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Theatre Street Journal

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers, Greetings!

TSJ starts its journey, finally.

The primary reason for starting the Theatre Street Journal is love for Theatre and the irrepressible desire to do something with the art form. And, the reason for producing the journal is to facilitate academic discourse on Theatre. We wish that one day TSJ provides a forum for Theatre practitioners and academicians to come together for sharing their experiences and knowledge.

The challenge is to go online through Blog, a latest and popular form of social media. To be more precise, the challenge is not to spend anything behind the publication of TSJ other than time. Let us make money irrelevant for once.

We seek everybody's academic and aesthetic support. Be with us. Read this inaugural issue and give us your valuable feedback at theatrestreetjournal@gmail.com

Yours Truly

Sourav Gupta

Editor

Theatre Street Journal

Tennessee Williams' *Dramatis Personae* : A Study in Types

Dr. Dharanidhar Sahu

The dramatic world of Tennessee Williams seems to contain three visible types of characters who can be termed, for a working hypothesis, as the *Naturalizers*, the *Fugitives* and the *Compassionate*. These types, it should be stressed, are flexible because their attributes emerge out of dramatic exigencies and their interactions usually lend to the situational significance of the plays. It would not be in the spirit of this essay to typify Williams' characters into neat groups of black, white, and grey, but to categorize them in terms of their becoming in the limited context of the play.

Williams' characters are inextricably linked to their own time and place, and they appear natural in their respective locales as brambles and bandicoots in a tropical jungle.

Williams has a tendency to plumb the dark depths of his characters to find their motivations. There may be moments in each of his plays when the reader or the spectator would be out-manuevered and even mellowed by the predilections of the playwright. The reader would be asked to make certain allowances against his own grain, to reconsider his preferences and to dilute his disgust for aberrations. In a sense, he may achieve a broadening of feeling and inward candor while judging others. "I don't believe in villains or heroes," declares Williams, "only right or wrong ways individuals have taken, not by choice but by necessity or by certain still uncomprehended influences in themselves, their circumstances, and their antecedents" (Day 1978:91-2). On an occasion, Tennessee Williams interviews himself. He reacts to a question he hurls at himself: "Why don't you write about nice people?" "Well," he answers, "I've never met one that I couldn't love if I completely knew him and understood him, and in my work I have at least tried to arrive at knowledge and understanding."

The *Naturalizers* and the *Fugitives* live side by side of one another, and are

crammed into one another like rotten apples. Their nature is slowly revealed in the process of their confrontations with others, with society, with corrosive time, with an inscrutable universe and their chosen masks. The *Compassionate* characters, like catalysts, speed up the dramatic action, passively participate in action, help to disclose the inner alchemy of the Fugitive protagonists, bring them closer to the audience by acting as bridges between them, but are not much affected by dramatic situations.

The first category under the rubric of *Naturalizers* includes persons who do things which bring them immediate pleasure or fortune. They are solipsistic and have the knack of getting their things done. They are calculative, good at manipulation, sly in taking revenge and ruthless in opposition. They act against their own sense of honor and justice, ride roughshod over others, but do not feel the pricking of conscience. They are prompt to naturalize, prompt to patch off the schism. And if they do not feel the existence of something wrong inside, the wrong gradually seeps through their systems and is crystallized into a way of life, an expediency that leaves no room for disagreement, a putrefaction that is taken as normal. It is the common way, the way of the moron, the cunning, the wicked and the fool.

The *Naturalizers*, it should be pointed out, resemble Ortega y Gasset's "mass" which "sets no value on itself—good or ill — based on specific grounds, but which feels itself just like everybody, and nevertheless is not concerned about it; it is, in fact, quite happy to feel itself as one with everybody else." "As they say in the United States," quips Ortega y Gasset, "to be different is to be indecent. The mass crushes beneath it everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified and select" (ibid: 12). The adjusted person is one, writes Fromm [1950:75], who has made himself into a commodity, with nothing stable or definite except his need to please and his readiness to change roles.

They are Erich Fromm's "adjusted" persons and Herbert Marcuse's "one-dimensional men ". Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire* is proud of his efficiency, his luck, his country, his success and his brutishness, but what shocks Blanche and exasperates sensitive readers is Stanley's "commonness":

Blanche: Well — if you forgive me — he's COMMON.

Stella: Why, yes, I suppose he is.

Blanche: There has been some progress since then! Such things as art — as poetry and music ... in some kinds of people some tenderer feelings have had some little beginning! That they have got to make grow! And cling to, and hold as our flag! In this dark march toward whatever it is we

are approaching...

The *Naturalizers* live on the surface, floating and drifting, yielding easily to baser impulses, surrendering to the current that carries them down. Like a swarm of limpets they cling to the rock of congruence more as a matter of habit than of principle. Big Daddy in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Job Torrance in *Orpheus Descending*, Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Boss Finley in *The Sweet Bird of Youth*, Maxine in *The Night of the Iguana*, Mrs. Venable in *Suddenly Last Summer*, and Miriam in *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel*, only to mention a few, belong to this category. Most often they are successful, crude and savage, pointedly pragmatic but incapable of subtler feelings of friendship and love. They are attached to those persons whom they can use. For these people, death is a sudden shock of horror. They stagger, crawl, and shrink at the very notion of death and are never ready to face it.

Significantly, most of them do not die when the curtains fall. The fear of death, not the death itself, really serves as a gadfly that hovers threateningly close, tormenting a lot before biting. As Kierkegaard (1944:30) observes, "Death is not the last phase of the sickness, but death is continually the last. To be delivered from this sickness by death is an impossibility, for the sickness and its torment ... and death consists in not being able to die." Their fear of death is not different from that of a wolf attacked by blood-hounds; it is desperate, terrible and traumatic. "I fear death," cries Miriam, "I know it would have to remove, wrench, tear the bracelets off my arms. . . So I wait in dread. Terror, yes; I could say terror . . . No inner resources of serenity in me at all" (Williams 1970:36-37). Some of Williams' famous characters are haunted by this terror of decay and death. What these characters such as Alexandra Del Lago, Casanova, Marguerite, Mrs. Goforth, Mrs. Stone, Big Daddy and Amanda Wingfield want is a personal immunity against time. And when they find that such wishes are never granted, they indulge in life with a vengeance.

The *Naturalizers* readily conform to the modes and moods of civilization. They cast their votes, visit churches, earn and squander, but they do so like real-life somnambulists whose eyes, though wide open, are unable to see, whose dark subconscious, rather than their alert minds, dictates their movements. But the fact of their insensitivity does not shield them against a feeling of ultimate estrangement. In them the sense of estrangement is more acute, more complete and more devastating because such a sensation comes to them at the face of defeat. Death, decadence of flesh and gangrene are forms of such defeat (Fromm 1950:75).

Erich Fromm comments on the ultimate despair of such an "adjusted" person: "As long as he succeeds in his efforts, he enjoys a certain amount

of security, but his betrayal of the higher self, of human values, leaves an inner emptiness and insecurity which will become manifest when anything goes wrong in his battle for success." Their cunning, their animal surrender, their ingenuity betray them into the hand of an inescapable despair. Their gross nature fails to understand the depth and subtlety of passions that stir within the Fugitive protagonists; their insularity trembles impotently before the universal contexts of life. Unlike the Fugitives, they are not redeemed by their final anguish, because instead of wishing to go beyond their world which, they suspect, is not the best of all possible worlds, they try to grab the bones that life throws at them until their fingers and teeth are broken.

The second category of characters are said to be *Fugitives*. For them the feeling of alienation is not an accident, but a necessity. Sometimes their inner demon, sometimes their surroundings and other people conspiring against them, thrust them to the edge of the escarpment, to the fag-end of existence.

It can be assumed as a general belief that there is presence in each individual which informs him what is the proper thing for him to do. This concept, however, has had a most eventful and ontological journey from Platonic idealism to the Freudian Super Ego. It is variously termed as conscience, Super Ego, the idealized image and the impartial judging agent of God. The sensitive person, Karen Horney (1945:111) says, develops an "idealized image" of oneself, but his actions, his transactions with other people push him away from this centralized, ideal image. As a result, the gap between his ideal self and his real self increases. Karen Horney points out that this "gap" is the cause of alienation. Williams' *Fugitive* is an alienated individual because "he clings to the belief that he is his idealized image." A schism is created when such a person is enamored of contrary forces for profit and pleasure, when he is sundered from himself by a number of diabolical forces external to him and more powerful than him. This person is unable to naturalize his psychic situation. His mind becomes a battleground of nerves. He is embarrassed by his built-in contradictions. The gap between his idealized self and real self makes him a deracinated and divided personality. He is not in harmony with his own self, nor is he able to take this situation as his natural state. He is constantly consumed by a desire to connect himself meaningfully to others around in a genuine bond of intimacy, to achieve amity with his own essential nature and to identify with, what Hegel calls, the Social Substance. "The Social Substance has come into existence and has been sustained in existence, through centuries of human activity. He (Hegel) regards it as the objectification of the human spirit in which the spirit finds the objective

form that is essential to its actualization," Richard Schacht (1970:39) paraphrases Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. His thoughts always tend to the center of his being, prompted by an inner search, inspired by an indomitable hope to regress into the past, into a state of prelapsarian innocence. He is often an intelligent, high-strung, avid and thoughtful individual who is bruised, baffled and victimized in a world of temptations and guilt. But he keeps his wounds open. There is the rub. That is why he suffers. In one way, he is unable to raise himself to the mental level of the man of commitment, integrity and true heroism, and in the other, he is reluctant to sink into the smudge of the *Naturalizers*. He is unable to break away completely from either because the possibilities of both camps are within him.

The fundamental characteristics of the *Fugitive* individuals are as follows: he is vulnerable to temptations, but he gets befuddled in the face of disillusionment; he is unable to soak the sense of guilt into his system; he lacks the coarse cynicism of the *Naturalizers* and the faith that transcends cynicism; he withdraws himself from the busy world because its crowds and conceits vex him, but he is not comfortable in his isolation and longs for human contact which turns out to be his undoing; he does not feel settled anywhere and exhibits an uneasiness as if he has drunk gasoline.

Like Blanche Dubois in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Alma in *Summer and Smoke*, he sometimes relies on the kindness of the strangers when he feels exploited and victimized by his familiar world. Sometimes he is mauled and eaten up by hungry street urchins, like Sebastian in *Suddenly Last Summer*; sometimes his love relationship with a girl ends up with his castration, like Chance in *The Sweet Bird of Youth*; sometimes like Val Xavier he is burnt alive by a blow torch and sometimes like Kilroy(*Camino Real*) he is transformed into a patsy and ends up as a tomcat.

The *Fugitive* has certain ideals, but he sells them cheap. He is somewhat vaguely convinced that there is something important to be done, that he is secretly connected to something. Such allegiance wavers precariously between the connection of a missionary to his scriptures and of a witch to her mysteries. He either considers others unworthy of his confidence or he himself is not sure of his ideals; he never speaks out his secrets, but is most eloquent in condemning other people, their way of life, their mendacity and their civilization. In this context, Williams' *Fugitive* finds his prototype in Baudelaire's "dandy" who is a saint or a sinner for his own sake, who is a "hero and anti-hero at once" because he "thirsts for heroism in an age that is mediocre" and refines his "sensibility to a fashionable heroism which is a diluted insolence" (Sypher 1962:37,41). Sypher continues

his discussion on Baudelaire's concept of "dandy". "Dandy" is a middle-class aristocrat who disdains mediocrity. "His life is a role" (ibid:36). "He is an existential hero manqué" who resists "the inauthentic", but fails to gain "the authentic" (ibid:41).

Brick in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* furiously condemns the mendacity of others, but what escapes the audience is the reason why he loses his temper when Big Daddy accuses him of mendacity. Val compares himself to a bird that has no "legs so it can't light on nothing but has to stay all its life on its wings in the sky" and speaks a lot about his inability to get entangled, but does not hesitate to steal, gamble for money, and act as a gigolo to a highly sexed elderly lady (Williams 1976:Act-I Sc.2:70). Williams (1950a) describes this bird in his novel, *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*:

"Speaking of birds, said Mrs. Stone with an effect of composure, is it true that the rondini don't have legs and that is the reason they stay in the air all the time? No, said Paolo, they stay in the air all the time because they don't want to mix with American tourists" (ibid: 70). Alma whose name in English means 'soul' shows some spiritual pretensions, but finally ends up as a nymphomaniac.

Williams' *Fugitive* does not make himself understandable to others, hence lends himself generously to the "wrong" understanding of others. Gerald Weales (1974:388) makes this point in one of his long essays: "If Williams' (man)kind is fugitive, then something has to be in pursuit. His characters are menaced by three things: by other people, by themselves, and by the universe." The *Fugitives* are pursued by other people who try to use them mechanically, by their own fear and guilt, by the universe which sets hounds of time on them. He confronts the world with childlike curiosity or mischief, but the world swoops over him like predatory birds on young turtles. He is frequently corrupted, but he still retains, or he makes us believe so, his purity. The flame in the center of his being does not die out; it sustains him, protects him from outside cold and darkness though at the same time burns him slowly. When through with the outside world and "others", he recoils into the private chamber of his heart, and through with his monotonous privation he gasps for fresh human contact, thus makes himself available like a shuttle-cock.

