

Synopsis

Ghasiram Kotwal

Ghasiram Kotwal is not a historical play. It is purely and simply a play! A play is a play alone. It goes against the integrity of a creative piece of writing to be called historical or mythological or social. Time can quickly turn social into historical and historical into mythological.

Nevertheless this play has been cooked in some what historical kitchens. But the play only thinly draws from history and no further. And the ingredients are as much historical as they could have been contemporary. Maharashtra was ruled by the Peshwas; Nana Phadnavis was their Chief. There happened to have been a Ghasiram, Brahmins, a Maratha Government and together these entities were flowing, at times parallel and at others colliding. Whether their conduct was proper and relevant is for the scholars of History to decide and not for the playwright. That is the reason I maintain Ghasiram Kotwal to be an 'unhistorical' play.

When the reality is coloured with our morality and gets reborn through our creativity it turns into a kind of legendary folk tale. Well Ghasiram Kotwal is quite like that. Such a tale can either remain a myth or touch us as an intense experience. There is no doubt that only intense experiences make truly creative literature. In a way it is more important to gauge our own reactions and investigations into events than to discuss the makings of folk tales. To me, Ghasiram Kotwal is a pointer towards a definitive social predicament. This predicament is time-less. It is not limited by Geography either. It is independent of its locale, born purely out of societal conditions and so are the Ghasirams and the Nanas.

To us the alternative of a (folk) form during the course (of the play) was a deliberate decision. Folk plays have the famous flexibility which is most useful for a tale such as this. There was no reason for me to give the privilege up. But then an author ought not to speak much about his own work; let the work speak for itself, and that alone is the truth.

Vijay Tendulkar

(Excerpted from the published introduction to 'Ghasiram Kotwal')

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Ghazab Teri Adaa

The play "Ghazab Teri Adaa" is a new original play written by Prof. Waman Kendre inspired by Aristophanes 'Leastrata'. The action of the play takes place in imaginary time and place which revolves around the never ending aspiration for the expansion of kingdom and is the constant battle for the continuous fights in the battle field.

The play begins with the farewell address to the soldiers for the hundredth war. Everybody assembles to bid farewell the soldiers. Women happily send away their husband and sons being unaware about the brutal consequences of the war. The group of performers foresees and feels the deterioration of humane values. Months have passed but the King does not hear of any news about the soldiers who are off for war. The king longs to gather the information from the chief but when the king hears of no news he asks the group of the performers. The groups of performers make the king aware about the future of the

war. The fearful king rejects to see and understand the situation. Meanwhile, the messenger brings the news of the victory in war and along with it they bring thousand of women from the defeated country for the king and his soldiers. The heart of women fill with sadness, guilt and fear after listening their stories and seeing their pathetic condition and abuse they visualise their own future after listing to their stories. All the women, with the feel of fear and pain agglomerates together to stop the war under the leadership of Laya. They think of various alternatives to stop the war and finally decide that they will not allow their husbands to maintain any physical contact with them until the war stops. The struggle begins from here. Initially, this strange way of protest by women is taken as a game by the men folk. But seeing the intensity and seriousness of the protest the male ego is challenged. Male tried to suppress the protest through their muscular power. But the firm dedication of women helps them in rejecting the idea of stopping the protest. Helpless, hopeless and tired men approach courtesan for fulfilling their sexual desires but all efforts go in vain because even the courtesans stand shoulder to shoulder with the other protesting women. The final outbreak comes when the queen joins the protest. The violence appreciating king and his war loving soldiers breaks down in front of this unique, peaceful and non-violent protest by the women. The play ends with the call for humanity and peace.

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TajMahal Ka Tender

Emperor Shah Jahan invites the chief engineer of CPWD, Guptaji and shares his dream of building a monument in the memory of his late wife, Mumtaz. After much deliberation he comes to the conclusion that a mausoleum be built in her memory and he wants it to be named TajMahal.

Guptaji, a shrewd, corrupt, official, entraps the Emperor in the snares of bureaucracy and red-tapeism leading to many hilarious situations. The ridiculous bureaucratic procedure takes 25 year only to float after which it finally floats the tender notice of TajMahal.

TajMahal Ka Tender is one of the successful satires of contemporary times.