



**The Conflict between State and Spirituality in " Murder in the Cathedral"  
and "The Mahabharata"**

**Ms. Somaiya Prarthana Manishbhai**

Student,

Smt K.S.N. Kansagara Mahila College

**Abstract:**

The conflict between State and Spirituality in all ages and times. the paper focuses on the same in "Murder in the Cathedral " by T.S. Eliot and "The Mahabharata" the epic by Ved Vyasa.

The conflict between State and Spirituality is paramount theme in "Murder in the Cathedral" and "The Mahabharata". In both works, we witness the confrontation between secular authority and Spiritual principles, as characters navigate the complexities of power and faith. Thus, the theme invites us to explore the exquisite balance between political governance and religious influence, shedding light on dilemma about morality, duty and the nature of authority.

**Keywords:** murderinthecathedral, mahabharata, conflict, spirituality, power, state, crown, religion, clash, war, complexion, authority

***The Conflict between State and Spirituality in "Murder in the Cathedral":***

In "Murder in the Cathedral", the conflict between State and Spirituality is exemplified through the power endeavour between King Henry II and Archbishop Thomas Becket. Becket's unwavering commitment to his religious principles clashes with the secular



jurisdiction of the state, leading to a profound confrontation between the church and crown. this disput underscore's theme between secular and spiritual power.

This conflict is the struggle for supremacy between the secular authority of the state, represented by the character of King Henry II, and the spiritual authority of the church, personified by the character of Archbishop Becket. This play is inspired by the historical events leading up to Becket's murder in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. Through the portrayal of this struggle of power, the author explores the themes such duty, loyalty and dedication towards God. The archbishop Thomas Becket's commitment to his principles and his willingness to sacrifice his life for church symbolize the enduring conflict between state and spirituality.

**"The last temptation is the greatest treason: to do the right deed for the wrong reason."**

**- Archbishop Thomas Becket**

***The Conflict between State and Spirituality in "Mahabharata":***

In the "Mahabharata", the conflict between State and Morality is portrayed through every character of the epic, who serves as both a ruler of the state and the spirituality in their life. Through its narrative, the "Mahabharata" offers insights into the ageless dilemma between worldly concerns and higher ethical ideals, inviting reflection on the nature of governance and fidelity.

In the epic "Mahabharata", The Pious Prince, Yudhishtir is the central figure and the eldest to the Pandavas Brothers. He is known for his noble virtues of integrity, fidelity to Dharma or Righteousness, wisdom, and compassion. Yudhishtir's character is defined by honesty and his commitment to moral principles, even in the hardest time of his life, he has always followed the path of Dharma and Spirituality.

The conflict between State and Spirituality is often depicted by the character of Yudhishtir in "Mahabharata". this conflict is exemplified in one incident during Kurukshetra War when Yudhishtir lies to his guru, Drona about his son's death, Ashwasthama. Yudhishtira forges



Vidhyayana - ISSN 2454-8596

An International Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed E-Journal

[www.vidhyayanaejournal.org](http://www.vidhyayanaejournal.org)

Indexed in: Crossref, ROAD & Google Scholar

the news of Ashwathama's death to demoralize Drona and turn the tide of the battle. This moment summarizes the struggle between fulfilling one's duty as a ruler and adhering to spiritual principles of righteousness. he uttered a verse to preserve his spiritual principles so that he would not deviate from his morals, which is;

"अश्वत्थामा हताः इति | नरोवा कुञ्जरोवा ||"

Yudhishtira's decision reflects the difficulty of navigating the tensions between worldly concerns and moral ideals in the pursuit of political ambitions.

In conclusion "Murder in the Cathedral" and the "Mahabharata" both offer extreme reaction on the conflict between State and Spirituality. While the settings and characters separate, both works enlighten the complexities of navigating the secular authority and spiritual principles. By exploring theme, they invite readers to consider the delicate balance between governance and belief, leaving us with enduring perception into the human conditions.

#### References:

goodreads.com.