A short story of Williams precisely deals with such dual allegiance The Young Man in "The Portrait of a Lady in the Glass," who becomes Tom in *The Glass Menagerie*, leaves his mother and sister, and goes away in search of his security, peace, freedom and ways to actualize his creative powers. But he is constantly reminded of his family, his home. He feels guilty for his action, his selfish betrayal, his behaving like his father who

had also deserted his wife and children, but he does not come back. This exactly is the mentality of the *Fugitive* who, by his very act of choosing, alienates himself from his family, from his society, but is not at peace with his newly discovered state of freedom. He plunges towards temporary distractions in a desperate attempt to forget his inner conflict, but they turn out to be mere palliatives. There is always a desire to return. He is neither seriously repentant nor can he brazen it out. This split is an innate and vital pointer to his being. Another aspect of his nature is his obsession with an order, sometimes moral, sometimes spiritual, sometimes social, sometimes vaguely general, which eludes him teasingly. He gropes for a form, a pattern that can give relevance to his actions and coherence to his thoughts and feelings. His love for order clashed with the disorderliness of his life-style; his adoration of "ideals," clashed with his freaked temperament; as a result, these conflicts do not allow him to live up to his own expectations; his sense of purity and his proclivity for the profane — all these qualities create an unhappy situation in his psyche and wear him to a frazzle.

The third category, the Compassionate characters, is very frugally introduced into the arena of action. Strictly speaking they are neither predators nor victims; they are noble witnesses, though their compassionate nature gives them an appearance of partiality for the Fugitive protagonists. Hannah Jelkes in *The Night of the Iguanas* is the paradigm of this type. Shannon calls her "Thin-Standing-Up-Female-Buddha." She tells Shannon in Act 4: "Nothing human disgusts me, unless it is unkind, violent." She understands people, so she forgives them. Laura in *The Glass Menagerie*, Stella in *A Streetcar*, Blackie in *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore*, Carol in *Orpheus Descending*, Aunt Nonnie in *The Sweet Bird of Youth*, Doctor Cukrowicz in *Suddenly Last Summer*, Leonard in *Tokyo Hotel*, Bertha in *I Rise in Flames*, Monk in *Confessional*, Father de Leo in *The Rose Tattoo*, Old Man in "The Strangest Kind of Romance" and The Writer in "The Lady of the Larkspur Lotion" are such Hannah-like, Horatio-like characters who cling to those bedeviled *Fugitives* with love, sympathy, candor and quiet understanding. They give us an attitude to reconsider human possibilities and weaknesses. The presence of such characters is the sound of water beneath the desert bed of Williams' bizarre sensationalism and perversions. This probably helps Christine Day (1978:xii). to discover in Williams "a tenderness towards humanity, a sympathy for human frustration that, perhaps, can result only from a personal understanding of human weaknesses." Day describes Williams as "a distiller of complexities of human nature" and discovers in him a "realism/idealism dichotomy."

The *Compassionate* characters are what Williams wishes his audience should be; they think what Williams wants his readers and spectators should think while reading or watching his plays. They are to his plays as Horatio is to Hamlet. They share with the *Fugitives* their sensibility, their inner conflicts, and their refusal of the status quo. Their cool and reflective temperament, their profound sympathy, their love for humanity, their capacity to accept defeat with fortitude often disarms antagonism. Such qualities appear more radiant when they are projected against a backdrop of cruelty and crudity of the *Naturalizers* and their miserable victims. Their very presence not only proves Williams' consummate theatricality and attitude towards a segment of population who, though they do not feel at home in a mindless set-up, are capable of retaining sanity and warmth of love for their fellow sufferers, but also infinitely enriches his plays.

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Finding their own voice: Women Writers and Directors of Indian Theatre

Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee

Indian theatre tradition goes back to the 1st century B.C. However there were hardly any women dramatists to speak of before the 19th century. Because of socio-cultural milieu, women did not, or could not contribute much in theatre in ancient India as writer or director or even as actor. The few contributions they have had, has not been properly documented. Almost the same situation existed in other genres of literature.

Things began to change from 19 Century.

During 19th century many female authors carved out an important place for themselves in the genre of fiction and poetry: the stage remained largely closed to them. Women started contributing (or their contribution began to be recorded) in the genre of theatre only from late 19 Century. It gained in significance with time. And, interestingly it was more pronounced in regional theatre.

In early twentieth century Balamani Ammal, a former devadasi led her own troupe consisting only of women who needed shelter, that travelled all over the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The director and male impersonator – R. Nagarathnamma followed suit, forming an all-female Kannada company in 1958. (1)

Talking about the writing of plays, the earliest plays by women were composed in Bengali, Urdu and Marathi language. Swarnakumari Devi (1855-1932) and Rasheed Jahan (1905-52) highlighted social evils through their Urdu and Bengali plays respectively. The pioneer lawyer, Cornelia Sorabji (1866- 1954), wrote the first drama in English by an Indian woman, *Gold Mohur Time* (1930), a parable play that she succeeded in publishing from London. Bharati Sarabhai's socialistic *The Well of the People* (in verse, 1943) and *Two Women* (prose, 1952) followed.

The numbers increased appreciatively after Independence. The issues raised amaze by their range with regard to women's experiences. Important women dramatists include Mahasweta Devi, Nabaneeta Dev Sen, and Saonli Mitra (Bengali); Dhiruben Patel and Varsha Adalja (Gujarati); Mannu Bhandari, Kusum Kumar, Mridula Garg, Shanti Mehrotra, and Mrinal Pande (Hindi); Malatibai Bedekar, Mukta Dikshit, Tara Vanrase, Jyoti Mhapsekar, Sushma Deshpande, and Prema Kantak (Marathi); Manjit Pal Kaur (Punjabi); Ambai and Mangai (Tamil); Volga and Vinodini (Telugu); Jameela Nishat (Urdu). Sanghamitra Mishra and Nibedita Jena (Odia). Dina Mehta is among the best known of those writing in English, addressing various themes on *Mythmakers; Tiger, Tiger; Sister Like You; When One plus One Makes Nine*; and the most celebrated, *Brides Are Not for Burning* and *Getting Away with Murder*. In 1989, Bilkiz Alladin dramatized the historical romance of the British Resident in Hyderabad, James Kirkpatrick,

with the beautiful Khairunnissa as *For the Love of a Begum*, which revealed the interface of the Raj and harem politics.

The new millennium opened with great promise. Manjula Padmanabhan shot to fame with her award-winning *Harvest*, followed by *Lights Out*, *Hidden Fires*, and *Mating Season*. Poile Sengupta wrote some fascinating plays, like *Mangalam* and *Keats Was a Tuber*. Hardly a domain of life is left untouched by these playwrights, who offer a variety of analyses of the position of women, exploration of female subjectivity, and different strategies that need adoption to negotiate social change. Their work and voice ask for reformulation of conventional paradigms and meaningful social intervention, the reconsideration of historical knowledge and the re-examination of the basic premises of traditionally organized systems of knowledge about social and literary dynamics. In doing so, they shape a new dramaturgy—a feminist theory of theatre that finds unacceptable the notions of Aristotelian catharsis and *Bharata's* rasa as the feelings aroused in viewers. The plays upset the equilibrium, provoke, and demand response from an audience that will not expect entertainment but will participate in the dialectics since the issues concerning women and children are of the kind that have invariably been and continue to be sidestepped and neglected by society.

Happily, the emergence of women directors as individual cultural producers with gendered perception, innovative semiotics, and sensitive treatment of social issues, has opened up the field to accommodate women's experiences and viewpoints as well as re-present, with gender-sensitive treatment, texts by male playwrights. This is of utmost importance as far as the impact and consolidation of women-centred theatre in India is concerned because theatre as a patriarchal hegemony is quite capable of absorbing female texts, nullifying their cutting edge, and even turning "feminine concerns" into new commodities for male consumption.

Talking about the women theatre directors, Dina Gandhi-Pathak, Shanta Gandhi, Sheila Bhatia, Vijaya Mehta, Rekha Jain, and Joy Michael were the pioneering directors, succeeded by such innovative creators as Kirti Jain, Anuradha Kapur, Amal Allana, Neelam Man Singh Chowdhry, Usha Ganguli, Sohag Sen, Tripurari Sharma, Anamika Haksar, Anjana Puri, B. Jayashree, Maya Rao, Rati Bartholomew, Nadira Zaheer Babbar, and Vinapani Chawla. Younger talents like Robijita Gogoi, Shailaja J., Jayati Bose, Rourkela based Nibedita Jena, Bhubaneswar based Bhaswati Basu and Balasore based Sasmita Rana to name a few, are forging new idioms.

From the 1980s onwards, we find the emergence of a host of women

playwrights and directors populating the list of practitioners in Indian theatre, which has traditionally been a male preserve. Their plays strive to present, amid the varied women experiences which is not devoid of struggles against domination, Indian women's hopes and aspirations, their fulfilments or frustrations, subject to the conditions they live in. These can be further correlated with the lived experiences of the women playwrights and directors themselves. In order to dramatize these issues effectively, they make use of history, mythology or ancient accounts of life and society, by way of reinterpreting them from women's point of view. They have consistently used folk themes to their own advantage, and used drama as an effective medium to analyze socio-cultural differences and issues associated with gender discrimination.

Things somewhat changed with women playwright and director's entry into the field of theatre in India, and then took several turns along the way. The first phase was one of the imitations of male dramaturgy – modes of representation and theatre practice, which earned the women theatre practitioners some recognition from male theatre critics, practitioners and the audience. The second phase can be described as women practitioners' critical sensitivity towards the male theatre traditions and the third phase has begun with the articulation of the women-centric concerns, where the women playwrights and directors are not just exploring the nuances and ramifications of women experiences and desires but also celebrating their differences. The 'womanist' dramaturgy, thus evolved, is neither the outright rejection of traditional theatre forms because they also can be used to present the nuanced locations of women in the complex Indian contexts, nor is it the merely experimental theatre forms and non-linear plays as exemplary of women's theatre. It is as, Helene Keyssar says, projecting the 'consciousness' of women as women and what it means to be in the position of the 'subject', while being also aware of the otherness. Hence, the 'womanist' dramaturgy emerges as the shift in stance, where it is not dependent on the patriarchal recognition or identity. (2)

I strongly feel women playwrights directors in India have come full circle. Women theatre is not only focusing on traditionally women-centric subjects. This, I believe is good. Women directors and playwrights are transcending their gender-related fixation and looking at issues and events from a more open, and should I say humanistic perspective.

Endnotes

(1) http://www.indianetzone.com/59/role_women_indian_theatre.htm

(2) **A Theatre of their Own: Indian Women Playwrights and Directors in Perspective** Pinaki Ranjan Das *State/University Junior Research Fellow Department of English, University of North Bengal*, on adaptations of the plays written by the male playwrights. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 11, Ver. VII (Nov. 2014), PP 57-60 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. www.iosrjournals.org*

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Delectation of Dramatic Delight-Revisiting Bharata's *Rasa*– Theory

Dr. Chitta Ranjan Kar and Sanjeet Kumar Das

Every theatre-going person has a specific purpose to attain while going to a theatre. He/She may get some sort of pastime, restfulness, entertainment, pleasure, instruction, relaxation, etc. getting rid of pain, misery, fatigue, sorrow, fear, anguish, etc. This can also be done by singing, reading a book of interest, gossiping, walking on a landscape, painting, dancing, playing, etc. but, truly speaking, the enjoyment cultivated by viewing a play on stage is unique and unparalleled. This paper aims at fathoming the sublimity and subtlety of this dramatic delight keeping, especially, in view the *Rasa*-Theory propounded by Bharata (200 B.C.).

Both Bharata in our Indian tradition and Aristotle in the Greek tradition have the same view on drama as the best among performing arts. Why is it so? It is because, as Bharata says, "There is hardly any knowledge, any actor's craft, any love, any fine art, any design, in which art, love of emotion are interconnected, any activity, that will not be seen in this *nāṭya*." (cf. Devy, 2011: p.5). Aristotle also recognizes the importance of drama as the best poetic form: "In drama, the poetic imitation of life attains its perfect form – the idea of imitation in its more rudimentary sense is at once apparent" (Butcher, 1895).

