

Ghasiram kotwal essay sample

[Literature](#), [Drama](#)



Ghashiram Kotwal is a Marathi play written by playwright Vijay Tendulkar in 1972 as a response to the rise of a local political party, Shiv Sena, in Maharashtra.[1][2] The play is a political satire, written as historical drama. Based on the life of Nana Phadnavis (1741–1800), one of the prominent ministers in the court of the Peshwa of Pune. Its theme is how men in power give rise to ideologies to serve their purposes, and later destroy them when they become useless. It was first performed on 16 December 1972, by the Progressive Drama Association, Pune.

Synopsis

The play begins with an invocation to lord Ganesha. Then the Brahmins of Pune introduce themselves and we can see the morally corrupt state of affairs in Pune. Nana Phadnavis who is the Diwan (Chief Secretary) of Pune is also corrupt and visits the lavani dancer. Ghashiram is working with the lavani dancer. Ghashiram being a Brahmin goes to collect alms at the Peshwa's festival the next day. However he is ill-treated there and is charged with pick-pocketing and imprisoned for the offence. He then decides to take revenge. Ghashiram barter his own daughter to get the post of Kotwal (police chief) of Pune from Nana. Having got the post he begins to enforce strict rules in the city. He starts asking for permits for everything and starts throwing people in jail for the smallest offences. In the mean time, Ghashiram's daughter is impregnated by Nana, and dies during childbirth. The situation goes out of hand when a few people in the jail die out of suffocation. The Brahmins then complain to the Peshwa. The Peshwa summons Nana who orders Ghashiram to be killed in the most derogatory way possible.

Vijay Dhondo Tendulkar was an eminent Marathi playwright, screenplay writer and a journalist. He began writing in the fifties but his signature style began to develop clearly with his association with the experimental theatre movement which was a beginning of modernism in Marathi literature. His plays like 'Maanus Navache Bet', 'Shantata court chalu ahe' and 'Kavlyanchi Shala' gained him fame. But the play that brought him the much awaited accolades was Ghashiram Kotwal. Ghashiram Kotwal a play by Tendulkar showcased the corruption in the society during the Peshwa régime. His character of Ghashiram is a depiction of the working class in Pune and how the Brahmin supremacy prevalent then lead to the oppression of the lower classes. Tendulkar has subtly shown what power does to men and how they become inhuman and greedy just to achieve that. The play then made into a book has a historic context. The idea that most strikes the audience is Tendulkar's ethical concern which is quite prominent throughout the book- from his understanding of relationships to effectively dealing with the social evils of those times that keeps us involved in the characters is their simplicity and realistic perception on the part of the writer.

All the characters seem so much like the people we see or meet or have met sometime. Also Tendulkar is not a writer who is struck with the Bharatmata Syndrome and explains the bitter reality of the Indian society without sugarcoating anything. The story begins with Ghashiram a Kanauji Brahmin coming to the city of Pune to try his luck and gain some money from the then rich city. His first appearance is in Bavankhanni a red light area in Pune where he is dancing as a foil to Gulabi a lavani dancer. Beginning as gulabi's servant he graduates to becoming the servant of Nana Phadavnis

the antagonist who is the chancellor of the Peshwa. Initially, Ghashiram is portrayed as an obedient servant to Nana but as time goes by due to the ill treatment he gets from Nana and the Brahmins in Pune he becomes power hungry. To the extent of sacrificing his teen daughter Lalitagouri to the old Nana only to get the respectable post of the Kotwal. Ghashiram who is oppressed initially now becomes the oppressor as power evokes a sense of dominance in him. Tendulkar smartly portrays the social evils in the society during the Peshwa rule.

Prostitution, corruption, the power structure and the ignorance on the part of people is quite evident from an incidence when the entire Pune Brahmins visit Bavankhanni while their wives stay home waiting for the husbands. What is different is Tendulkar's style of explaining the story effectively through the Sutradhar or the narrator and the various characters and their changing relationships. What happens to Ghashiram in the end comes as a total shock to the readers. All in all Ghashiram Kotwal is a timeless piece of writing. The issues that are primarily dealt with in the book still remain the same even after so many years.

Women still continue to be the ruled ones and the caste conflict has now become the class conflict where the rich dominate the poor and the cycle continues. It highlights the harsh reality that even when times change human nature remains the same. Greed and lust for money were, are and will always exist in human nature... In 1972, Tendulkar wrote another, even much more acclaimed play, *Ghāshirām Kotwāl* ("Officer Ghāshirām"), which dealt with political violence. The play is a political satire created as a musical

drama set in 18th century Pune. It combined traditional Marathi folk music and drama with contemporary theater techniques, creating a new paradigm for Marathi theater. With over six thousand performances thus far in its original and translated versions, “ Ghāshirām Kotwāl” remains one of the longest-running plays in the history of Indian theater