privileged by Caste, then perhaps response of the audience would have been different, audience would not been reacted so much aggressive. But when Sakharam, portrayed as Brahmin by birth, and who rejects all the Brahminical morality of caste and asserts his present identity with self-esteem it is not acceptable by

society. Upper caste morality, aesthetic conceptions and gender, Caste and religious stereo typed notions are trembles when Sakharam says

“I am born in Brahmin family, but dirty, Mahar!” (Pg. 127)

More over the way Sakharam ruthlessly demystifies sacredness of family and marriage institution along with his above mentioned rejection of concept of purity- impurity linked with caste by calling them a bloody joke, was also a big blow to religious morality because Sakharam in a way deconstructs Brahminical norms of matrimonial relationship, family and house (Gruhya Sutram), based on Varna Dharma and Ashrams in very rude and derogatory language and tries to reconstruct his own concept of house, man- woman relationship free from marriage, caste, religious moral institution. This was perhaps one of the most important reasons why ‘Sakharam Binder’ was opposed by elites as well as authority.

While acknowledging this as the decisive departure made by Tendulkar one should also acknowledge that it was a time when Dalit Panther came out with the force for radical transformation of caste-class ridden society by uniting with workers, landless labourer and all the oppressed castes and class people. They were the leading force which was strongly opposing caste-class-religious hegemony and power relations.

Namdev Dhasal, Raja Dale Daya Pavar and many other Dalit leaders were powerful writers and poets. But very few main stream upper caste writers ever dared to express their solidarity with their cause. Tendulkar was one among those handful, bold and courageous writers who dared to denounce high castes' morality and cultural hypocrisy through his plays. Sakharam is a glaring example of it.

It should not be forgotten that then mainstream Marathi literature in general was not ready to accept Dalit literature as literature even. Even today in the cultural field the prevalence of Brahmin aesthetic notions and biases against Dalit and Dalit literature are very much visible. Tendulkar being a Brahmin when writes and performs 'Sakharam Binder', though opposed by upper caste moralist, it had a different dynamics. Sakharam uses the language which was identical with Dalit literature, but succeeded in creating a violent opposition and finally getting acceptance from upper caste elitist main stream literature by the main stream theatre. This point needs to be discuss separately and it will be a long term discussion so we cannot get into that and hence we focus on the analysis of 'Sakharam Binder'.

The 'Sakharam Binder' constructed and develops in three acts: First Act opens with say Gruh Pravesh of deserted, homeless woman Laxmi in

Sakharam's house. It deals with the relationship between Sakharam and Laxmi. Second Act again opens with Gruh Pravesh of new woman Champa in Sakharam. It deals with the relationship of Sakharam and Champa. Interestingly in both the occasions Sakharam delivered almost same long lectures while welcoming both the women. The 7th woman Laxmi behaves differently than 8th woman Champa. Third scene deals with inter- relations and cohabitation of Sakharam, Laxmi and Champa

Just see the opening scene in contrast to the normal ritualistic notion of marriage, Pani Grahanam, Sapta-padi promises to each other, Gruh - Pravesh, Gruhini, and Gruh Karya. Nothing like that sort of things is happening here. Sakharam enters into his house with his 7th woman Laxmi, children laugh at them that he brought one new woman. For Sakharam this may be ego enhancing since he is increasing his score in rescuing helpless woman but for a woman it is certainly embracing humiliation because as per society's point of view she is not a wife of Sakharam but she is his kept or woman with a loose character. Sakharam sought at them by asking: "You think we're dancing naked round here? Move on; get the hell out of here! I'll shine your bottoms for you, I'm warning you, the whole lot of you! Now, Get out!"(Pg. 125) Then he himself welcomes Laxmi in house with his own dictatorial conditions. The conditions are as follows:

1. This house is like me... If you think it all right put down your bundle and stay otherwise you can clear out.
2. You shall get two square meals.
3. You'll get two Saris to start with, then one every year.
4. There's a well at back of the house... Well dries up in the summer. Then you'll have to fetch water from the river.
5. I won't have you leaving the house unless there is work to be done.
6. If someone calls, you're not supposed to look up and talk.
7. If it's Stanger, you'll have to cover your head and answer him.
8. May be I am rascal, a womanizer, a pauper. Why may be I am all that but I must be respected in my own house.
9. I am the master here. What I say goes. Other must obey. No question should be asked.
10. you'll be have to be a wife to me.
11. If you agree to deal? Right then, go and make some tea.
12. If you live here, you don't need to fear anyone

The above mentioned dialogues are of 'Sakharam Binder' – He's a terror. He is a curious case. The study of Sakharam in 'Sakharam Binder' shows how his subjection to violence in his childhood produces in him low

self-esteem, a sense of fear and even self-hatred the feelings he tries to combat through over-projection and assertion of male supremacy by violently trying to subjugate women. Tendulkar's emphasis about Sakharam is on self-introspection to attain the knowledge which is buried in the pains of Sakharam's unforgotten childhood experiences.

Sakharam criticise marriage system, but so far his rules are concern they are no way different then the system of marriage. Only difference in both is that in marital relationship man are tied up with societal rules to take care of his wife and off spring. But here in Sakharam's case woman has to perform all the duty she performs in family including that as wife of Sakharam but Sakharam will not be tied up himself with her as husband. She will have no say in the house. Everything will be decided, govern and ruled by Sakharam only. In a way we can call it as the code of Manu Smruti <sup>6</sup> which governs existing upper class Hindu marital relations even today. Manusmruti says:

“Childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.” <sup>7</sup>

Tendulkar puts it blatantly as Sakharam's Rules of the House, which believes that women must be protected and guarded right from the child



hood to the death by father, brother, husband and son. No way should she be allowed to enjoy freedom.