A treatise on dramaturgy, "The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is a compendium of performed arts: drama, music, and dance. It presents in a great wealth of detail descriptions of the prevalent modes of these art performances, and the extraordinary precision with which the multiple facets of these arts have been defined and analysed is indicative of the sophistication of the art-practices as well as art-criticism of Bharata's age. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* was used through the fifteen hundred years of Sanskrit Literary thought as the bedrock of literary theory. Whether it was Abhinavagupta, Mammata, or Vishwanath, discussing poetry and literature during the subsequent centuries, they inevitably turned to Bharata's formulations as the polar star of Indian aesthetics (cf. Devy, 2011: p.3)

In dealing with various aspects of drama, namely *rasa* (rapture, delight), *bhāva* (being), *abhinaya* (acting), *dharmi* (actor), *vṛtti* (mode), *pravṛtti* (local/regional/conventional mode of appearance), *siddhi* (accomplishment), *svara* (tones, notes), *ṛtyodya* (musical instruments), *gāṇa* (accompanists), *raṅga* (stage, theatre), Bharata assumes *rasa* as the most prominent and dominant factor and announces the theory (known as the *Rasa-Theory*) as follows:

"*tatra rasaneva tavadābhivyakhyama.*

na hi rasante kashchidārtha pravartate.

tatra ibhāvānubhāvavyabhichārisaṅgyogadrāsanishpatti'

i.e. first and foremost we will elucidate *rasa*, (since) there is no meaning bereft of *rasa*. There (in the spectator/ reader/ hearer) *rasa* is aroused after the harmonious relationships of the determinant(s) with the accompanying constituents and the inconsistent states of mind. Thus, the term *rasa* has a twofold significance: it means the 'aesthetic content; of the art-form and also 'aesthetic relish' that the spectator enjoys (Bhatt, G.K. *Bharata Nāṭya-Manjari 1975*). Hence the genesis of the *rasa-sūtra* may be three-fold:

1. What is *rasa*? (What is it that is transformed into *rasa*?)

2. How is *rasa* created?

iii. Who enjoys *rasa*?

The first question is concerned with the meaning and nature of *rasa*. Bharata himself raises this question as:

"*rasa iti kaṁ padārthaṁ? uchyate- āsvadyamaṇatvat,*"

(i.e. What is *rasa*? It is said: What is tasted is *rasa*.)

Abhinavagupta, a commentator of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, clearly explains

as the 'poetic meaning' is *rasa*: "tatkovyortho rasa."

The poetic meaning which is suggestive in nature ultimately evokes aesthetic pleasure in the spectator. By 'aesthetic' is meant the beautiful in the mind, but "...in Indian theories of art and literature, the states of mind, the emotional states, *bhavas* constitute the core aesthetic experience ... if the art/ literary composition succeeds in giving enjoyment by evoking some state(s) of mind, then the work is aesthetically satisfactory. Beauty in fact is secondary- the evocation and communication of a state of mind is judged successful if it *moves* the reader/hearer and affects him deeply, in which case the work of art is beautiful"(Kapoor : P.96-97).

What is it that is transformed into an aesthetic pleasure? There are basically eight permanent emotional states inherent in all humans. It is this permanent emotion that gets transformed into *rasa*. The permanent or foundational/emotional states are as follows:

<u>Emotions</u>	<u>Rasa</u>
<i>rati</i> (passion)-	<i>raga</i> (erotic),
<i>utsaha</i> (energy)-	<i>veera</i> (heroic),
<i>jugupsa</i> (revulsion)-	<i>beevasa</i> (disgust),
<i>krodha</i> (anger)-	<i>raudra</i> (wrathful),
<i>hasa</i> (fun, humour)-	<i>hasya</i> (comic),
<i>vismay</i> (wonder)-	<i>adbhuta</i> (amazing),
<i>bhaya</i> (fear)-	<i>bhayanaka</i> (fearful)
<i>oka</i> (grief)-	<i>karuna</i> (compassionate)

In addition to these eight, there is one more *rasa* known as *anta* (quietist).

The second question is very pertinent and is two- dimensional: One, from the viewpoint of the actor(s) and two, from that of the spectator(s). Not only in both the actor and the spectator is it created and relished but also by the poet himself/herself while creating the work of art. Bharata explains it as the *vibhava* (determinant, stimulant, instrument, cause)– the main component carries on as well as arouses (stirs) the *sthayi bhava* (permanent emotion) in the actor by means of the consequents *anubhavas* (*sattvika*- mental, *vachika*- verbal, *kayika*- physical, and *aharya*- attiral) i.e. the realization of the specific emotions. The *vibhava* and the *anubhavas* are accompanied by the transient emotions (*vyabhicharibhavas*).^[1]

"The *vyabhicharins* are so called because they (the transient emotional states) move (*charanti*) prominently towards (*abhi* : *abhimukhyena*) creating the poetic sentiments in a variety of ways (*vi* : *vividham*). Equipped with the acting based on speech, body and concentrated mind, these lead

or carry the spectator, in actual dramatic performance, to the poetic sentiments; hence they are called *vyabhichārins*." (cf. Devy, P.12).

The emotional process of decontextualisation of the *vibhava*, *anubhava*, and *vyabhichāribhava* combined with the *sthoyi bhava* can be illustrated with an example from the *Abhijñānashakuntalam* by Kalidasa. The king Dushyanta, in Act III, (Vasudeva, 2006) sees the damsel Shakuntala with her companions Anusuya and Priyamvada in the hermitage of Kanva. She is watering the plants and all of a sudden a bee assails her. Dushyanta steps forward for her rescue and both getting tempted towards each other fall in love (*sthoyibhava*) Dushyanta and Shakuntala are the *ā lambana* and *āraya vibhava* (determinants) vice-versa because they carry the permanent emotions; the beautiful garden in solitude is the *uddipanavibhava*, (stimulant) because it stimulates and favours the emotions to accelerate. The amorous conversations taking place between Dushyanta and Shakuntala and also between her companions, body gestures– reddening of eyes, smile, shyness, feigning anger, pretext, and the attires– are all the *anubhavas*; (consequents) and *chapatā* (unsteadiness), *austukya* (impatience), *moha* (delusion of mind) in both Dushyanta and Shakuntala merging with love are the *vyabhichāribhavas* (transients).

Now the question arises how it is possible for the actors and spectators to relish the same pleasure as the fictional characters Dushyanta and Shakuntala might have done (in the poet's mind). Usually the audience is of variegated classes-high, middle, low with different tastes. The solution to this question is that everybody relishes this pleasure according to his/her capacity and interest as well as his/her relations and experiences of real life the traces (*saṅskāras*) of which are undoubtedly in their minds. It is blissful experience of delight as the outcome of harmonization in all the components mentioned in the *Rasa*-Theory.

Bhattanayaka, a commentator of Bharata's *Rasa-Sūtra*, says that the proper use of language in drama is responsible for the delectation of *rasa* (rapture, delight) through *sādhārikarāṇa* (generalization, impersonalisation, transpersonalisation, or harmonization) which gives the same taste to experience the pleasure as did the author and the actor. According to Ananda K. Coomarswamy "The concept of *sādhārikarāṇa* results in sublimation and extension of consciousness" (cf. Pathak, p.70)

The process of generalization is thus an attempt of objectification of a subjective experience for which all the three subjects – the author, the actor, and the spectator – are equally responsible. In our Indian tradition

(although less important in the Greek tradition), the spectator is an integral part of theatre. (No doubt, this is a film era where impossible things can be shown in a better way, but what is more important in theatre is that there is reciprocity between the actors and the audience which is not possible in a film.) This is attested by the mention of 'tatra' in the *rasa-sūtra* as well as 'sumanasa' (Bharata's term), 'sahodaya' (Rajashekhara's term), and 'rasika' (Bhoja's term). Thus, the answer to the third question as who tastes or relishes the pleasure is the responsive spectator/reader/hearer.

In conclusion, in real life whatever experiences of love, worries, anger, disgust, ridicule humour, fear, pity, etc. one undergoes, the traces or predispositions (*saṁskāras*) are left in the unconscious mind. These traces become manifest when they come in contact with pertinent experience (of an actor on stage, for example), then the viewer's individuality weakens and his/her consciousness merges in the universal experience (a state of sublimity resulting in *rasa/ānanda*-delight (cf. Kapoor, p.114). This reminds us of Aristotle's *catharsis* which is nothing but purgation or purification of human mind. (cf. Blamires, p.9).

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patita pābana swāmi or madhusādana."

–Harivansha.

Achutyananda Dash, the poet of Pañcasakha age, had given form to a noble poetic consciousness, addressing Lord Jagannath. In it he has proved that Lord Jagannath and His temple is universal, his doors are open for all, irrespective of class, and religion. He is the savior of all. Lord Jagannath is of all and all are his, irrespective of class, creed and religion. In the past, he had represented the human race keeping himself above all geographical and social differences. Historical evidence says that many preachers of various religions, attracted by this Lord of *Niñcaā (Puri)* refined their religious sensibilities by coming and staying in this holy place. People from all over India have regarded Puri as the holiest of places till the late 20th century. But today it seems that the greatness and grandeur of both Lord Jagannath and his abode Puri is in shatters. Greed, inhumanity, selfishness, and cunningness have taken the place of the past greatness and noble thoughts. Nationwide it has become a matter of discussion and criticism in the media. The administration and priests are supposed to be responsible for it. For the last few years these indisciplines were visible in special festivals (Car Festival, Naba kabāra etc.) and rituals of Lord Jagannath. Because during these periods devotees, from all over the world come to see Lord Jagannath and fulfill their wishes. The love and adoration of the devotees towards the Lord make them vulnerable to the mental, economical and physical exploitation during their religious practices. This has not only damaged the reputation of the Lord but has caused the loss of love and faith of devotees from other states of India towards Lord Jagannath. Today Jagannath consciousness has sunk into a very distressed condition.

If we analyse the different ages of Odia literature like the Early age, Middle age, and Modern age, we can see the deep liking and interest with which the literary multitude has depicted the grandeur of Lord Jagannath in their works. He has taken incarnation for safe-guarding Truth, Virtue, Justice, humanity and most importantly for the liberation of mankind. Such literary creation on Lord Jagannath has added to the prosperity of odia literature. In literary works like fictions, plays, poetry and prose, the topic of Lord Jagannath remains an integral context even in the modern age. Here too the literary discourse renders importance to the generosity and magnanimity of Lord Jagannath. One such literary creation is the play, "Bandiāwā Biwāpati" (the Lord of Universe in the prison cell) (Pub. 2012) by Niladri Bhusan Harichandan (1946-). In this work he has presented the many problems of the devotees facing in the premises of the temple.

themselves as the live Gods or the incarnations of Lord Jagannath. They say that if the untouchables enter the temple then it will get impure. The idol would get impure and so as the food. When the legacy of Dasa Bhoi aware us about the entrance to the temple, the temple administration and Govt. have taken all favor of the gullible Brahmins. That is what the playwright has mentioned in his play. The complexities that the play reflects are the inactiveness of Govt, and the superstitious incivility of the priests. Strong willpower, strict implementation of the laws/rules by the government and the humbleness of the worshipers are needed for preventing such nuisance. It is there in the *Laxmi Purāna*, that Goddess Laxmi had taken rice in the house of an untouchable. Instead of respecting and promoting the ideals of our great Lords they are displaying their mean thinking. They have been doing all these for their self satisfaction and dominance. In actuality it should not happen. For their indecency both Jagannath culture and Odia culture are blamed. Jagannath is the symbol of the Aryans and Non-Aryans getting one. The God of a sovereign religion. This tradition and custom is in practice since time immemorial. For a few selfish priests and politicians, a great religion and its God have become mean. A reformation should be brought to this tradition. As a whole the playwright Niladri Bhusan has felt such complexity for the last few years. The news and criticism about the conflict between the priests, the devotees and the administration has been witnessed. The intensity of these conflicts touches its peak during the Car festival. The priests and other servants, (worshipers) try to take advantage of earning for the whole year during this festival. The politicians and administrators also support them. That's the reason they show such indecency both inside the temple and over the Car (Ratha). Very often it is seen that the High Court and Puri *Paikaracharya* needed to interfere and express their view to sort out such shameless issues.

The plot of the play "*Bandi*" is very much based upon the contemporary issue. He has reflected in it the shattered glory of a great culture and this inhuman behavior of the priests. The prejudiced priests have opposed Nira Dash and a foreign researcher of this great culture. At the next level the promoter of the humble Jagannath consciousness, Dasa Bhoi is assassinated by the assassins. Even after much effort from the C.M. and the Mediator Professor there is no change in the scenario. At last, the Great Lord himself is stranded, and not spared of such bestialities. The priests have locked him in the temple. They have made him vulnerable. He is insulted with the rubbish behavior of the priests. His heart is crying, seeing the insanity of them towards his devotees. He is stranded alone on the stage in the last scene of the play.

The Lord of the Universe is in the prison cell. The dialogue he has articulated displays the insanity/cruelty of the priest and the gratitude of the devotees. The playwright has depicted at last the relation between the God and the devotees. The vision of the Lord of this Universe is the solution to the play. If the priest can realize the same then all the conflict in between the God and devotees will come to an end. He is watching his devotees. He has said "I have become restless, let my devotees come to me. They will hold me with all their deeper feelings and emotion. A stream will be created out of streaming team tears of their eyes. I will glow like anything getting a dip in that water. " (P. 51)

In the play Dasa Bhoi has advocated for the entrance of all into the temple irrespective of class, creed and religion. He has called conference and meetings to free the temple from the clutches of the priests. According to Bhoi, the priests are exploiting the devotees with their created superstitions. On the basis of it a huge mob has gathered in front of the temple to rebels against these unlawful priests. To handle such sensitive situation the act 144 is in action. At last the situation comes under control. 218 of the rebels are killed and another 927 are injured by the attack from the alliance of priests and police. Dasa Bhoi is arrested for leading the mob. World renowned writer Nira Dash has informed the C.M. about the indiscipline and irresponsible acts of the temple authorities. She knows that the C.M is valuable to the vote politics and helpless. Still she has braved to Gove the proposal to the C.M. that "She wants to be given the foothills of the Green Mauntain, just: – 1 K.M away from the temple. I am trying to build a temple with the help of the Indians residing abroad and some foreign Jagannath lovers. They have promised me of huge donations.... The temple of sovereignty, whose length, bredth and height would be more than the existing temple. Its (existing temple) art and architecture would be very much followed in building the new temple. A priest would be chosen of the highly knowledgeable, wise men irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The doors of the temple will remain wide open for everybody." (P.34)

Dasa Bhoi and Neera Dash have given up after long struggles with the temple administration and the priests. The supporter assassins of the priests have kidnapped and murdered Dasa Bhoi. The priests have dominated both the public and the authority. They are regulating the temple rituals as usually. Lord has never expressed His wills. He has looked blank since ages, the temple has remained their empire, such is their perception. They have given ultimatum to the authority that if they do not support them then they will lock up temple. All the rituals would be stopped. The idol will remain in darkness. The professor who tried to

prevail and promote the humble and sovereignty of the Great Lord, is threatened and they have maintained their supremacy.

