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**Retelling the Ramayana and Mahabharata by AnandNeelkantan, with
reference to Asura and Ajaya**

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Abstract:AnandNeelkantan is the author of *Asura: The Tale of Vanquished*,*AjayaI:Roll of Dice* and *AjayaII: Rise of Kali*. The books are written through the perspectives of the defeated. *Asura* is the Ramayana through the eyes of Ravana and *Ajaya* is The Mahabharata in the perspectives of Suyodhana. The books by Neelkantan are about the history and mythology retold by him. It portrays the evil and vices of Brahminism and caste system. The stories are beautifully rendered through the characters of Ravana and Duryodhana. Neelkantan has given more importance to huminity than divinity. Neelkantan got success in reshaping the concept of Dharma and Adharma.

AnandNeelkantan did an excellent job of weaving together realistic picture of what might have been actual events which now have turned into legends and myths.

Key words: *Asura ,Ajaya , Ravana , Duryodhana , Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bahubali,Kauravas.*

Introduction

Usually epics are the stories of great men and their deeds, their heroism, divinity, right, wrong, white dark etc. The voice of common man remained silent in any epic. Neelkantan has written several mythological books. The paper is about the study of retelling mythology with reference to *Asura: The Tale of Vanquished*, *Ajaya I: Roll of Dice* and *AjayaII: Rise of Kali*. In his books Ravana, Duryodhana are the heroes. He has written stories from the other side, from the side of defeated. As India and Hinduism are all about diversity, the writer has used the folk tales for his narrative and used opposite perspectives what he wanted. For Neelkantan Ravan was never a villain, he became villain in Bhakti era. Before Bhakti-era it was Karma, The epics are contemporary and characters are still found in society. We can see characters like Ravana and Duryodhana around us, these characters are written to show how people behave in different circumstances. *Asura* is the voice of common man, where Ravan is pictured with all emotions like anger, pride, jealousy, happiness, sadness, *Asura*, *Ajaya* are written in the perspective of defeated.

About the Author:AnandNeelkantan, author of the bestselling book '*Asura: The Tale of Vanquished*,*AjayaI: Roll of Dice* and *AjayaII: Rise of Kali*', grew up in the town of Thripoonithura near Cochin. Educated as an Electrical and Electronics Engineer from Govt. Engineering College Trissur, Calicut University, he has been working in Indian Oil Corporation since 1999. He is an author, columnist, screen writer, television personality and motivational speakers he writes columns in 'The Hindu' Indian Express, Pioneer, Washington post. etc. Anand is also a prolific writer in Malayalam and regularly publishes his stories in prestigious literary Malayalam magazine. Anand is a cartoonist too who published many of his works. He lives in Mumbai with wife Aparna, daughter Ananya and son Abhinav. .

Literary Reviews:*Asura: The tale of Vanquished* is the debut book of AnandNeelkantan, which is the Ramayana told through the eyes of Ravana. This was followed by *Ajaya I: The Roll of Dice*, which is all about Kauravas. In the words of Neelkantan

"It was these two books that led me to write the story of characters like Shivgami and Bahubali'.^[1]