Thus Vijay Tendulkar presents here in this play two male dominated spaces, one is of existing family or institution of marriage govern by caste, religion ,traditions and morality another is the anti family space created by Sakharam as his own house which is claimed to be secular space free from the caste, religion, marital bondages. But while looking at the conditions of Sakharam it appears both the places are male dominated only.

Interestingly enough though Sakharam claims in this scene that he doesn't believe in any family, caste, religious norms, morality and customs of society. But the rules he dictates to the women are the Gender stereotypes, socially, culturally, traditionally constructed norms for the women and men.

It is simple biological fact that somebody is woman. It is simple biological fact that somebody is a man. These biological facts do not conceive any superlative or abysmal qualities in them. These biological facts do not determine that man cannot do any domestic work like cleaning the house, cooking, fetching the water, taking care of his wife or feeding her, or woman cannot go outside, read news paper, order her husband to do this and that, or beat him, abuse him, kick him throw him out of the house.

These are things both the sex can do. This is possible there is nothing like manly or womanly quality in any work. Both are capable to perform any of the domestic or other works in the world. Only one thing is there which man cannot do that of producing a child. Woman is ahead of the man in this regard, she is having reproductive capacity.

The process of culturalisation develops the mentality amongst us to believe that cleaning, cooking, fetching water, obeying the orders, etc. are women's work. Violent dominating frame of mind of male dominant society converts men's work into kicking, beating, heating, physically, mentally, and sexually torturing and harassing a woman. These divisions of work and superior inferior qualities imposed upon it are socially constructed gender stereotypes. We can see in even in Bharat Natya Shashtra also that violent or aggressive art forms are considered as Tandav or masculine forms and graceful, tender, delicate forms are considered as Lasya or feminine. But aggressiveness, bravery, or gracefulness, kindness tenderness etc qualities have nothing to do with masculinity or femininity.

We have our own gender stereotypes and because of our Gender stereotypes if we observe an aggressive woman we immediately say she is 'Marad' or categorised her as 'Bhayadachhap'. If we see that a husband

cleans the house or cooks in the kitchen we will immediately brand him feminine, impotent (Bayalo) or not manly. In 'Sakharam Binder' Vijay Tendulkar introduces two types of women. One is polite, obedient, ready to serve man, kind, virtuous, religious, without any say. Another is bold, apparently lustful, not knowing about Gods or religion, not accustomed to do household works, aggressive, capable to beat her husband in front of people, by abusing him in the same space, Sakharam's house. We can call it a play ground of gender violence. Both these women and their response to the norms and life within and without Sakharam's house are the main subject of inquiry.

Sakharam though believes that he is radical and doesn't believe in social taboos, values, stereotypes imposed upon man-woman relationship, but his rules are not free from this Gender stereotyped role model of duties of women and man. These rules equally apply to his male centric schematic house too, as it works in existing family structure.

Let us see again the rules he dictates to Laxmi which he repeats when Chama enters his house. These laws are like testaments, he had already dictated to all earlier women repeatedly. So they serve as the moral or ideal basis of Sakharam's personal or domestic relations. Women will be provided

food. Women will be provided shelter. She will be protected from the rest of the world. Women will be provided minimum required cloths to wear. In exchange of it they should cook, fetch water from the well or from the far way river and fulfil all the requirements of Sakharam. They have to fulfil sexual hunger of Sakharam as her wife. But he will never tie him down with her as husband.

Sakharam criticise husbands that they don't have guts to do things openly. They are all same, womanizer, but they try to make world believe that they are innocent lot. He believes body has its appetite! We are not saint. We're men. He treats women as his appetite husband does in family. He believes that what's there to hide? Sakharam's criticism against these husbands is that they are hypocrites. They all are womanizer but they hide. Sakharam's opposition is only that they keep silent about each other's sin. He believes that having sexual relation with woman is natural.

Sakharam's case become curious because Sakharam wants free sexual relationship with women then he dictates such terms which are long list of non sexual domestic works for women. Sakharam knows that married woman doesn't have her own house or shelter. If husband kicks her out then there is no place for her to go anywhere in the world accept becoming

prostitute. So he finds this easy and cheaper way to satisfy his sexual hunger. He provides roof and food to deserted woman and in exchange satisfies his needs.

Though Sakharam doesn't believe in marriage he does need woman. He condemns husbands and calls them pig- swine. Reason is simple, he wants everything from woman but he doesn't want to tie down himself. He says, "It's good thing I am not a husband. Things are fine the way they are. You get everything you want and yet you are not tied down." (Pg. 129) This is his way of keeping sexual relation with especially deserted women but without relating himself with any of them. He doesn't want family but wants a space called house where he can rule like a king, where he can exercise his power, where his orders must be obeyed. He is or may be a drunkard, womanizer a dirty fellow but he must be respected in his own house. One can say it, self centric but in post modern term one may find there the reflection of self respect and self dignity of a drunkard, womanizer.

When Sakharam says: "I must be respected in my house" (Pg. 156); it implies that in his own intimate space, in his own being, he must be respected by himself. He criticises that family, marriage system and moral taboos about the sex makes husbands hypocrite swine and it is respectful not

for others but for themselves only. It degrades them in their own eyes, in their own house, in their own intimate being. This concept of house is an ideal, say moral construct of Sakharam. In a way he is not free from patriarchal morality. It is same space rather more pernicious space, patriarchal form of male-domination than family which demands everything from woman without binding male in exchange.

Sakharam's hatred towards husbands is having another rational ground also. He talks about his emotional concern towards all earlier women to Laxmi. He says that he gave shelter to six deserted women prior to Laxmi, but he realised that despite treating them well almost all were worshipping their husband as God. Despite keeping them in his possession he was unable to rule over these women at their heart.

