
ORIGIN OF INDIAN DRAMA: A SHORT INTRODUCTION

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Abstract:

Any study of Indian drama begins with Sanskrit drama, which is purely of Indian origin. The word “Natya” often been translated as “Drama”. The Sanskrit word for play (Nataka) and actor (Nata) are from the root “Nat” which is the prakrit form of Sanskrit “Nrutya” meaning to dance. A Sanskrit drama always opens with a namely or benediction, usually addressed to Ganesh or Shiva for the prosperity of the audience by “Sutradhar” or director. Bharata is historically thought-about to be the daddy within the history of Indian drama. The history of Indian drama is deeply unmoving in classical Indic theatre, which is the earliest existing form of drama and theatre.

Key Words: Drama, Indian, Sanskrit, Theatre, History, Natak.

Introduction:

Drama is that the branch of humanities within which stories square measure acted mistreatment combos of speech, gesture, music, dance and sound. Indian drama and theatre has a vivid history. The history of Indian drama is charming, enigmatic and unbelievable. India has AN autochthonous dramatic tradition, and remains stay unaffected from any foreign influence. Hindu drama was not borrowed or an imitation of any other, but it is the product of native genius.

Origin of Indian Drama:

History of Indian drama is made with Vedas and Indian epics and has step by step modified with time and remains unaffected by any foreign influence. Indian drama has originated and

developed from depository of Sanskritic language in India. It has given incredible impact and limit to perfection since ancient times. The earliest variety of the theatre of India was “Sanskrit Theatre”. It emerged sometimes between the first century BCE and the second century BCE and flourished between the first century BCE and the 10th during which hundreds of plays were written.

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Contemporary Indian Drama:

To understand contemporary Indian drama, first we have to understand the history of the Bengali drama and theatre. The beginning of the Bengali theatre may be derived to the development of the Calcutta theatre back within the year 1779. However, nothing exceptional happened until the top of 1794. In the year 1795, it was for the very first time the then intelligentsias of Kolkata witnessed Bengali theatre as the Russian dramatist Horasim Lebedev along with a Bengali theatre connoisseur Goloknath Das staged the Bengali translations of two English comedies, Disguise and Love is the best doctor in Kolkata. That was the time since once Bengali theatre started its journey. With few unstable steps and later with long strides it had been with time, Bengali theatre gained a redefined dimension.

It is with the establishment of Hindu Rangamanch at Kolkata by Prasanna Kumar Thakur further supported Bengali theatre to take that steady step towards maturity. Prasanna Kumar staged Wilson’s English translation of Bhavabhuti’s Sanskrit Language drama Uttar Ramacharitam whilst laying the foundation for modern theatre in India. The Bengali theatre then gained a new diction. Other important attempts in developing Bengali theatre was made by Nabin Basu’s Jorasanko Natyashala, the private stages of Ashutosh Deb and Ramjay Basak, Vidyotsahini Mancha, Metropolitan Theatre, Shobhabazar Private Theatrical Society and most significantly the Bagbazar Amateur theatre. Bengali theatre once more within the nineteenth century witnessed a vast amendment because the made, young Bengalis of Kolkata started to write plays based on British realistic manikins whilst ideally weaving them with Indian songs,

classical dance and music to feature that tiny additional. Rabindranath Tagore's Raktakarabi (Red Oleanders) and Raja (The King of the Dark Chamber) became a very important a part of this effort. At that point, the works of poet were additionally wide translated and tailored within the Bengali theatre while redesigning Bengali theatre to check the Indian urban tastes.

The history of Bengali theatre is thus the saga of changing tradition. The main aim was then to make the mass aware of the then socio political scenario. With the coming of the theatre personalities like Badal Sircar, Mohit Chattopadhyaya, Arun Mukherjee and others the timeline of Bengali theatre gained that desired contour.