If we look into the past, since mythological age, the notion of untouchability and caste system is very much prevalent in the Indian Society. Such practices centering around God, become horrible at times. In 21st century such discriminations are illogical. Religious reformations are desirable in age of scientific reformations. Unless such conflicts will crop up, both God and his devotees would be insulted. The politicians and administrators would try to take advantage of it. But in reality nobody is paying attention to the great interest of the nation, the God and the culture. Both Puri and Odisha come under harsh criticism due to the conflict between the devotees and the priests. If it continues then never can this land and the culture get liberated and prosper. The play, full of conflict and suspense is well composed from the dramatic point of view. The playwright has been successful in portraying the land of Puri. The Jagannath consciousness is in deprivation in this deprived time. The playwright has done his duty and played his part by attempting to bring a change to the system and a solution to the perennial conflict through this play.

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Application of *Prahllad Natak* in Development: A Study

Dr.Pradosh Kumar Rath

Prahllad Natak: The Origin

Prahllad Natak, also known as Raja Nacha in common parlance is such type of dance which symbolizes the culture of Odia people particularly of Ganjam district of Odisha. This dance is song-based in character which is being played throughout Odisha with different names like Prahallad Natak, Raja Nacha, Nrusingha Avatar, Hiranyaasur Baddha, Stambhabatar and Nrusingha Bheta etc. Its birth is estimated to be during the 1870s in South Odisha particularly in Paralakhemundi region. It was written by one Gourahari Parichha, a dramatist and musician at the Court of King Ramakrushna Chhotray of Jalantara (now in Gajapati district of Odisha). Ramakrushna Chhotray can be regarded as the founder of the Prahallad Natak tradition. The king wrote the script of Raja Nacha which was lost after the end of their dynasty. But it was recovered in 1938 from a library at Madras. After that the script was read all over the state and some people started dramatising it. The important feature of this dance is that some it has similarities with contemporary traditional dances of other states like Ramleela (North India), Krushna Natyam and Mudi yettu (Kerala), Krishna Parijata and Sangya Balya (Karnataka), Dashavatara(Goa) and Nrusingha Leela (Mathura). Though the scripts are different the themes are almost same in all the dances. The scripts are followed according to the books written by the regional writers. Similarly, the Script of Raja Nacha in Ganjam district is imported from the book written by Raja Ram Krushna Chhotray of Jalantara Taluq.

According to the script the Hiranakshya and Hiranyakashipu are two sons born from sage Kashyap and Deeti Devi. Both sons were Rakshasas in character and created havoc in three Puris (mentioned in the Puranas as Swarga, Martya and Patala). Lord Bishnu took the incarnation of Varaha and killed Hiranakshya. It created hatred in the mind of Hiranyakashipu against Lord Bishnu and he worshipped Lord Shiva instead. But his son was reverse to his father and was a staunch worshipper of Lord Bishnu. As a result Hiranyakashipu tried everything to kill Prahallad by following different tricks but fails always with the

interference of Lord Bishnu. Prahallad says that Lord Bishnu is omnipresent and savior of all. Hiranyakashipu, in anger breaks a pillar of his courtyard enquiring whether Lord Bishnu is present there also. To his surprise, Lord Bishnu emerges from that pillar with a new incarnation. It is half man and half-lion, with fire coming out of the mouth and the eyes are burning with anger. It is famous as the Narasingha Avatar of Lord Bishnu. He drags Hiranyakashipu, lays him on his thigh and tears the chest of the Rakshasa.

When shown at the stage the audience becomes still bound. When Lord Narasingha emerges from the pillar the audience starts worshipping the Lord along with Prahallad. Tears come out of their eyes as if they had got the opportunity of watching the Lord in their naked eyes. The characters are so much involved in this drama that they also feel themselves as Gods, goddesses and demons. The supporting staff including the musicians, singers and other staff feel themselves proud to be a part of such a nice religious fervour. The songs are very pleasant to listen which is the combination of Karnataka and Hindustani music. The theme songs and other songs are sung by a group of singers with a leader. The musical instruments include Table, Pakhwaj, Ginni, Harmonium and Madala. The actors also toil hard to perform in front of a large audience during the performance. In the absence of prompting system in front of the audience they have to prepare beforehand. For the purpose the rehearsal procedure starts almost 4-5 months before the stage performance. It is done inside village community halls known as *Akharas*. Even after public performance they restart rehearsing for the next season.

The Raja Nacha is performed all the season but rainy season. Due to incessant rain the stage performance is stopped for four months. The Nacha is performed during the other days. The time limit of a single performance is not fixed. Sometimes it takes 4-5 days for a complete show. The audience come and go according to their convenience, but the actors continuously perform the show. But they also take rest for a short period of time during day time. The normal period of a single show is 12 hours. The costumes are made according to the characters. The costume of Lord Narasimha is so heavy that the character feels too much pressure wearing it. The costumes of Raja Nacha resembles that of the costumes used during the *Mughol* period.

The stage is prepared under the open sky. It is the tradition of starting the preparation of the stage with seven wooden plates. At that place the crown of Hiranyakashipu is prepared. It is made at a higher level with wooden steps attached to it. The audience sit in front of the crown of

Hiranyakashipu as if sitting at the court of the King. At the beginning a group of singers inaugurate the Nacha with ode to Lord Ganesha. The Nacha is anchored by one Sutradhar who narrates the story throughout the show. He works as a string to the characters. The background music is an important aspect of Raja Nacha. The Mukhaveena is completely used for the music. The play starts with the character of Lord Ganesh who sings song and blesses the audience. Then King Hiranyakashipur comes with his ministers and courtesans. Then comes Prahallad with Chanting mantras of Sri Hari (Lord Vishnu). After that the show runs with arguments and counter arguments from Hiranyakashipu and Prahallad.

Lord Nrusingha plays a special role in this Nacha. His costumes, mask and other belongings are regarded as godly and worshipped before the show. Before Lord Nrusingha emerges from the tomb his mask is worshipped before it is worn by the character who plays Lord Nrusingha. The crown of Hiranyakashipur and Prahallad is almost 3 feet in length. The audience watch the incarnation with much affection and devotion. When the Lord gets angry the audience remain spellbound with fear and apprehension. Even the characters are too much involved in the play. The character who acts for Lord Nrusingha is so much involved in the play that he feels himself as Lord Nrusingha and sometimes runs after Hiranyakashipu to kill him. He has to be kept in control by a group of people.

Communication through *Prahllad Natak*

Prahllad Nataka or Prahllad Drama is a stylized form of Oriya theatre widespread in Ganjam district, southern Orissa. The tradition is not very old. In the late nineteenth century, Raja Ramakrishna Chhotaraya, an Oriya feudatory ruler of Jalantar, conceived the first performatory edition. The first text was written in Sanskritized Oriya by Gopinath Parichha. He was a poet-dramatist who received generous patronage from the Raja. As a gesture of gratitude he not only dedicated the work to the ruler but also ascribed its authorship to him. Within a few years of its birth, Prahllada Nataka became so popular that it inspired rulers of neighbouring princedoms to prepare other versions. No matter which version, the plot remains the same, based on the myth of Narasimha, Vishnu's man-lion avatar. Thus Prahllada Nataka has only one play in its repertoire.

Similarities of make-up and costume suggest that Terukkuttu of Tamil Nadu and Yakshaganam of Andhra Pradesh influenced Prahllada Nataka. But the theatrical style is close enough to Suanga and Yatra of Orissa. It takes place as arena theatre, presented open-air and on level ground sometimes temple precincts. But a must for performance is a five- or six-tiered wooden platform some 2 m high. The top has an area of about 2 m

by 1 m, on which rests the throne of Hiranyakasipu. Hiranyakasipu was a demon whom Narasimha kills at the end. The platform is usually collapsible, easily erected before and dismantled after a show. The acting area of about 4 sq. m is enclosed with ropes in front of the platform. About 6 m to the left from the platform there stands a hollow structure representing the pillar Hiranyakasipu smote. The accompanying musicians take their places to the right of the acting area, close to the platform. The band normally comprises three instruments. The names can be mentioned as a harmonium, a double-ended drum called mardal, and gini i.e. a pair of small cymbals. A few groups have started using violin and trumpet, adding a touch of glamour, but actually enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the music. This is the life-breath of Prahlada Nataka. It not only provides the base but also determines the dramatic structure. Both vocal and instrumental music at appropriate points intensify the impact. Dialogue winged with music takes the emotive intent farther than realistic delivery. Prahlada Nataka draws heavily upon traditional Odissi music, with over 100 songs. Each of these songs set to a raga and tala.

Since music dominates that the director must be a good singer. More often than not, he serves as the lead vocalist i.e. a 'singer'. This is not quite a character in the drama, yet the pivot on which the performance turns. Primarily, he leads the chorus, but acts also as interpreter, commentator, and conductor of the band. Although, usually, he does not wear make-up or formal costume, he has specific songs and dialogue. He sings eulogies of gods and narrates events preceding a dramatic situation or pertinent to the plot but not enacted. At times, he speaks a character's asides and comments on his or her mood and thoughts. He is entrusted with the responsibility of explaining to lay spectators the cryptic, pithy lines. His role resembles that of the Sanskrit sutradhara. Although songs predominate, there are also long prose passages, besides prose dialogue linking the sung passages. The demonic role of Hiranyakasipu is the most demanding. The way he goes up and down the tiered platform with vigorous dance-like movements is indeed a treat for the eyes. The audience enjoys it a lot. More than one group at times, hires a professional actor who excels in this part. Though Narasimha appears only in the last, climactic scene and is seen onstage for only around fifteen minutes, his is also a difficult role. The actor fasts on performance days. Putting on the lion mask and tapered nails simulating claws, he stands amazingly transformed. The choice of an actor for this role is made with much care.

In some villages like Bokagaon near Chhatrapur, Narasimha's mask is worshipped in a temple and believed to have divine powers.

Hiranyakasipu wears no mask, but his face is painted bright red to suggest ferocity. His moustache consists of thick ropes of black thread twined with golden zari or brocade and runs across the full expanse of the cheeks down to the nape of the neck. There it is tied in a knot. Both he and Prahlada wear colourful skirts and huge magnificently crafted headgear embellished with glittering glass beads. The major male characters sport shoulder decorations and artificial ornaments. Apart from female and minor characters, all are costumed in such an exaggerated manner that they seem masked head to foot. In keeping with the stylized make-up and dress, the acting is choreographic, having a strong dose of dance. Prahlada Nataka is so popular in Ganjam that there are now more than thirty troupes. But this should be mentioned that all of these are not equally good. Simanchal Patro made a name as Hiranyakasipu, and Raghu Nath Satapathy as a singer-musician. To watch a performance by a really powerful unit is an unforgettable experience. Tuneful music, operatic songs, poetic dialogue, dramatic dance, vigorous acrobatics, stylized mime, elaborate spectacle, colourful costumes, and sumptuous decorations all combine to induce a hypnotic state of consciousness between wakefulness and dream. All these qualities have made Prahlada Nataka a unique one.

Application of *Prahlada Natak* for Development

Traditional media is otherwise called as participatory media because in this form the people can participate in a discussion or programme.

Traditional media is the oldest media which is being existed since the civilization itself. Its familiarity with the people makes it more powerful.

Participatory Approach to Communication

While most of the models of communication are based on an approach to using Mass Media for development the application of a cultural art form like Prahlada Natak would require a participatory approach to development. The communication process in development is heavily laden with technological and semantic noises or barriers to effective communication which may may be nullified in using a local art form with which the target audience i.e. the villagers can relate & identify.