In another occasion he remembers earlier woman who died in the hospital. She was also kicked out by her husband Sakharam provided her a shelter. But on her death-bed there was her husband's name only on her lips. It was Sakharam who gave her last drop of water in her mouth, but what she uttered was her husband's name only. Just before Laxmi one woman was there in his house. She was worshipping her husband. That fellow wanted to kill her, but for her he was God! Sakharam expresses his pain: "The fellow

who who's out to kill them- he's god! The chap who saves them- he's just a man! She worshiped his shirt for two full years. She had T.B. I took her to the hospital at Miraj. Last Friday that was. She died there, hugging her husband's shirt to herself..." (Pg. 127-128)

When he asks Laxmi about her husband's name she refuses to utter his name. What Sakharam says to Laxmi is interesting aspect of Gender stereo types internalize by women, which allows males to dominate them. He says: "The whole lot of you! All alike where this one thing's concerned. Mention your husband's name and your eyes begin to brim over with tears. He kicks you out of the house; he is out to squeeze the life out of you. But he's your God. You ought to worship a God like that with shoes and slippers! He should be whipped in public." (Pg. 133)

Tendulkar shows emotional and caring concern of Sakharam towards her women. It apparently looks very progressive but at the same time one can see that internally Sakharam feels himself defeated and helpless to win the hearts of these women in front of their profound devotion towards their 'Husband'- 'Swami'- 'God'. Despite his all beautiful ideas, mission and attempts of rescuing deserted women by providing everything they need in his house, they worship their husbands as God, whom he calls swine...

Some Dalit reformist relates Sakharam with the 19th century upper caste reformers' concerns and position on women and widow remarriage. Their argument is that many of them were already having illicit relations with widows, and upper cast reformers wanted to legalize for their own dignity! These arguments are based on auto biographies of Narmad, Maniram Nabhubhai Dvivedi etc. We may agree or we may not agree with the argument. Sakharam Binder's ideas are in one way may correlated with exposure and deconstruction of the image of 19th century upper caste social reform movement. It is another area of research so we are not going deep into this point of view.

But another point is very interesting which can be made here. Sakharam is in one way an idealist. He has his own view about his own house. About Muslims, He believes that Dawood should be invited and allowed at Ganesh Pooja. When Laxmi opposes the idea to allow Dawood in joining the Ganesh Pooja because he is Muslim, Sakharam violently beats Laxmi. This violent act of beating Laxmi by Sakharam can be compared with what Mahatma Gandhi had done to Kasturba when she refused his order to clean toilet as part of his ideas of removal of inequity. Here Tendulkar deals with two things together. One thing he exposes the hypocritical claims of upper castes idealists who shamelessly suppress their



wives' or families differing view in order to protect himself as great idealist. On the other hand he exposes the typical male ego of godfather who thinks that a rescued homeless woman cannot dare to prevent his friend in his own house. Other thing is also noticeable here that though Laxmi thrown out of her cast, family, religion she can still assert that values in her helplessness to regain her power.

Thus here we can see that Tendulkar uses Sakharam against the orthodox upper caste moralist conception of family, marriage, caste etc. And at the same time through the portrayal of Sakharam's own life and double standards, he also tries to expose the so called upper caste social reformation as well as radical anti-family positions prevailing in the society to show that how both though appear opposite but are two sides of the same coin, both the positions are anti- woman and male dominated ideas which is clear example of gender violence.

The Laxmi appears throughout the play as religious, obedient, soft, hard working, and sensitive. Laxmi as described in the play looks passive and her behaviour, her devotion, gesture, expressions, and the way she speaks attracts Sakharam. She appears submissive, docile but she is the

woman who has internalised all the values of male-dominated society, she is capable to perform all the domestic works dictated by Sakharam.

When we look with bioscope to the play we find various forms and dynamics of violence imbibe in theme 'Sakharam Binder'. The play is lengthened in three acts. Each act deals with gender stereo types and various forms of violence exercised by male domination either within existing social institutions like family, marriage, caste, religion or within the House- or the "space" reconstructed by Sakharam which is claimed to be free from bondages of family, caste, religion and morality. Entire play rolls within the anti-family space created by Sakharam, within his space of experimentation with his truth of man- woman relationship.

Entire play, runs within the theatrical Space or house created by 'Sakharam Binder' which is opposed to the prevailing basic social unit called Family or institute of marital sexual relationship. In fact this play is an exploration of Gender violence which takes place within these two male dominated domains or spaces: one is within existing family or in institution like marriage and another is within the experimental ideal space created by Sakharam which claimed to be anti- family, anti-caste, and secular space ruled under despotic power of a Man called Sakharam. Interestingly

Tendulkar triggers violence through this house or space created by Sakharam which unmasks or exposes the real nature of Gender Violence operates in various forms beneath the exterior so called unity of the contemporary lives of society.

If we trace Gender violence in the past lives of Laxmi and Chapa we find Laxmi was abandoned by her husband because she was unable to produce a child; she is victim of patriarchal Gender stereo types constructed about “true womanhood” or femininity. Stereotypes in which a woman who can produce children is considered as blessed and who is unable to produce child ( fragile) is considered as cursed, and thus entitled to be discarded from the family, since the family is conceived as basic unit of reproduction of offspring. If woman cannot produce child then she is useless so far family is concern. She can be thrown out by husband and there exist a moral and religious sanctity for it. In case of Laxmi there is no mention of any other physical or sexual violence committed by her husband to her. But abandoning woman on the basis of her being unable to produce child of course is an unbearable form of mental and psychological form of gender violence, since women themselves internalize these anti-woman values right from their childhood. So this incidence must have a definite violent and

negative stigmatic psychological impact over Laxmi and may be responsible for her low level of self-image and self-esteem and timidity.