Marathi Theatre:

Marathi drama and theatre occupy an important position in Indian drama and theatre from the middle of 19th century. Marathi drama and theatre are active in form from the middle of the 19th century and it is continuing till date. The folk arts of Maharashtra being the backbone of its cultural ethos and Marathi theatre thrive to be the melting pot of several poles apart from contradictory. Medieval India witnessed overseas invasion, the silhouette of the same falling obliquely on Indian theatre chiefly Marathi theatre. Apart from the consolidation of a different territory Maratha's glorious history can be traced back to several times in their drama. To do this they gained the linguistic freedom also.

After Bengali theatre in India, Marathi drama is indeed a pivotal break through, the Marathi culture oozing throughout. Marathi Theatre is an art form considered to be very rich aspect in Indian culture. Marathi theatre rose in full swing in Pune and Mumbai, with the inception of dramas by Vishnupath Bhave, who used amorous and tragic themes. Bhave, specialized in light hearted farcical themes; comically slaughtering the contemporary social developments providing a platform to the upcoming good work. Sangeet Shrada is rightly the pioneer of social Marathi drama, intoxicating with its artistic and progressive focal points.

Influenced by *Yakshagana*, the traditional dance drama of rural Karnataka, the Marathi drama achieved a clear regional form by the middle of the 19th century. Marathi theatre at first was more of an untried experimental theatre derived from the folk forms and the already breathing Shakespearean and Parsi dramas. Natak Companies were then floated, with an addition of the Hindustani classical music and dance in Marathi plays that were replete with mythological and social themes, which became popular instantly. Even historical plays about the famous Marathi heroes like, Shivaji and others, began to be written and presented. As these were

banned, the Marathi dramatists invented subtle stratagems to present their point of view in allegorical fantasies or in farcical comedies.

Humorous social plays came later which gradually became a speciality of Marathi stage. A leading contemporary dramatist, Mama Varekar wrote social plays in a realistic style, attempting a synthesis between European convention and Indian content. He gave a tremendous lead to the younger groups, which have been re-creating the Maharashtra village theatre through the Powada and the Tamasha. In Marathi drama years between 1885-1920 were productive enough in terms of quality and the quantity of the plays and a delight for theatre connoisseurs.

Under the influence of these vital actors a Marathi worker wrote a play called *Dada*. He portrayed the day-to-day life of the Bombay workers, their sufferings, hardships and frustrations with an authenticity born of grim experience and with a humanity; characteristic of his class. The audiences were thrilled to see their own everyday lives put before them so clearly and seemed to be deeply moved by the realization that they could alter the conditions of their lives through their own strength.

Thus, the Marathi plays left a powerful influence on the masses in spite of the appearance of movies in the third decade of this century. Stage songs, based on Hindustani classical ragas, though yet, are famous, do not last for about 4 to 6 hours, the way, they used to as the old fashioned plays. Marathi drama is still very popular with the urban and rural masses, mainly due to nostalgia. People also feel that theatre today has comparatively fewer biases, prejudices and influences. Nobody imitates great mature playwrights or directors of the play like, *Ghashiram Kotwal*, *Gochi*, *Uddhwasta Dharmashala*, *Begum Barwe*, *Mahanirwan*.

The first Marathi stage performance was the play *Seeta Swyamvar* by Vishnudas Bhave in 1843. But the experimental form of this drama was derived from folk dramas and was already in presence in Shakespearian plays and Parsi dramas. The first sign of a fresh kind of theatre was seen in Shyam Manohar's *Yakrit* (1984), followed by *Hriday* (1984), both directed by Satyadev Dubey, which were comic plays focusing on an individual. Vijay Tendulkar's *Ghashiram Kotwal* (1972) and Alekar's *Mahanirwan* (1974) can be viewed as pathfinders, where the use of folk form has, helped in articulating and expressing the content of the dramas. They both made use of various folk traditions of Maharashtra, such as the kirtans and marked the major turning point of contemporary Marathi drama.