Let us take look at the conventional model of communication:-

Thus, we can see that Noise may play a spoilsport in achieving the desired result or response from the audience. The factors range from lack of electricity to lack of media literacy. This is where Communication for Development in a Participatory Approach can be useful where live involvement and participation of the audience is very important. People can simultaneously enjoy the performance value of Prahlada Natak, a form

well known to them and also seamlessly receive the messages of development embedded in the art form. An ideal model for this kind of participatory communication for development may be found in the following design:-

Conclusion: The Importance of Folk Media

Every country in the world has its own variety of folk dances. Even in civilised nations wherein highly developed classical and modern dances with complicated technique are to be found, folk dance and music also play an important part in the life of the people, because while the former can cater only to the artistic taste and needs of a few, the latter are a matter of necessity to the masses at large. In short the latter have been from time immemorial the mainstay of the cultural pastime of the vast masses of people. India is no exception to the rule. From the earliest time a rich variety of folk dances has been in vogue in almost all parts of India. Classical and folk arts have always been influencing each other and some of the chief systems of classical dance in our country have been developed in their present forms from folk arts. Folk dance is always used for social as well as secular integration. All dances have been intended and utilized in India not merely for serving as a cultural pastime but also for refining and ennobling at large an abiding faith in and love of God, a sense of beauty and good conduct in life. Folk dances in India have always had a spiritual purpose and religious background and through them the fundamental principles and philosophical truths of the dominant religions in our country have been enabled to permeate into the minds of the masses.

So the government and the other organization should use folk media, folk songs and dances to involve the common people in different activities. The use of traditional media will very much be helpful for the rural people who constitute 70% of the total Indian population. The important feature of folk media is that the information sent, directly reaches the heart of the audience. As women are tortured more in rural areas, the use of traditional media is very much helpful in bringing development to the womenfolk. For this purpose the government should chalk out an appropriate plan to use folk media in empowering women and uplifting their living standards.

It is examined and proved that traditional media is the most suitable media for development particularly for India. Thus we can achieve development if we can utilize the content and message of the traditional media in a systematic and meaningful manner. According to media specialists there are two types of traditional media. i.e. conservative and

liberal media. The contents of conservative media can not be changed. But the contents of liberal media can be substituted with development messages. Raja Nacha is one of such types of liberal media where the messages of Indian development can be added and can be disseminated to the people. It can be utilized as a mediated communication for development. Without changing the theme , we can add some development messages during the song time like Pulse Polio Immunisation Camapign, Malaria Eradication Programme, AIDS Awareness etc. thus it can be concluded that theatre is not meant for entertainment only it can be a powerful weapon for development in developing nations.

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Experiment with Folk Elements: A study in Modern Odia Drama

Dr.Alok Baral

Introduction

The comprehensive aspects related to human life bears resemblance to folk elements, viz. folk religion, folk belief, folk literature, folk medicine, folk art etc. Even acclaimed mainstream literature cannot claim that it is free from influence of folk elements. The stalwart creators of literature consciously or unconsciously have used elements of folk in their creations. The cultural heritage is thus reflected in the academic works of an author through the use of folk elements. This particular 'reflection' forms the basis of significance of the created literature. Despite of several disparities, the relationship between folk elements & modern Odia drama, specially in recent times have gained a strong bondage starting from folk ballad , folk tale and folk songs, proverbs & folk-sayings, folk language, folk customs & beliefs have been assimilated in theatre.

Odia Drama: An Anthropological Study

Many plays have been written based on regional & colloquial languages and also on the basis of partial usage of regional languages. Aswinikumar Ghosh's '*Samaleswari*' (1925); Jointly written by Shibaprasad Mishra,

Krushnaprasad Mishra & Murariprasad Mishra's *'Pranayaballari Kabya Nataka'* (1954-un published) & *'Akbar Ray'* (1955-un published); Kali Charan Patnaik's *'Hirakhand'* (1960) contains use of 'Sambalpuri' or regional language of western Orissa. Dhaneswar Patnaik's *'Adivasi'* contains a fusion of tribal language with Sambalpuri language. Sankar Tripathy's *'Shuniba Heu E Kahani'*, there are characters like *Saragu, Shanta, Chandu, Chari* etc. who use language of western Odisha similarly Gopal Chottaray's *'Ghataka'* (1961), Pramod Tripathy's *'Honu Upadraba Sambad'*, Sadananda Agrawal's *'Rakat'* etc. have used Sambalpuri /Koshali or the colloquial language of Western Odisha.

Among these plays, Sambalpuri and Koshli are the two frequently used regional language. The other colloquial languages have not been used in writing of plays. So, the first two languages mentioned find place in these plays – *'Gountia Babu'* (1957) is the first property written play in sambalpuri language based on submerged valley of Hirakud dam area. It was first time played at Sambalpur by Chitrotpala Kala Parisada. The play was jointly written & enacted by Murari Prasad Mishra, Shiba prasad Mishra and Krishna prasad Misra; Later this trend was followed to write many were plays like – Manglu Charan Biswal's *'Lura', 'Bhukha', 'Barua', 'Ulgulan', 'Ma Samlei', 'Bhutiari Hothiar', 'Udla Patar Budla Danga', 'Haran Paap', 'Surendra Sai', 'Chhaeli'* etc. Sadanand Agarwal's *'Rokat'* centres around communal harmony is a famous play. Shradhakar Supakar's, *'Kasturi Mruga'*, Sankar Prasad Mishra's *'Ukia'*, Satyaranjan Behera's *'Hejla Phagun', 'Kiria'*, Panchanan Mishra's *'Entabi Hesi'*, Mitrabhanu Gountiar's *'Bhai Juntia'*, Dilip kumar Behera's, *'Bharatbasi ki Jai'*, Dhanaputi Mahapatra's *'Dalkhai'*, Binod kumar Pasayat's, *'Ukhi', 'Muin Nai Maren'*, Ashok kumar Baral's *'Anchal'*, Jagadananda Churia's *'E Jugar Gandhi', 'Raja Praja', 'Neta Janata', 'Thaka Mana Chala Jeeba'*, Atuly Pujari's *'Karamu'*, Atal Bihari Panda's *'Lenjhatar'*, *'Dandua'*, Ashok Kumar Bohidar's *'Pushpuni'* etc. Some of the plays in the above Sambalpuri & Koshli segment have been telecasted and played.

Odia Drama in post colonial period

In post independence period, if we study the drama scenario, following remarks may be observed regarding the use of folk elements:

- Forming plots from folk ballads
- Use of plots from folk tales
- Direct use of folk songs in drama

- Use of rhythm & style of folk songs in drama
- Use of folk sayings like proverb, idioms, riddles etc.
- The experiment of style of folk theatre
- Assimilation of characters from folk drama
- Use of stage craft of folk drama
- Use of folk language & dialect

10) Drama based on tribal groups & tribal life

So many modern dramas are based on the folk tales, folk legends and folk ballads. The use of folk element in modern drama can be categorized into following four types:

1. Complete symbolic representation of drama
2. General conventional story telling
3. Partial symbolic representation
4. Free & open visualization

In this context, the following texts may be discussed-playwright Aswinikumar Ghosh's *Kalapahada*(1920), *Konark*(1927), Adwaita Chandra Mohanty's *Sadhaba Jhia*(1947) & *Chakhi Khuntia*, Purna Chandra Kanungo's *Kala Pahada*(1974), Rajat kumar Kar's *Chakhi Khuntia* (1952), Purna Chandra Mohanty's *Byaghra Ebam Kankana lobhi Pathika Manankara Kahani*(1982), Jadunath Das Mohapatro's *Surjya Mandir*(1962), Ratiranjan Mishra's *Chanchalyakar* (1984), Monaranjan Das's *Kathaghoda* (1973) & *Nandika Kesari*(1985), Bijay Mishra's *Jane Raja Thile* (1982), Niladri Bhusan Harichandan's *Kaluribenta* (1998), Bijaya Satapathy's *Sonita Swakshra*(2000) etc.

Mohanty's *Sadhaba Jhia* is a melancholy tragic adaptation of a folk tale focusing on *Tapoi*. In *Sonita Swakshra* the legendary mythical character '*Khulanasundari*' reflect in new prospect. We see plots revolving around revolutionaries in *Chakhi Khuntia* and *Chandan Hazoori*. There are also socially established mainstream folk characters in modern Odia drama like *Toapoi*, *Chandan Hazoori*, *Kala Pahada* and *Gobinda Chandra*. In Purnachandra's *Kala Pahad* & Rati Mishra's *Chanchalyakar*, we can see the transformation of the historical character '*Kala Pahada*'. The play *Kala Pahada* raises voice against castism albeit in a symbolic manner. Although Manoranjan Das' *Nandika Kesari* was written 58 years after Aswini Kumar Ghosh's *Kesari Gang*(1927), the latter has consciously infused folk elements

in the character of *Nandika* to present it in a new form. The new applications of folk are found in plays like *Konark* and *Surjya Mandir*.

In plays like '*Kalluri Benta*', '*Jane Raja Thile*', '*Byaghra Ebam Kankana lobhi Pathika Mananka Kahani*'(1982)& Rati Ranjan Mishra's '*Sita*'(1983) we can see use of excerpts from folk tales. In some of their plays the playwright intends to spell out new concepts & ideas through superficial use of folk idioms. Excepting Rati Mishra's '*Sita*' this trend prevails in all the other plays. A complete segment of '*Sita*' is actually made based on the idiom of Fairy Tales or '*Pari Kahini*'.

In many cases the playwrights improvise the titles of the plays in a symbolic manner reminiscent of folk element. Aswinikumar Ghosh's '*Maluni*', Manoranjan Das '*Kathoghoda*', Prafulla Rath's '*Saata Tala Pani*' (1978); Pranbandhu Kar's '*Dur Pahada*'; Byomkesh Tripathi's '*Suna Pharua*'; Narsingha Mohapatra's '*Baunsha Rani*' (1969); Ananda Shankar Das's '*Chaka Bhunri*'; Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi's '*Paka Kambala Pota Chhata*'; and '*Hati ku Homeopathy*', Niladri Bhusan Harichandan's '*Manhisira Pasa Na Jaa Danai*'(1985), '*Maharaja Bije Hebe*' (1984), Ratiranjan Mishra's '*Kuachori*'(1977); Shankar Tripathy '*Rabanachhya*' (2002), '*Bagha Bakri Khela*' (2003), Ranajit Pattanaik's '*Gunia Jhadelo Dahani*'(1992); Hrusikesh Panda's '*Bramha Rakshya*' (1997), Dilliswara Moharana's '*Chake Gale Bara Hata*'(2001); Panchanana Patra's '*Ghodamunha*' etc. are prime instances. In this phase, the folk elements have been aptly assimilated in plays '*Sadhaba Jhia*' and '*Chakhi Khuntia*'. In context to *Kalapahada* the theme is woven in a symbolic manner in '*Jane Raja Thile*', '*Kalluri Benta*'. The folk persists partially. The playwrights have given a unique fiction touch to the existing folk psychology.

Experiments in application of folk elements in modern theatre

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The folk drama has influenced modern drama in various ways. Recently importance of modern drama is on a decline which has led the playwrights to revert to folk theatre. Not only in terms of content but the form of folk theatre is also very important.

1. The experiment on the '*style*' and '*form*' of folk theatre.
2. Assimilation of Characters of folk drama in modern theatre.
3. Craft of folk stages in modern drama.

In case of assimilating folk elements into theatre; we see that there are mainly three trends. The stage preparation has relied heavily on the

Director's thoughts. Ghoda Naacha in Kartik Rath's '*Choiti Ghoda*', Daskathia in Subodh Patnaik's '*Ethu Onte*' and Ramesh Panigrahi's '*Mahanatak*', Pala in Bijay Satpathi's '*Ei Je Surjya Uen*', Koraput desia Naacha in Manoranjan Das's '*Nandika Keshari*', Daskathia, Pala & Keertan in Niladri Bhusan Hari Chandan's '*Bhimo Bhoinka Sandhanare*', (1988), etc. have been added with a novelty. Similarly Manoranjan Das's '*Kathghoda*', Ratiranjan Mishra's '*Sita*', Bijay Satpathy's '*Ei Je Surjya Uen*' have been directed with an idiom of '*Jatra*' or traditional musical drama. Ramesh Panigrahi's '*Dhrutarastrara Akhi*' has '*Kandhei Naacha*' (Traditional Puppet Play). The form is used in a completely new pattern.

Ratnakar Choini's '*Mukha*' (1979), '*Asthira Upatyaka*' (1984), Manoranjan Das's '*Shabdaliipi*' (1976), Bijay Mishra's '*Jane Raja Thile*' (1982) etc. has the use of "*Mukha*" or Mask. The mask of a Bull in '*Asthira Upatyaka*'; the mask of a camel in 'Jane Raja Thile', the sutradhara's mask in 'Mukha' and also use of 'Chhou' dance and 'Ram leela' had masks which reflected the folk elements. Off late the playwrights, under the influence of expressionism wanted to show the moral degradation of human character through these masks.

The characters of folk culture have appeared in modern drama basically in three ways:

1. Mythological character of traditional folk Theatre.
2. Traditional characters of social folk drama
3. Characters influenced by Sanskrit Drama.

Ganesh, Shiv- Parvati, Narad, Kali, Durga, Debi etc. have found important roles in modern drama. The folk idioms like Danda, Desia have also found application here; example is appearance of Ganesh in 'Nandika Keshari'.