In case of Champa, she abandoned her husband because he was impotent and unable to give her a child. In both the cases stigmatic Gender stereotypes connected with impotency are the reasons for abandoning either wife or husband. Catherine Thankamma appropriately comments:

“Laxmi is thrown out of her house by her husband but she still considers him her God. Champa on the other hand is a figure of revolt.”<sup>8</sup>

So, Laxmi is a symbol of surrender and Champa is a symbol of revolt. Common factor of their presence in this house is impotency. But the difference between male impotency and female impotency generates different types of Gender violence.

In case of Faujdar Shinde, husband of Champa impotency lead him to another extreme of inferiority complex. Shinde is Faujdar, already a symbol of power. Moreover he is husband of a beautiful wife and head of the family, so obviously it would have been unbearable for him to accept the simple biological fact of his impotency. How he can declare to the world that he is impotent and that he is unable to satisfy Champa's desire for a child. This is

more pernicious male ego socially constructed around potency and masculinity, According to Gender stereotype strong, powerful man is one who is potent, whom we say 'Viryavan', 'Sarvagunsampanna' capable to produce children within or without his family or community.

While defining masculinity all the virtues like bravery, strength, and physical strength have been condensed and imposed upon this simple biological fact called potency or fertility.

A man, who has internalized such values or Gender stereotyped image of masculinity, will not able to accept this simple biological fact. If he accepts this fact then his entire self-image of being a powerful, strong or brave man will be collapsed. So he tries to prove his potency by taking shelter of religious sanctity to violently suppress the reproductive power of his wife.

Thus when there is no way to satisfy desire of his wife, this violently imbibed gender-stereotypes of masculinity will lead an impotent man to very typical and pernicious kind of inferiority complex which may lead him to alcoholism and violent act of wife beating and sexual tortures. And this is what exactly Shinde has done to Champa. So, Shanta Gokhale appropriately writes:

“His play, ‘Sakharam Binder’ reveals a specific psychopathic attitude of his male protagonist towards women coupled with an erotic interest in Sakharam’s coercive sexual behaviour. He, for instance, compulsively indulges in violently exploitative sexual orgies with his women. Shinde, in the same play, is a man who tries to force his wife, Champa, into whoring and thus violates her sense of honour. He is also the one who derives sadistic pleasure by sexually torturing his wife”<sup>9</sup>

When Shinde goes to Sakharam’s house Champa gives him big fist over his mouth. Blood comes out. She throws him out by kicking and beating him. Sakharam pulls her back by saying that: “Look! What you have done to him! He is your husband. Haven’t you a heart?” (Pg. 167) Chapa’s furious reply is self explanatory: “No! I don’t have heart. He chewed it up long ago. He brought me from my mother, even before I’d become women. He married me when I didn’t even know what marriage really meant. He’d tortured me at night. He branded me, and stuck needles into me and made me do awful, filthy things. I ran away. He brought me back and stuffed chilli powder into that god awful place, where it hurts most. That bloody pimp! What’s left of my heart now? He tore lumps out of it, he did. He drank my blood. Get up you pig. I’ll stuff some chilli powder in to you now!” (Pg. 167)

Champa's violent attack on her husband like a possessed woman is no doubt a logical outcome of what he has done to her. But the fact of his impotency is the main powerful weapon in hand of Champa against him. "Champa calls her husband impotent corpse" then she gets energy to kicks him, drive him out. And finally she refuses to consider him as a human being. The usage of weapon of impotency of her husband by Champa works. It turns him in to useless creature in his own eyes. The simple biological fact of his impotency makes him alcoholics. He lost his entire self dignity. He says no, "I want her to beat me. Want to die at her hands. Don't want to live. Why live? No jobs, no wife, no home -- what's left (sobs loudly) What is left?" (Pg. 190)

Here Shinde still tries to get her back so that he can retain his dignity as a potent man. Here Tendulkar with a brilliant insight shows that how socio-cultural stigmatic pigeonhole about masculinity compels an impotent man to neglect his own biological fact or sexual identity and makes him worst then an animal by leading him towards futile attempts to prove or pretend himself to be a potent man. It is important to note down here that impotency or potency both conceive violence within themselves. It is just a diverse manifestation of life. There is nothing great in one's being a potent or there is nothing shameful in one's being impotent. If one accepts this

biological fact without imposing any social stigma, taboos or stereotype over it then only it can be converted in to useful, constructive force.

Otherwise any attempt to suppress this fact may lead this force towards pernicious forms of Gender violence. No doubt, in male dominated society such violence inevitably tries to suppress women's sexuality first but it also perverts male sexuality also. Tendulkar gives here very complex minute details of experiences of Gender violence in the married lives of these two diametrically opposite set of women Laxmi and Champa. Laxmi is unable to give birth to a child. This infertility turns Laxmi into submissive woman, while Champa being a gorgeous and lust full woman. She uses her husband's impotency as a tool of driving force and beats him. While Laxmi shows sympathy towards him. Here Tendulkar deals with very interesting and subtle aspects of Gender violence related with stereo types constructed around impotency, and brings to our notice that how this simple biological facts has been converted in to the something like a shameful stigma, which creates inferiority complex in the minds of impotent man or childless women.

It is interesting to notice that Laxmi being a religious woman believes that any virtuous woman should not behave like the way Champa behaves



with her husband. More over the way Sakharam and Daud both get shock and the way they try to stop Champa by seeing Chapa's vengeance against her husband is an identical male dominated stereotype behaviour which believes that only man can beat the wife. Women should not beat her husband.

