

Mahabharat: The Eternal Conflict

Preface

Going through the text of Bhishmadev Seebaluck's **Mahabharat- The Eternal Conflict** has been a thrilling cultural encounter. This from known-to-unknown voyage with the great heroes of the world's greatest epic reminded me of Peter Brooks's mega production and of Dharmavir Bharati's **Andha Yug**. It is not only due to the greatness of the saga itself but also because of Bhishmadev's lucid style, ability and control of the lyrical and impressive dialogues throughout.

The playwright has opted for a bounded canvas by just choosing the dense part of the conflict between the Pandavas and the Kauravas for their values and ideas. This play in five acts depicts the essence of Mahabharata's proclamation "what is not in it, is nowhere." While reading the book the reader is instantly reminded of Bhishmadev's days of theatrical activities.

Why the déjà vu? Is it not because the rungs of the ladder leading to the future rest on the past? Chengiz Aitmatov had said it: "We turn to myths in an attempt to pour ancient blood into contemporaneity."

Classics have to be taken to the people through direct dialogue between the authors, performers and the audience. **Mahabharat – The Eternal Conflict** gives a new awareness and reassessment of the relevance of the great heritage in today's decaying society.

The play, no doubt, comes to add a vital element to the possibility of avoiding the atrocities of war. This anti-war play provides pace and space and enough scope for good theatre to any stage director and his actors.

The author invites us to discover many contemporary realities in his text in which the classical characters like Krishna, Arjun, Draupadi, Karna, Abhimanyu, Duryodhan, Aswatthama, Bhishma Pitamah and others become characters of today in the vortex and chaos of a disturbed world. The book being a good piece of literature asks to go beyond and brought to life by our performing artists.

In the optimistic candour of **Andhayug, Mahabharat – The Eternal Conflict** ends with the eternal divine song of Krishna, and yet it doesn't end.

This well-written drama has synthetic force, comprising poetry, philosophy, mythology and powerful cultural urge. Any reader reading it in book form will be longing to live both the tense and peaceful moments in a theatre.

At least I am one.

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