'Bhalo Lokia', 'Mousa', 'Thentel' (Danda), 'Niyati', 'Dwari', 'Grahaka', 'Sutradhara', 'Bondi', 'Nachnia', 'Gauni' etc. are mediating character of folk theatre; who have newly been placed in modern drama. As a result the paradigm has shifted towards common people. Although, Sutradhar, Nata-nati, Gayak etc. are elements of Sanskrit drama. But when character like 'Niyati' & 'Bibek' have appeared they have come as unique character. Influence of 'Mogal Tamsa' a very much popular folk theatre of Bhadrakh; the character of 'Visti' appears in Odia drama.

Hindi playwright Sarbeswar Dayal Saxena's 'Bakri' when translated to Odia; shows the character of 'Visti'. Independence Odia drama, similar character of Hadi-Hadiani can also be seen. The mediating character appear in a chorus like Greek Theatre. Many modern playwrights bring

these characters and also the stage and they solve many problems. Manoranjan Das's 'Katha Ghoda' director himself appears as 'Sutradhar' in midst of the play. The sutradhar of 'shabdaliipi', 'Banhiman' in beginning of every act the sutradhar enters. The story starts with a song, In 'smruti, Santwana o sunyata', Tapaswini and in 'Mu Dunhe' (1978), the Trutiya Purush; Ratuakar choini's 'Mukha's' sutradhar 'Kalankita Surjya' (1975); sutradhar, 'chanchalyakar'(1984) by Ratiranjan Mishra used two journalist 'Indradhanu' & 'Bijuli'; in 'Sita' play Ghoshak's announcements; Himanshu Bhusan sabat's 'sandhani's sutradhar, Niladri Bhusan's 'kaluri benta's journalist, Bijay satpathy's 'Aei je surjya Uen's 'Shripalia' and 'Gayak'(Daskathia); Manoranjan Das's 'Nandika keshari's Sutradhar; Sandhi, Gayak are few examples of such character; these character relate the stage with the audience. They break stage illusion and impart velocity to the story. These characters blend entertainment with social commitment and make the drama pro- people.

The theatre is performed in open air with minimal settings and costumes. The lighting is often ignored. These forms have been accepted in modern theatre. Many plays are being experimented in 'Mukta Mancha' or open space theatre. The costumes are sometimes very colorful and at times very plaintive. It is being observed that the delivery of various colours of light and the stage is going out of practice. Zone light or full light or Halogens are being used more and more. The efforts to make illusions or obscurity on stage have died down. The need for screen and stage settings are diminishing. Off late street plays have rejuvenated new life onto this new philosophy of theatre many plays are being performed impromptu without rehearsals similar to folk theatre. It seems that these philosophies are in sync with Brecht's concept of 'Epic Theatre' and Badal Sircar's 'Third Theatre'.

The anthropological life of tribal have been portrayed in Dhaneswar patnaik's 'Adivasi'(1961) Balram Mishra's 'Dumba'(1962), Mangalu Charan Biswal's 'Bhukha'. The main essence of these plays has been dwelling into the daily lives of the tribal people. Plays which partially dwell on similar issues are Dhaneswar Patnaik's 'Utha Pacheri' (1959), Akshay Mohanty's 'sambit' (1969). Niladri Bhusan Hari Chandan's 'Munda Upare Chhata', Banabihari Panda's 'Gotie Jhara Phulara Kahani'(1984), Kartik Chandra rath's 'Manshara Phula'(1975); Ratiranjan Mishra's 'Maachha Kandanara Swara'(1996) and more than 30 plays written by Dramatist Subodh Pattanayak for the 'Natya Chetana'(A Theatre group of Odisha); like 'Katha'(1992), 'Bishabazar'(1997), 'Kalapani'(1998), 'Bali'(2001), 'Dhuan'(2005), 'Dhalasuna'(2006), 'Bana'(2009), 'Phula'(2010)etc. and Khetrabasi Manseth's 'Baja Mahuria Baja'(2009), etc.

In the plays '*Adibasi*' the context of *Suakati* village (Keonjhar) and its boy *Parashu*'s life story comes through dialogues written in Tribal dialect. The angst, fears, anger, honesty, simplicity and diversity of life style is reflected in the play. In '*Dumba*' play, the malnutrition and poverty tragedy of a *Kondha* boy called *Dasuru* and his wife Sambhari and also his sister Mushi's situation was well explained. The play '*Bhukha*' is written centered around western Odisha's '*Dom*' or '*Bajaniya*' community . The play was later turned into a film which got critical overseas acclaim. It is a story of an ancient community getting obscure into poverty struggling with modernity. In some plays the tribal historical characters came to the theatre with their tribal anthropological values, like '*Maachha Kandana Swara*'. In this play the *Bhuiyan* tribal protagonist character *Dharanidhar* and his '*Bhuiyan-Meli*' of Kendujhar is reflected with a social value.

In play '*Kaathha*', the present changing scenario was well explained. *Kaathha* (fuel-wood) is a basic need for a tribal people, but the play depicts about the present changing scenario about a tribal woman who is not able to gather some wood for the cremation of her husband. In the play '*Bisha Bazar*', losing all things due to addiction through market available foreign liquor; the socio-cultural problem and conflict regarding stream water and forest land- in the play '*Kalapani*', the panic starvation death in *Gutipada* village and collective opposition of a tribals against government ; in the play '*Bali*', likewise the problem of displacement and oustees among tribals of Sunabeda and Koraput due to industrialization and modernization; in the play '*Dhuan*', the grave suicide cases of cotton farmers of Kalahandi district ; in '*Dhala suna*', and the picture of communal violence and religion conversion of tribal people of Kandhamal ; in the play '*Baja Mahuria Baja*', narrations were quite sensational. Likewise the religious and communal problem was pictured in the play '*Bana*'.

Plays like '*Sambit*', '*Mansharaphula*' , '*Gotie Jhara Phulara Kahani*' , '*Utha Pacheri*' , '*Munda Upare Chhata*' highlight tribal characters but is not essentially about the holistic tribal community .But ,it can't be denied that these plays are based on elements of folk.

Conclusion

Some observation regarding the experiment of folk elements in Theatre – The question which is frequently raised is why do modern dramatists adopt folk elements? Debate continues. The most logical reply to this is that the Playwright makes a conscious effect to bring back the people into the theatre auditorium. But it can't be denied that all the playwrights are not very adopt and committed in adopting folk elements and they end up with artificial masking their plays beneath a false getup of folk elements. It

is also a fact that many modern playwrights, due to their limitations, actually shy away from folk. In order to strip intellectualism from the disgust of modern daily life and out of frustration, the playwrights are searching for a new path. Thus folk elements aided by 'mood' and 'motif' have created a new bridge of communication. The bridge has filled the cultural gap to some extent. This is not total escapism but may be hailed as a successful effort to understand and reflect human values.

The soul and mood of folk, changes very rapidly, for example in '*Dandanata*', where the character is not static but dynamic. No previous preparation is there as people accept '*Danda*' psychologically and vouch on it. It is not defined who will enact which part – one who vows '*Danda*' starts the enactment. It is really a question whether efforts to rehearse '*Danda*' and present it on modern stage will be successful or not?

Questions are being raised that there is not direct correction between the qualities of play with the share of folk elements used in it. So, folk theme and modern theatre should exist as separate entities. There is no harm in inter-relating them but modern theatre should come to common people in its unique form rather than in folk form. Tradition may be colorful but it has to be infused scientifically & artistically in modern creation otherwise the purpose will be defeated. In this context, it may be commented that application of folk should emerge as a social commitment than a mere creative luxury. To wind up, it may be inferred that in recent times, '*Epic Theatre*' or '*Third Theatre*' or '*Total Theatre*', all the ideas have reflected a healthy blend of tradition with modernity. A playwright with his hearty dedication, determination and experimentation – these three things if powerful than any element of theatre will not go waste.

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Crime against Women in India: Can Theatre for Development (TfD)

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&

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Abstract

It is very common that theatre has been used for social progress and for the development of the society. Theatre for development (TfD) includes activists and grass-roots bodies, government and non-government organizations (NGOs), as well as socially-aware theatre groups or individuals. The groups working with women, children, Dalit[2] (Suman K Kasturi 2013:143-152), sex workers, and other marginalized populations – all qualify as practicing theatre for development. "Plurality" is the nature of India. It means people of various cultures, heritage, etc live across the length and breadth of this country. In India, the crime against women (in particular) has been increasing in leaps and bounds, year after year. There is an urgent need to curb the crime against women in contemporary India. "A society that is unable to respect, protect and nurture its women and children loses its moral moorings and runs adrift." (Siddarth Chatterjee 2012:7). Due to the widespread and branched out cultures in India, apart from the involvement of the less educated and rural masses in most of the crimes against women in India, the medium of theatre could alone be very effective in addressing this significant problem. The aim of this paper is to emphasize the role of Theatre for Development in sensitizing the people of India to overcome the problem of increasing crime against women.

Key Words: Theatre for Development (TfD), Satmass Media, Theatre in Education (TIE), Crime, Development Communication, Development Support Communication, India, Communication, Mass Media

1. Introduction

One of the major forms of human communication and expression is the arts. Individuals and groups apply them to explore, express and communicate ideas, feelings and experiences. The purpose of artistic works is to inform, teach, persuade and provoke a meaningful thought. They not only can reproduce and reinforce existing ideas and values, but also challenge them, or offer new ways of thinking and feeling. Also, they

can confirm existing values and practices to bring about a change. As a result, the arts play an important role in shaping people's understanding of themselves as individuals and members of society, as well as their understanding of the world in which they live. Arts, if effectively utilized, can address the problems being faced by the society.

Theatre for Development (TfD) is a relatively recent phenomenon in the arts (Kees Epskamp 2006: 9-10). In Western Europe during the 1960s, its pre-history began as 'Popular Theatre', 'People's Theatre' or even 'Activist Theatre'. All these terms were in vogue till the time of before the end of the Cold War (1989). The application of performing arts was considered as a *weapon* used strongly and overtly to oppose both political and social oppression. The practitioners of these forerunner genres of TfD had a very pronounced Socialist or Marxist perspective. For that reason, in defining these terms associated with TfD, political or ideological references were involved, almost every time.

The other terms currently in vogue for TfD projects are – Theatre in Education (TIE) projects or Community Theatre projects. All these fields have common characteristics. Which of the three applies best to a particular project depends on definitions of the terms 'development', 'education' or 'community'. TfD is mostly used in the context of 'Development Support Communication' (DSC) and /or in the field of adult education and training, while Theatre in Education (TIE) basically refers to the use of theatre within a formal school or out of school context.

According to Jackson (Ibid) TIE began in Britain during the mid 1960s and spread rapidly as theatres sought to extend their outreach programs and developed a variety of ways of speaking to the countries they served. TIE refers to the use of theatre for explicit educational purposes, closely allied to the school curriculum and mostly in educational purposes: schools, colleges and youth clubs, or sometimes measures and historic sites.

From the other end, community theatre refers to theatre initiatives taken and further developed by the community itself – most often based on popular local forms of indigenous theatre or performing arts within the community. One common characteristic of all these types of theatres is – all of them are participatory in nature.

The use of the term 'Participatory Theatre' might best suit as a common term for all sorts of participatory forms of performing arts and applied drama, including TfD. Theatre in Education, Community Theatre and Forum Theatre. All these forms have certain features in common. They are appended below: (Ibid)

- Performances or workshops aim at an exchange of ideas between actors/facilitators and the audience;
- The context of the performances indirectly related to the living environment of the targeted audience;
- The themes interwoven in the storylines of the performances are problem-oriented and of direct relevance to the community;
- The audience is motivated to interact in a direct manner during or after the performance with the actors/facilitators.

Society and Theatre is a trans-disciplinary cooperative project at the interface between society and the arts. It combines ethical and social aspects – as they are presented with the staging of plays in theatre.

As far as India is concerned, theatre has a great role to play in curbing the crime against women. The significance of theatre in this milieu is discussed at large in the subsequent paragraphs, starting with the working definitions considered for this paper.

2. Working Definitions

The Working definitions of Theatre for Development (TfD), Theatre in Education (TIE) and Development Communication (DC) considered for this paper are as follows:

“Theatre for Development (TfD) means live performance, or theatre used as a development tool – as in international development. TfD encompasses in-person activities, with people before an audience: a spoken-word drama or comedy.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_for_development)

According to Samuel Jotton:

“Theatre in Education (TIE) is a new form of theatre that has cropped up in direct response to the needs of both theatre and schools and which has sought to exploit the techniques and imaginative potency of theatre in the service of education.” (Suman K Kasturi & P. Bobby Vardhan 2013:1-12)

The term “Development Communication” was first coined in 1971 by Nora C. Quebral. In her own words, Development Communication is defined as follows:

“Development Communication is the art and science for human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the

mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential” (Frank Esser & Thomas Hanitzsch 2012:65)

3. Discussion

3.1. Significance of Communication for Social Change

According to a Rockefeller Foundation position paper, communication programs have very sophisticated propensity to fulfill three roles in development thinking and practice. (Kees Epskamp 2006: 109)

- To inform and persuade people to adopt certain behaviors and practice beneficial to them; for ex: to urge them to have fewer children and inform them how to do so;
- To enhance the image and profile of the work of organization involved in development with a view of boosting the credibility of their work, raising more funds and generally improving public perceptions;
- To enable community consultation over specific initiatives on a more targeted level within communities.