But in case of Sakharam it appears bit surprising because he himself was criticising women that they worship their husbands as god. They worship them as gods, who all time kick them, want to kill them. He was advising Laxmi that these gods you must worship by beating them with slipper in the public. But when Champa kicks, humiliate and abuses her husband by calling him an impotent corpse who was all the time trying to make whore out of her, Sakharam tries to stop Champa by telling her, "He is your husband. Haven't you a heart?" (Pg. 167)

It indicates the double standards of Sakharam who hates husband because his words are "Those fellows—they can't Father a brat and they take it all out on their wives... They'd try to keep up a good reputation in society." (Pg. 129) He also says, "They're an impotent lot! For them the woman is just dirt, that's all" (Pg. 129) We can see that Sakharam has no guts to say Champa openly in public that yes kick him, give him a big blow,

Stuff chilli powder in him, yes you do it these swine, and this impotent lot deserves it! This exposes Sakharam's own double standard as if a civilized hipocratic moralist shows double standards in society. Tendulkar gives space to his characters to live as they want to. Tendulkar asserted in one of his lectures:

"I was never able to begin writing my play only with an idea or a theme in mind. I had to have my characters first with me." <sup>10</sup>

These characters as "living persons," he further adds, led him "into the thick of their lives" <sup>11</sup> Where they would give him the theme. So, it is clear that Sakharam is natural, Laxmi is natural and Champa is also a natural human being and no imposition from writer on their behaviour.

When we are introspect of gender violence within the relationship of Sakharam and Laxmi we find Laxmi a religious, obedient, loyal woman. We have seen that her husband has tortured her as she was unable to produce a child. Now, for her, Sakharam is her husband. Laxmi has internalized all the patriarchal values of patriarchal society. She believes that husband is provider, protector and should be honour as God and all the needs of the husband should be fulfilled by woman without any opposition. So she is capable to perform all the domestic duties very well and readily prepared to

fulfil all the demands of Sakharam including his sexual demands. Sakharam exploits her both physically and psychologically. He also tortures her several times.

Vijay Tendulkar brilliantly shows through Sakharam's character that Gender type casted male's sexual desire cannot be satisfied merely by sexual act. It can only be satisfied by imposition of series of strict laws of domestic duties over woman by not allowing her to freely talk with stranger, to go outside, express her desire and to live according to her wish. But he fails to understand the other side of the coin that when woman like Laxmi, already convinced about these laws of women's subjugation are not the sacred laws decided by the God, where she has to serve the husband as her master and her master has to rule over her as master.

Sakharam expresses his intimate agony about this that so far no women in his life have ever worshiped him as God. They were always worshiping their husband. Many of them were devotees ready to do everything for him. But none ever worshiped him as God. Laxmi realised his crisis. She understood that though Sakharam claims to be the master, he is deficient to understand the status of a husband in the family. Sakharam fails

to identify with the fact that no patriarch can ever rule over his subject woman without accepting religion- God.

Laxmi's loyalty and religiosity, gradually starts turning Sakharam's house into family. She starts with God, then Pooja and thus brings change in Sakharam's life. Sakharam who was deprived of enjoying status of Swami or God of woman unconsciously feels happy about these developments. A man who never bothers about God gradually becomes religious man. He starts taking regular bath, performing Pooja almost like a family man.

Tendulkar indicates indirectly that though Sakharam doesn't believe in family or marriage system, Laxmi's loyalty towards him, transforms him. For Laxmi he is her husband so she wants him to be her real ruler, master. This is other side of the coin where slave herself teaches the master how to become God or how to rule her. Laxmi being a religious woman knows very well how to make God out of patriarch like Sakharam and turn him into a useful and responsible husband. Sakharam comes under her influence and feels some changes in him but does not give any credit to Laxmi for such changes.

Here Tendulkar deconstructs two aspects of Gender Violence. On one hand all the religions of the world are highly patriarchal and they help men

to subjugate women. But at the same time he shows through Laxmi's character, how same stereotype of respecting male patriarch or husband as God can be used by woman a readily available weapon in her hand to domesticate man as a tame animal. Sakharam knows that house or shelter is the prime requirement of women so they can be easily is trapped by providing them the house. But he is unaware of the fact that house or domestication of life was discovered by women long before the emergence of patriarchal society. And though men used house being a women's requirement as a tool to cage her in four walls of this house, women know the dynamics of domestication of wild animals and nomadic, anarchic human lives including that of a man far better than him. Thus here Tendulkar shows that same violent stereotypes of domestication women by religion can easily be used by women as liberating, constructive force in given situation to tame man in same house in her possession.

Laxmi's religiosity, behaviour, gesture, posture etc. attracts Sakharam. We know that Laxmi's sexual appeal is basically of ideal wife. Sakharam's attraction towards her or towards all abandoned house wives also shows that basically he wants such virtuous woman, which he will not be able to find anywhere else but in family only. This shows that despite his all radical claim Sakharam really wants a woman who is already moulded in patriarchal

values of the family but she should replace her husband from the thrown and put him on that place.

One more interesting aspect of Gender violence can be noticed in case of Sakharam's sexual relation with Laxmi. Tendulkar has already described that Laxmi is docile or fragile woman. Laxmi is very calm peaceful, kind and soft hearted. Sakharam is very violent, and lustful. For him Laxmi is merely a sex object or appetite of his bodily requirement. While for Laxmi her body is an instrument of serving and worshiping the master. She has already surrendered everything to her master but master fails to satisfy her. He thinks she is docile. She is unable to fulfil his sexual demands. But fact was other way around; he remains blind to her expectations. He thinks that Laxmi cannot have an orgasmic experience, since she is fragile. But one day he hears Laxmi's voice from the kitchen when he comes home. Laxmi was talking to someone with erotic laughter saying:

“You little rascal, you're trying to trick me, are you? I put you out, and you steal it again. You want me to feed you all the time... You're getting spoilt aren't you? No you won't get anything now... Don't look at me like that... 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? (Laughs as if

tickled) Oh! Don't? Now watch out! I'll really heat you if you get in to my lap. Go away. .. Get away you leach! I'm not going to give you anything today. You've become a regular pest. Get off me first... Oh dear why are you after my blood, you?" (Pg. 136)

Sakharam suspects her. But when he comes to know that she had a habit of talking with small creatures his doubts removes when she tells Sakharam that the ants, sparrows, crows—they all talk to her. Her words: "Ants, sparrows, crows—they all talk to me. Why do you talk to me? Eh? Why must you talkee—talkee to me? Go on... Tell me... You naughty little fallow... Tell me..." (Pg. 139) But here Tendulkar brings out very subtle and deep psychological aspect of sexual orgasmic experience of Laxmi (woman) and Sakharam's failure to provoke Laxmi upto that extreme.