Apart from many theatre groups managing the Marathi dramas, the Awishkar theatre group has consistently been doing Marathi experimental plays for the last forty-three years. Awishkar has also produced over a 150 plays. It has additionally provided a considerable platform for varied administrators, technicians still as budding artists. Various workshops are conducted through out the year for amateur artists. The group comprises of Mr. Vijay Tendulkar, Ms. Sarojni Vaidya, Mr. Arun Kakde, Ms. Sulbha Deshpande and others. Alyque Padamsee is an Indian theatre personality from Mumbai, both as producer and actor. Influences of modern theatre and world theatre underwent a slump after world war thanks to the cacophonous effect of radio and television, and the oncoming influential vibes of the western theatrical scene, Marathi theatre boomed back with a bang. There was no looking back

Tamaasha is a traditional folk theatre form of Maharashtra. It has evolved from the folks forms like Gondhal, Jagran and Kirtan. Unlike alternative theatre forms, in Tamaasha the female actress is the chief exponent of dance movements in the play. She is known as Murki.

Hindi Theatre:

Hindi theatre has a firm footing in India. A study reveals the very fact that Hindi theatre is believed to own been initial started by someone named Bhartendu Harishchandra of Varanasi. He tried to create Hindi theatre renowned not solely in Bharat however additionally overseas. Bhartendu additional few ideas of Indo-Aryan Theatre in Hindi. He established an association, Bhartendu Natyamandali, whose main aim was to make Hindi theatre famous worldwide. The thought of contemporary Hindi theatre developed within the late Nineteen Forties and early Nineteen Fifties. It is attention-grabbing to notice that fashionable Hindi theatre isn't solely confined to the Hindi speaking areas however unfold to all or any the non-Hindi speaking areas additionally.

The new energetic administrators have given a replacement impetus to the thought of Hindi theatre within the fashionable developing era. The Brobdingnagian influence of the center category in Hindi theatre within the era has resulted in a very radical transformation in its nature. From 1960 forrader alternative regional theatres were translated into Hindi. It was gave a new meaning and style to Hindi theatre and also helped it to develop unique identity of its own. An important genre in Hindi Theatre started in late Nineteen Seventies with the institution of the Prithvi Theatre. This ushered in a very new era, giving newcomers an opportunity to exhibit their talent in front of the masses. Shashi Kapoor, one in every of the foremost versatile actors in movie industry, is credited for the establishment of Prithvi Theatre. Presently it's several events

and activities that turn up everywhere Bharat however its main aim is to unfold Hindi theatre around the globe.

Conclusion:

Living traditions occupy a outstanding place within the Indian structure. Any living tradition has a natural flow. There will be little doubt regarding the very fact that ancient art forms replicate the ideals of the society, its determination to survive, its ethos, emotions, fellow-feelings, and so on. Drama in itself may be a complete kind of arts. In all the standard theatre-forms, songs and therefore the art of singing have a very important role to play. Traditional music of the theatre is Associate in Nursing expression of the sentiments of the community.

Traditionally the language of normal individuals has a part of creativeness, tho' not supported classical or grammatical roots. This kind of creativeness is spontaneous, rising from the circumstances. When there's intensity of emotions, there's a natural reasonably rhythm within the expressions. It is this natural rhythm from that emerges the standard theatre-form. In this sort, sorrow, joy, frustration, hatred and love have their role and place.

In different regions of Bharat, there are religious festivals, fairs, gatherings, ritual offerings, prayers, almost throughout the year. During these occasions, traditional theatre forms are presented. They replicate the common man's social attitudes and perceptions. Traditional theatre forms incorporate not solely the common man's interests however there's additionally a classical component in them. This classical aspect, however, takes on regional, local and folk coloring. It is realizable, that those related to the classical world of Sanskritic language drama, visited the neighboring regions once its decline and mixed with the native theatre forms. This kind of synthesis, give-and-take should have taken place on numerous levels like written, verbal, classical, up to date, national and native.

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