Access to communication and information is a prerequisite of ownership. Communication process owned by the people provides the community members with equal opportunities regarding participation in development of the society or otherwise.

It is possible to increase the participation in development, only if, communication systems start serving the needs of the vast majority in the rural and semi-urban rather than in the urban areas. TFD is a good option to make this happen. It is the opinion of many observers and researchers that there is no guarantee that greater access to information will automatically lead to increased participation in development.

3.2. THE NATURE OF THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Mostly, theatre is led by a team of experts who work with various types of extension workers or ‘village level workers’, assisting them ‘to get their health, nutrition, and agricultural messages across to rural villages using entertainment and fun’

(<http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5794e/Y5794E06.htm>). We might add to this list, campaigns to prevent crime against women too. Around the world, there are many ongoing projects of one type or another engaged in Theatre for Development.

Areas that come under this theatre vary from straight drama to songs that are employed in any way as media for communicating ideas related to various issues of development. So, broadly speaking, Theatre for Development (TfD) involves a wide range of resources. Following are a few elements of this theatre.

• **SONGS**

More often than not, these are campaign songs composed and sung by teams of extension workers either alone or together with the people amongst whom they work. In some cases, the songs are recorded on tapes and distributed all over the country for playing through the radio or portable tape recorders during working sessions. Where the latter is the case the help of properly trained musicians is sought. The songs are sung in vernacular languages and usually their tunes are well known adaptations of popular music styles. The guiding principles in composing such songs are: simple catchy tune, clear message, simple words and lots of repetition.

• **DANCE**

Dances employed in the theatre are those that already possess within themselves abundant mimetic potential, for what actually takes place here is what should properly be termed dance-drama. To the beat of musical instruments, dancers mime several scenes in which they depict whatever message they choose to show. In theatre for development, these messages fall within the total intentions of the project.

• **PUPPETRY**

This generally forms part of mobile information campaigns. The idea in such campaigns usually is to teach farmers and villagers in general, modern methods of agriculture and various other issues. Also, they are proven effective in educating the rural masses. In spite of its popularity amongst practitioners, puppetry is losing its grip on its adult audiences. The problems these shows try to tackle are usually a common phenomenon amongst the audience, so that no questions about the clarity of the message arise.

• DRAMA

This is the most extensively used art forms of the lot considered under Theatre for Development. The work in drama varies from plays performed for villagers by outside groups to plays created and performed by the villagers themselves. These dramas feature the adventure of a typical village farm family. In each story a situation is presented that a villager might encounter. Some of the dramas show ways that the problem might be solved, while others are left unresolved to encourage the audience to work out their own solutions. Each drama is in the vernacular languages of the people in which the project is presently being implemented.

3.3. THE PROCESS OF THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Theatre can be divided into two basic categories according to the way it is used (Ibid):

- Theatre in Development;
- Theatre for Development.

Theatre in Development is made up of three types:

- Scripted plays written by some specialists, containing information on a particular subject as understood by the writer and performed by a group of actors in the conventional theatre format;
- Unscripted plays co-created by a director and a group of actors, on a pre-selected topic and presented formally as conventional theatre; and
- Scripted plays on a chosen topic but later transformed by the actors before villagers and involving them in the refinement of the final play. This kind of theatre requires its audience to come to a special venue selected by the theatre group. It allows for very limited participation of the audience in the creation of the play and its performance.

Theatre for Development on the other hand could be said to be of two types:

- The one created out of researching in the community – but performed by the outside artists; and
- The one, which is explored and created with the community and performed jointly by the artists and members of the community. In both cases, the presentations take place in the community itself, and the venue does not necessarily need to have special requirements.

Very often, this theatre is a combination of music, drama, dance, masquerade and puppetry found within the community. It can be used both to investigate and probe specific issues as well as to stimulate discussion on issues of interest to the community, thus it can also be used to identify and discuss problem-solving approaches.

3.3. Paradoxes to Deal With

The common hypotheses to the cause of crime which was held in the 19th century were – poverty, lack of education and population density. The same can still be used to explain crime in general as well as crime against women in India.

1. Veeraghavans study (1994) (Doel Mukerjee 2005, 8-9) on Delhi gave a general overview that crime is mainly concentrated in the colonies of middle and lower middle class. Most victims and offenders came from lower level of occupation or unskilled workers like mechanics, technicians, drivers, taxi and auto rickshaw drivers, and vendors. The study also indicates that higher the educational level of the women, the lesser were the chances of rape.

Rapid urbanization along with growth of population and lack of space and education has led to various social evils in India. Greed, feudal mind sets, economic benefit, a need to dominate along with overall degeneration of other social and moral values in society, has led to the recent situation of crime against women in India. Overall development, i.e. rural as well as urban development should take place side by side. Else, the gap generated due to the differences in development at various geographic levels would lead to increased crime in the society. A notable point to mention here is – crime against women is not limited to a particular class of people.

Fig.1. gives us the clear image of the trend of major crime heads in India

over the years 1953-2013. If we consider the rapes alone, since from the time the collection of information was started in 1971, there has been a huge growth of 1255.3% (<http://ncrb.gov.in/>) in crimes. This factor alone speaks the aggravated situation of crime against women in India.

Fig.1. Trends of some major crime heads over the years 1953-2013
(Source: <http://ncrb.gov.in/>)

3.4. Approach towards Safety of Women

The statistical evidence gives us the impression that the crime against women in India has been increasing in leaps and bounds. There is a definite need to look into the safety of women. The following approaches may be adapted for the same.

- **To increase reporting of rape and assault cases:**In order to increase the reporting of such cases, we need to empower the women and children. They must be educated on their rights, apart from being encouraged to come forward to register the cases. There are many violent cases but due to stigma in the society very few are reported.
- **Law enforcement agencies:**Law enforcers should be well trained to react swiftly and with sensitivity towards the women and children cases.
- **Exemplary punishment:**Punishment awarded to every culprit need to be harsh, while campaigning for ***zero-tolerance*** of sex offenders. More number of fast track courts should be established.
- **Indian Police system:**Neither the Centre nor States have been proactive in improving the quality of Policing. Official records show that only 14 states (**Ajay Kumar Ranjan 2013: 1**) have either enacted the New Police Act or amended their existing laws to incorporate SC's suggestion.

3.5. Role of Tfd in Addressing Crime against Women in India

As Liverman *et al*, the eminent geoscientists observed:

Effective communication may require different approaches depending upon the educational background of the audience being addressed. The audience can be broadly classified as scientists, government administrators and the general public. The communication process is complicated further by the difficulty that geoscientists can have in

identifying the appropriate communication pathways to use if their endeavors to be successful. It raises questions of exactly who they should talk with, and whether one organization can open better communication opportunities than other (Liverman et al 2008, 179-184).

Often, theatre is misinterpreted purely as a source of entertainment. However, theatre can be so much more than just sequined costumes and pretty songs; in fact, it is often the perfect vehicle to provide education about current social issues and to inspire social and political change.

In general, the communication process involves only sender and one or more receivers. But unlike in conventional model of communication, a theatre communications involves two or more stages of senders (Suman K Kasturi & P. Bobby Vardhan 2013:1-12). The message intended to be passed to the audience involves coding and decoding at minimum two levels. So, sender- i.e. the author of theatre theme should keep in mind the comprehending levels of both the artists as well as the audiences. Fig.2 gives the detailed flow of information in a typical theatre communication.

Fig 2. A Typical Communication Model of Theater

(Source: Personal Files of author Dr. Suman K. Kasturi)

In our opinion, Theatre in Education (TIE), which is a form of Theatre for Development (TfD), in conjunction with the above mentioned model, would bring out the desired results. In 1965, for the first time in Belgrade theatre, TIE began to all aims and purposes (Ibid). Surely, this method of fusion would bring out the new concept of *actor-teachers* specifically because they seek to combine the qualities, skills and objectives of both actors and teachers, simultaneously.

In order to address the severe problem of crime against women in India, the concept of *epic theatre* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_theatre) developed by Bertolt Brecht and his partner Erwin Piscator might be used effectively along with TfD (in its most effective form of TIE). The main objective of epic theatre is to ensure that the audiences are not forgetting that they are seeing a theatrical presentation, and are therefore forced to reexamine reality. It is achieved using such techniques as very minimal scenery, harsh lighting, and actors speaking directly to the audience. These performances were meant to be seen as representations of reality but not as being real. The intent of this representation was to inspire critical reflection, rather than to encourage to audience to emotionally identify with the characters and actions of the play.

Even though the process of Theatre for Development varies according to

its purpose the following stages can be adopted in most cases: research, reporting back, creating the story, sketching the story, rehearsing the play, performing the play and after performance.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5794e/Y5794E06.htm>

▪ **RESEARCH**

Like any other development process, the process of Theatre for Development also starts with research. This is *informal* research – it is not set up. The research involves living in and with the community in order to know and learn about the *life* of the people there in. This involves participating in their happiness, sorrows, celebrations as well as their work. In this way, one is able to imbibe in the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the community. Although this research is informed, some communication and public relation tools could be used to sharpen pictures of the community.

Material and information learnt or gathered during such research provides:

- Stuff for the play that will be created;
- The way the play will be performed;
- The venue which the community actually would choose for performance; and
- Issues that the community feels most strongly about (in present case, it is the crime against women).

When a *theatre* team goes into a community, it should become a part of that community. That is why it is important to dress appropriately – in a manner that is in line with the communities. The team must ensure that they are not over-dressed or outrageous in their appearance. It is also advisable to work in pairs when going around the village rather than in one large group. In this way, the community members being observed and studied do not become overwhelmed.

▪ **REPORTING**

After experiencing the first hand information about the problems being faced by the community, the team must come back together to report on what they have learnt of the community. Such reports highlight issues closest to the hearts of members of the community; cultural life of the community; stories of happenings/events and anecdotes or jokes common in the community. Information gathered should include the

community's perception of whatever is the subject of concern (say for example, in our case it is the crime against women). Such materials provide good stuff for dramatization.

▪ **CREATING THE STORY**

Material gathered during research should give a *clear* picture of what the position of the *issue* of concern is like in the village or any other place of consideration. It should include stories of individuals, families or sections of the community showing concrete testimonies of how they relate to the issues. For instance, instead of saying the people of such and such village do not report the cases of a rape although they are aware of it, you should actually have a real person who has not reported the matter and who has had concrete reasons for not reporting to the police authorities. This takes you beyond awareness to actual experience of not reporting to the concerned bodies and its consequences.

From such personal testimonies or experiences and individuals, characters for the story and the story itself may be drawn and developed. Instead of speaking in 'general terms and about issues', an individual or specific people are made to live and demonstrate the experience of living with the issues being looked at.

The story so created is obviously fiction. But, it is built on actual lived experiences, that the community for whom (later with whom) the drama is being developed will recognize and sometimes even identify with it, depending on how well the dramatization is done.

▪ **SKETCHING THE PLAY**

Having created a story from findings gathered in the field, the next step is sketching the play. The goal here is not to create a play script, but an outline of the play scene by scene. A scene being stages in the story just created. If we can compare the story to a journey between place X and place Y, there are points that must be gone through to make up this journey. From place X, we might have to stop over at X₁, to have a break for snacks.

While at X₁, the driver might have quarreled with the attendant at the Restaurant in the parking area. We then moved to point X₂ where we stopped again -this time to visit the rest rooms. The next story may be our destination Y.

The above mentioned as an example of the whole story, we can say that points (X) (X₁) (X₂) and Y could be our scenes. In *building* the plot, we shall

select purposely events that happened at these points and leave out those that happened on the vehicle in between them. Sketching the play is very similar to this process. We deliberately select or create points that highlight important aspects of the issue the story is meant to tell (in our case, it is again the crime against women).

▪ **REHEARSALS**

Using actual stories of happenings gathered during the research, characters could be identified and re-lived before everybody in the team. Here, the whole team agrees on whether those *acting* out these happenings as put together into scenes of the sketch are being truthful. They can also select those individuals who seem best suited for what scenes. This is preparation of the play that is referred to as the rehearsal. The process of rehearsal uses other material gathered during the research. These are the songs, dances or rituals that people do in the village. During the research, the team will learn how people relate to each other, how they behave. From such observations, individuals selected to play particular roles might build their characters.

The idea here is – when the people of the village come to see the play, they should recognize themselves (as a village) in the play. Rehearsals therefore aim at achieving this, quite apart from dramatizing and developing the story created earlier on.

▪ **ACTUAL PERFORMANCE**

Once the play has been rehearsed and the team is satisfied that it is ready for presentation, they must choose a venue that is accessible to the people in the village. The period of research should reveal which places are used for public celebration in the village. The period should also reveal which time of the day is the best for holding the performance.

Efforts to involve the village community in presenting or even participating in dances from the village should be made. The idea here is to make it the people's own occasion than that of the team.

During the performance, the acting should deliberately offer opportunities for the audience to answer questions or even comment on what is happening in the play. These comments can be repeated and passed on to other members of the audience around issues being depicted in the play. The actors should always take the story back from this dialogue and move it towards the end.

▪ **FEEDBACK FROM PERFORMANCE**

The team should get back together to go through experiences of the performance, to examine their own performance and the comments that the people were making as the play was unfolding. This discussion should reveal material for further action either theatrically or on issues under discussion.