Sakharam realises that he is unable give her such orgasmic experience in sexual relation with her which he thinks even smallest creature like ant can give to her. He becomes so fanatic and jealous to ant that he forces, he beats Laxmi to laugh in the same way she was laughing while talking with an ant. He asks why can't you laugh for me and express your orgasmic pleasure. He twice beats Laxmi with belt to make such orgasmic laughter. But he was unable to make her laugh. This incidence of Gender violence

discloses inner psychology of Sakharam's feeling of insecurity. He realises that despite doing all aggressive sexual offensives he is not capable to give such an orgasmic experience and make her laugh in her wilderness which even an ant can give it to her. Some where he feels himself impotent. He is competing with an ant.

Here, Sakharam wants the laughter of innocence through his sexual act. But he not come up to scratch to know that that laughter is a rare and he with his cruel act never able to find. So he gets frustrated. The way Laxmi bursts out in agony and resist Sakharam is a clear sign of her assertion that she is not a sex object of Sakharam. Laxmi says: I've never heard a kind word here. Always barking orders. Curses. Oaths. Threatening to throw me out. Kicks and blows. (She wipes her tears with sari). There I was in agony after I'd been belted, and all you wanted me to do was laugh. Laugh and laugh again... Hell must be a better place than this. If I die, I'll be free of this once and for all (Pg. 148).

On another occasion Laxmi prevented Daud to perform Aarti of Ganesha. Sakharam slaps Laxmi for that. Here Sakharam appears as a secular personality but through this scene Tendulkar exposes the hypocritical gesture of an ideal man who claims himself secular and wants to invite his



Muslim friend to establish himself as a secular person. But when a woman opposes he beats her to establish himself in the eyes of world that he is a secular person. This incidence can very well be related with Gandhi's episode where Mahatma Gandhi beats Kasturba when she refused to clean toilet as a part of his program of self purity and removal of Untouchability. This is typical kind of male ego which justifies their violence over woman by saying it is inevitable for the sake of the cause.

— In Laxmi's case we don't know about her caste. Sakharam never asks her caste. She is homeless deserted helpless woman. But she knows the caste of Sakharam and she believes that she is a wife of Sakharam-Brahmin. Now Sakharam is following her advice. He has become religious, he has started Pooja and now he is performing Ganesh Pooja. All these changes happened because of her. So she dares to prevent Daud – a Muslim friend of Sakharam from Aarti. The relationship of Sakharam and Laxmi cannot last for a long period. There is no harmony in their relationship. Finally both of them mutually depart in a very good manner. Her departure left a great, deep mark on Sakharam. He says: "There have been many women here, but this one left a mark before she went away." (Pg. 156)

After Laxmi's disappearance, Sakharam brings a new woman Champa in his house. She was a wife of the police Faujdar Shinde. She is younger than Laxmi. Well built, slightly fat and having better body structure... Champa is exact opposite of Laxmi. We have seen earlier that Laxmi was abandoned by her husband because she was unable to give him a child while in Champa's case her husband was impotent and more over torturing her to prove his masculinity, so she left him. When Sakharam talks about rules of house, Champa asks him is it a class room or what? What rules? When Sakharam assures her that she should not get scared about anything this Sakharam is a terror! She counters him by saying: "Scared? Who, me? And Scared of whom? My husband? (Spits) What can he do to me?" (Pg. 157) She says that he is corpse what he can do to her. He keeps her threatening that he will kill her. But he has no guts to do so. What is he going to do her?

This is the difference. Laxmi believed her husband a god even after he deserted her. And Champa calls him a corpse. Laxmi was ready to do all the domestic works ordered by Sakharam, While Champa orders him to prepare tea for her or manage food for dinner. Sakharam follows order and asks Daud to prepare tea. Moreover she made it clear that she has never done any domestic works. There is no such rule that man cannot do such works. She

comes from the family where her father was preparing tea and food for them and mother was sitting on pan shop. She violates the rule of Sakharam of not to talk with stranger but she appreciates Dawood as he is nice. When she says about tea... "Sweet" (Pg. 161). Sakharam gets annoyed and asks her again what is this nice in tea? Sweet? Stop it." (Pg. 161) He thought she appreciates Dawood.

All these incidences are examples deconstruction of violent gender stereotypes inherent in society as well as Sakharam's house and Champa's rebellious nature doesn't allow her to keep mum. She breaks the silence and thus creates conflicts in Sakharam's schematic house. Sakharam was attracted by her too much. She squarely rejected Sakharam sexual advances by telling I am not that type of woman. When again he tries to make love, she snatches bottle from Sakharam and finishes the wine. And then surrenders to him by saying that now she is ready do all what he demands even with dog. Thus Champa doesn't fit in stereotyped ideal model of woman. She is rebellious.

This striking difference between these two women gives shocks to Sakharam and audience both. Because with the entry of Champa in the house, Sakharam's rules look getting shattered immediately. Moreover she

is capable to retaliate of her husband alone; she doesn't need Sakharam's support. And when Shinde comes Sakharam takes side of her husband. That is the reason V.M. Madge appropriately comments:

“The very words in which Sakharam condemns people's hypocrisy strongly apply to him also.”<sup>12</sup>

All changes made in Sakharam's life by Laxmi come to an end with Champa's arrival. A religious, responsible “household man” carved by Laxmi again transforms himself into an irreligious, sensual, drunkard person. The differences between Laxmi and Champa are noticeable. Laxmi appeared embarrassed when she came. Champa was cool and calm. When Sakharam explains his rules to Champa asks him to prepare tea. This is point where she confronts with the Gender stereo types imposed by Patriarchal society. She smashes Sakharam's norms and rules on several occasions in the play. When Sakharam asks her for anything she never gets shock. She expresses her views openly. Once she said about Daud that he is nice. Sakharam tries to remind her that she is not allowed to talk with a stranger. Sakharam becomes so possessed by Champa that his mind remains occupied in her only.

Though Champa looks very sensual she is very emotional, bold and assertive. She straight forwardly tells Sakharam at first night: "I am not that sort of woman. See? I left him because I had my honour to save... Now you just behave yourself. Don't go around like a dog behind a bitch." (Pg. 162) She orders him: "Now run along and fix some dinner for us, will you?" (Pg. 162) Here again we can see that the Champa's portrayal creates an impression in the mindset of Sakharam as well audience that since she disobeys domestic duties she will be readily prepared for having sex with Sakharam. But she gives jerk to Sakharam as well audience by breaking these gender stereo types constructed by the society.

Her dialogue is also addressed to society: I am not that type of Woman. This is what Champa is. Her mother was sitting on the pan shop and father was making tea and preparing food. They were doing good business. They were selling liquor too. Shinde raided and he raided her too. Champa says she never prepare tea or food in her in-law's house also. Her mother in law was preparing. She refuses to do household work. Champa smashes the laws of Sakharam's house and gives him shocks aftershocks by breaking traditional stereo types about man should not be asked to do household work or woman should appreciate a stranger openly. Etc. Later on

she starts drinking liquor also. She speaks bad words. She beats her husband also.

Champa's physical appearance attracts Sakham. He became mad after her. Her boldness, courage all these things shocks as well as attracts Sakham. And as we have seen earlier Sakham opportunistically doesn't side with her when she gives a big blow, kicks to husband by calling him, corpse, pimp, an impotent lot. Sakham, the opponent of all husbands surprisingly prevents her by telling that she should not behave with him like this. After all he is her husband.

As we know once he was advising Laxmi that all deserted women must worship their husbands with Chappal and slippers. But after witnessing Champa's wrath it seems he gets frightened and ready to change his earlier position. He observed her as being possessed while kicking, beating and abusing her husband. That shows the double standards and hypocrisy of male gender.

Champa initially strongly opposed Sakham's sexual advances. She told that she is not that type of woman. But Sakham compels her. He says: "The woman I bring here has got to be a wife to me. That's all fixed when I decide to keep her here. There were seven and not one said no." (Pg. 168)

Champa replies strongly: "Maybe they were that sort. But not me." (Pg. 168)

Sakharam threatens her. But she continuously refuses. Sakharam angrily goes out and barks: "To hell with you. Damn you." (Pg. 169)

Champa appears bold and expresses no shock Sakharam talks about his all his rules and fantastic way of radical sex life, Champa gives him a shock by breaking his stereotype notion about bold woman. She had very horrible experience in her married sex life. She condemns all males as corpse. After coming to a decision she drags Sakharam and tells him: "Shut up. I'll give it to you. All of it. Just hand me the bottle." (Pg. 169) She grabs the bottle from him. Drinks. Forces him down and tells him: "Just Few minutes more. Then you can take me. Do what you like with me..." (Pg. 169)

Champa's behaviour makes Sakharam speechless. He has never seen such a woman. Champa appears as a stubborn woman with tendencies to assert her freedom rather aggressively. These traits of her temperament and attitude decide her relationship with Sakharam and thus influence the course of events in the play. Her violent clash with strong headed and egotistical Sakharam and its catastrophic consequences, therefore, appear to be perfectly natural.

Sakharam couldn't fix his mind in the work. He thought all day about last night's sex with Champa. He comes home early from the work to have sex with Champa. Champa was eating. She resists again but he again threatens her that she should obey her demand otherwise he would thrash her life out of her. He threatens her to drive her out. And if so then she will have to live like a bitch. There is no way for Champa. She again surrenders but in order to relieve her pain. In order to desensitise herself she drinks and tells him: "I'll give it to you." Fun for anyone who comes along... A dog... A corpse even..." (Pg. 171)

These are the glaring examples of Gender violence. Though Champa surrenders under Sakharam's pressure she compares sex with him to sex with a dog or a corpse. Champa's agony, wrath, everything gives shocks to Sakharam. Sakharam though feels insults from her and every imposed rule of Sakharam and even under forced situation she satisfies his sex hunger by telling him she is a dog, a corpse...

Sakharam though left Laxmi inside him still has impact of her. He becomes religious. He looks religious. When Laxmi starts drinking from the morning on the occasion of Dashera he tells Champa that she should not drink on the day like Dashera and he wants to perform Pooja. On holy day



the woman of the house should look all clean and tidy. He says: “Drunk so early in the morning?... Champa, you should not drink on a holy day like Dashera... On holy day the woman of the house should look all clean and tidy. What will people say?” (Pg. 174)

In first scene he is telling that the married males are hiding from whom they have to hide. They pretend themselves in front of people as if they are innocent. He says: “But—no dishonesty allowed. If you sin—you must be ready to slap your face and say, ‘Yes, I sinned. You must be ready to take the rap.” (Pg. 130) But now dirty man wants to become gentleman on Dashera. Champa is drunk and she pollutes his Pooja. He is worried. What people will say?

Here again Tendulkar shows the limits of so-called Sexual Radicalism of Sakharam. Though he does not bother about God or rituals he is justifying all his sin by his dialogues: “God knows. Body has its appetites.” (Pg. 126) But when on Dashera Champa appears in drunken condition in the morning and she climbs to him in kitchen and wants to provoke him Sakharam tells about Pooja and asks to go away. She laughs. Now situation has become curious. Sakharam cannot beat her, cannot kick her out. Because he is completely under control of Champa and Champa knows his limits. She is

very well acquainted with how these corpses, wild animals, dogs can be handled.

In the third scene Laxmi comes back. Sakharam beats her. But she refuses to go back. She expresses her desire to die as Sakharam's wife. She wears Mangal sutra of Sakharam. When Laxmi comes back Sakharam severely beats her and kicks her. She says that she wanted to die in his lap. Champa persuades Sakharam and she prevents Sakharam not to kick her out she asks him to give her shelter. Laxmi remains under Champa's protection for some time. Tendulkar beautifully narrates sharing between Champa and Laxmi. Champa looks generous to Laxmi. Same thought is expressed by Arundhati Banerjee in her previous writing, she observes that:

“Champa shows kindness and generosity when she convinces Sakharam to give shelter to Laxmi, a potential rival.”<sup>13</sup>

Sakharam's turmoil increases. In presence of both the women he is unable to decide where to go. This split in Sakharam's psychology is the sign of defeat of his rule over these women. Gradually he becomes impotent. Laxmi had amazed him by her orgasmic laughter when she was talking with an ant. Sakharam had realized to that Laxmi does have an orgasmic pleasure.

Even a small creature like ant can give her such an extreme pleasure and make her laugh. But he cannot give such orgasmic experience to Laxmi.

On the other hand Champa's relation with him makes him feel that he is no better than a dog or a corpse for her. And in presence of Laxmi, in his own house he further gets unable to have a sex with Champa. Champa in her drunken condition goes on abusing Sakham. Her behaviour, her violation of his rules results into his impotency. He realises his failure to give Laxmi an orgasmic experience. And here Champa's sexual abusive utterances that in Laxmi's presence he has become impotent, makes him wild. He goes to Laxmi and asks her to leave the house in order to prove before Champa that he is not scared of any body. Laxmi informs him about Champa's relation with Daud. Here again the same stereotype of potency masculinity plays its role. He kills Champa.

The dramatic twist comes here. It is Laxmi who gives him solace that what he has done is not a sin. He has killed a sinner. She helps him to dig the grave and hide and bury Champa's dead body. Laxmi, who appears as calm, generous and soft hearted personality, at last we found in her a cold blooded violent planner. Laxmi succeeds in making Sakham "A husband". Sakham's realization of his own growing impotency had already created

turmoil in his sexual identity. He lived a life as womanizer. Through his ideal house he tried to prove himself as a true potent man. But now Champa's sexual relation with his close friend Dawood hurts Sakharam's ego. So he murders Champa. Here we can assert that the violence in its pure and vigorous form is preserved in Laxmi's mind it is deeply rooted with the notion of morality. Tendulkar says:

“We are living in a country, which has strong rigid conventions of ‘Dharma’ and hence violence is deeply rooted within the society.”<sup>14</sup>

The minor character of Dawood is also a complex character. He does not appear as an ideal friend from the point of view of his relationship with Champa. He is a regular visitor and companion to Sakharam who knows more about Sakharam than Sakharam's knowledge about himself. He stands by Sakharam in his crisis. Tendulkar in his article “Muslim and I” writes:

“Dawood is a local poor Muslim who earns his living doing odd jobs and is a bachelor. Dawood is a frequent visitor to Sakharam's house and is familiar with Sakharam's non-conformist, odd and colourful life-style.”<sup>15</sup>

Watching a new female in Sakharam's house every often comes as no surprise to him. Both are smoking chillum as is their routine at the end of the

day. Sakharam dryly and casually describes the plight of Laxmi after she was thrown out by her husband. That Laxmi can hear what he is being told makes Dawood self-conscious and he gestures to Sakharam to stop. But he goes on. The difference between the sensibility of Sakharam and Dawood, as expressed here is significant. As Tendulkar says:

“Dawood is shown as more “human” and caring, more circumspect in such respect than his rebel Hindu Brahmin friend Sakharam.”<sup>16</sup>

But the arrival of Champa makes him to go off course. He cannot restrain her charm and forgets his long cherished friendship with Sakharam. Driven by his fancy for Champa, he comes frequently to Sakharam's house. But suddenly he stops coming. He crosses the limits and develops physical relations with Champa. This very depiction of his personality proves that sometimes physical lust conquers over the pious bond like friendship and love.

Sakharam's ego tries to manifest itself in a challenging way. He is not ready to be tied down to anything. The influence of Laxmi triggers an inner conflict between the existential ego and the metaphysical I. In effect we see that Sakharam, 'a curious case of gender violence' who has lost his self, has become pitiable because of his spinelessness. When he realizes that he is

losing himself, he is frightened and finally this living corpse gets pacified after lifeless and senseless activities. Sakharam is unpolished and hence the play 'Sakharam Binder' appears to be rough. Nevertheless, the play does make its appearance with existentialist traits. Dr. Chandrasekhar Barve suitably quotes:

“The existentialist tendencies are openly manifest in ‘Sakharam Binder’.”<sup>17</sup>

At closing stage, we can say that Tendulkar was the pioneer who changed not only the external framework of Marathi drama but also the limits of the picture of life at the core and gave 'A Curious Case of Gender Violence' – 'Sakharam Binder'.

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