Sometimes, the people want further discussion on issues in the play – such an opportunity should be provided to them. There might also be need for follow-up action. This has to be taken care of, and whenever possible fulfilled, by the subject specialist.

4. Conclusion

Theatre for Development (TfD) as a form of communication is deeply rooted in the Indian tradition. In recent times, this form has been used to propagate social and political messages and to create awareness amongst the masses regarding critical issues.

Very often it can be seen that theatre has been used for social progress and for bringing various changes in the society. Theatre for development includes activist and grass-roots bodies, government and non-government organizations (NGOs), as well as socially-aware theatre groups or individuals. The groups working with Dalits, women, children, sex workers, and other marginalized populations, all qualify as practicing theatre for development.

Many studies carried out have tried their best to bring complex but important issues of the crime against women in India into limelight. A record growth of 1255.3% in alone rapes has been experienced in a span of 42 years i.e. between 1971 and 2013, in India. An important revelation of many studies is – most of the crimes are attributed to the middle and low middle class families in India. Also, they are attributed mainly to the rural areas. Theatre has been proven as an effective medium among the rural masses, even in this era of Satmass Media (Suman K Kasturi 2013, 183) (a word coined by Dr. Suman Kumar Kasturi to indicate the mass media that work in conjunction satellite communications). Consequently, clubbing together the participatory concept of Theatre for Development with the reality of increased crime against women in India, while considering the fact that more than 70% of Indian masses live in rural areas, the desired results could be achieved with theatre.

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A Study on the Impact of Drama on Modern Economy

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&

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Abstract

Development has been synonymous with directed, purposeful progress equated with economic growth with including all the dimensions. As such, communication for development has been largely understood as persuading people to adopt cut and dried messages which direct progress, hence the concept of mass communication. Unfortunately, this gives communication an apparatus for manipulation and propaganda dissemination. The widespread failure of development projects may be attributed to this understanding and practice of communication in development as communication becomes a way of forcing receivers to adjust and adapt to ideologically mediated messages and the midst of economic collapse, we are compelled to seek wiser systems of commerce and more equitable economic relationships. While it is imperative that we understand the history of our economic structures and what went wrong, it is equally important that we experience the outstanding examples of collaborative business practices that are changing the economic landscape today.. This paper proposes to study the impact of Drama in Modern Economy which support communication. Drama incorporates aspects of lived realities, supports progress in peoples' lives and effectively grips the audience's attention and commitment. Drama conscientises people on aspects of life such as environmental conservation assists people in spreading and using technological advancement assists in health, educational and other social efforts and programmes. In this way, drama provides a viable tool in development support communication and, as the paper shows, drama is natural communication which can ensure high impact yet low cost effects.

Keywords: Drama, Economic Growth, Human Behavior.

Introduction

Educational drama is defined as "drama in which there is no external audience, no prepared script, and in which the teacher frequently takes on roles with students" (Wihelm, Edmiston, 1998, p.4). Educational drama

utilizes skills across the range of dramatic activity, everything from teacher-in-role to normal theatrical conventions of audience and spectator[3].

The word 'development' has become synonymous with directed, purposive progress that results in economic growth. Developmentalists seem happy when material outputs increase—what more could anybody expect of them? The word 'communication' has the hidden prefix "mass" always attached to it whenever it is perceived. This gives it the stigma of an apparatus of persuasion and manipulation and therefore something to view with suspicion, something to avoid and something unfriendly. Unfortunately, government, institutions and even humanitarian organisations use mass communication to beam propaganda, persuasion and coercion or at least some cut and dried messages which force perceivers of the messages to adjust to the messages[4].

Drama identifies with concepts like entertainment, education, social comment (e.g. political, religious, cultural, inter alia). Drama has been and continues to be ignored as trivial by some, believed as reality by others, feared as too critical, admired as courageous, hated as too threatening, trusted as effective in effecting change and revered as balanced, neutral, fair and ideal[5].

Drama is a make-believe controlled experiment which, because its events and outcomes are deliberately created by the playwright, can be used to depict any and every human aspect for specific objectives. Drama is communication par-excellence because of its ability to grip its perceivers as it unfolds and rolls at a predetermined pace in a predetermined direction. Drama supports[6], all that is progress in our lives—it is development. This then makes drama a most appropriate tool in development support communication.

Definition of economic impact by Drama

The Everyman Theatre makes a contribution to the worth of the local economy in two ways: direct and indirect. Its direct impact is made up of straight local spending; for example, the amount spent on purchasing supplies locally, or the amount spent on resident staff wages, which is then spent on items such as accommodation, food, and clothes locally[7].

The indirect impact takes into account the 'knock-on' effect which is generated by the direct impact, where money spent results in more money being spent. An example of this includes the purchase of supplies from a local company, which results in that company spending on their staff wages and purchasing other supplies. This expenditure is constantly circulating around the local economy, helping to preserve jobs, and boost

economic growth.

Why Drama?

Drama is not the only medium of effecting change for development and Drama and theatre have their origins in the cultural settings of the past and the vicissitudes of the present. The theatre tradition has been part of the ritual and social life of the people embracing the totality of their way of life, habits, attitudes and propensities. Although looked at as a form of entertainment, theatrical activities and performances are regarded as informal ways by which the quality of lives of people can be inculcated and enriched[8]. Drama and theatre are tools used to sensitise the general public on matters that affect them on daily basis. These include matters of family planning/child-spacing, conduction of census, campaign against sale and distribution of fake and illegal drugs, HIV/AIDS and other STDs, abortions, child abuse/neglect etc. A perfect example is the TV series, I need to know, which focuses on the enlightenment of the youthful generation on the dangers of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, STDs and teenage pregnancies and the need to abstain from such vice's in order to protect their future. Drama, as one of the core genres of literature, is the mirror of any society because it documents what is happening and throws it back at the same society[9]. But I consider it a most appropriate tool because:

- Drama removes the stigma of "mass" from the concept of communication because real humans carry messages in their own flesh and blood and communicate almost at interpersonal level with perceivers. Where the perceivers do not directly participate because they have not enough money, they at least seem to observe immediate neighbors as the neighbors thrash the issues and messages loaded onto the script—on stage, on the screen or on air (radio). Communication then ceases to appear as "organised" manipulation but rather takes the form of spontaneous, natural interaction.
- Drama can also be used as a means of self- expression and empowerment by people facing hostile political or social circumstances. For example, the Tivs used the traditional Kwagh-Hir puppet and masquerade theatre to voice opposition to political victimization during the 1960s.
- Drama broadens the meaning of the word 'development' to include concepts like education, conscientisation of the people, empowerment of the indigenous communities,

insistence on good governance, moral purification of society, condemnation of crime and corruption and above all, drama ushers in participation by the communities—a very crucial element.

- Using drama as a teaching and learning tool, for personal development, social awareness and equal educational access to dramatic arts. Rooted in the theatrical form of improvisation, along with group theater games, ensemble-building and student-generated performance showcase we impact lives by showing youth options of behavior, ways of being and behaving through theater that can carry over into everyday life. With our use of props and costumes we help awaken imagination and guide students to feel what it might be like in someone else's shoes, creating empathy that we also hope transfers to real life. We also improve capacity for literacy and communication skills by introducing theater vocabulary. IDEAS offers a direct experience where youth are encouraged to "act out" creatively, something they are often reprimanded for doing. Many of the students we work with have never had the opportunity to be part of theatrical presentation before^[10].
- According to Thomas in Servaes et al (1996:21) drama challenges the "taken for granted assumptions and pries open the gaps between ideological promise and institutional performance". Promise with no performance is no development. Those who give the promises always have the means to broadcast the promise and yet usually, there is no platform to question the unfulfilment of the promises. However, in a manner subtle or bold, drama exposes the gap between promise and performance.

Drama directs the spotlight onto those responsible or is it irresponsible! Drama demands accountability and suggests remedies. Drama evaluates the totality of performance by all organs within a community be they political, social, economic, ideological, moral, philosophical etc. This evaluation is not a question and answer session the gate keeping method. It is a no holds barred, unstoppable exposition. This way, those charged with developmental assignments dare not rest on their laurels^[11].

Hence the banning and condemnation by some authorities, of certain plays (e.g. by Churches, pressure groups and governments). Hence the

persecution and even execution of playwrights by some governments. All this happens because drama, as a true tool in development support communication, will be at work not only to communicate development but to insist on development. The icing on this case is that no matter how serious the message contained, drama will always be loaded with entertainment (e.g. humour, comical blunders and misplaced trusts).

(d) Drama exploits the politics of possibility. Over the centuries, drama has been used to criticise, suggest ideals and propose solutions to problems. It uses humans to suggest how all its proposals could be implemented. From rural Afghanistan to urban Nigeria BBC World Service audiences have been tuning-in to mass mediated drama with 'instructive' messages for many years. Each 'drama for development' reflects the interweaving of development goals, donor objectives, processes of cross-cultural translation, creative dialogue and debate between local and expatriate dramatists and, not least, the responses and interpretations of dramatic narratives by audiences. From such a perspective, organizations such as the BBC World Service Trust, the BBC World Service's charitable arm, can be seen to be actively engaged in crafting complex development concepts and issues into local frames by applying specific cultural, social and political filters to render these concepts and narratives intelligible^[12]. The playwright creates ideal communication situations with actors who interact to fulfil the playwright's purpose. Implementation of suggested proposals develops society and yet through drama, nobody feels "exposed" as the ring leader in criticizing lack of development—sometimes not even the playwright! The development support messages seem to come from this huge powerful but anonymous bulldozer called drama. The message becomes a collective effort of the playwright, the depicted, the actors, the criticized, the critics— in fact, the whole community not only feels part of the issues raised by the drama but feels it OWNS the issues and is therefore OWED restitutions.

(e) Drama is dialogue and according to Paulo Freire (1972:136) "dialogue does not impose, does not manipulate, does not domesticate, does not sloganize". (Development messages are imposed when brought by carriers or researchers who are outsiders not only in terms of community membership but culturally and politically as well. However, a play tailored to suit a specific situation, carrying that specific development message and acted by members of the target community will belong to the people in its entirety, will be owned by the people and so will the development message it carries. This is dialogue. This is drama. Paulo Freire's notion of cultural action for liberation stresses the importance of evolving culture-based development strategies and the use of popular theatre as a

medium for social transformation. (f) Drama provides as opportunity for the target community to participate. I know that the mass media have cheapened the word participation to refer to the rhetoric of apologetic mass messages from politicians and even developmentalists.

Participation is a democratic process. Drama is real participation. In drama, the word participation has not yet lost its critical edge. In drama, participation is context-based, is tradition based and is therefore wholly cultural. The people are involved in the construction and interpretation of the message[13].

At exposition, they see Mr Khumalo—a member of their community—taking a wrong course of action and Mr Dube— another member of their community—taking the correct course. At conflict, Mr Khumalo seems to have it all easy, rosy and comfortable (e.g. wining, dining and highly promiscuous). Mr Dube seems miserable in his self-imposed life of sanction and denial. At Resolution, Mr Khumalo's irreversible misery sets in and he exits in agony —even in death—while Mr Dube has the last laugh as he enjoys good health and prosperity. (Consequences and rewards)

Use of culturally foreign humor misleads the people to concentrate on the wrong details (e.g. clothing, symbols) and explain away the results on these strange symbols. This way, the target community needs little motivation to implement the lessons derived from the drama thus the role of the drama It achieves its goals by developing new conceptual frameworks to define peacefulness; providing metrics for measurement; uncovering the relationship between peace, business and prosperity, and by promoting a better understanding of the cultural, economic and political factors that drive peacefulness[14]. It becomes their project. The use of drama as a tool in development support communication then becomes true generosity which empowers the target communities to be independent to desire development, to propel them to develop.

According to Freire (1972:21-22), "Real generosity lies in striving so that those hands —whether of individuals or entire peoples—need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, by working, transform the world". Desired transformation is development.

(g) Drama is easy to assimilate. Perceivers participate or they sit, watch and listen. Reading is heavy and too demanding. Instructions are not always the best method of communicating.

However, drama constructs the story/ message and real human beings bring it to the perceivers.

(g) Drama has access to any medium, leaving it to the playwright and the

owners of a development message to select the most appropriate medium between the State, Television/ Film and the Radio. Two or more of these media can be used simultaneously or one after the other to carry the same development message. This makes drama a very convenient tool in development support communication.

Drama provide us mental Peace, The economics of peace should be seen as an intermediate period between the economics of war, where the underground economy dominates, and the economics of development, which focuses on medium- and long-term objectives of economic growth and structural improvements. There are a number of ways in which the economics of peace must differ from the normal development agenda.

Policies during the economics of peace may need to be short term and emergency in nature, so as to ensure that the country does not revert to conflict, even if this means that these policies are less than optimal in the long run. Former combatants and other war-affected groups need to be reintegrated into productive activities as soon as possible, so that they have a stake in the peace process. The traditional development principle that all groups with the same need should be treated equally may need to be put aside. In some cases it will be necessary for special attention to be given to those most affected by the conflict, or those most likely to revert to it.

Aid always presents opportunities for corruption, and the extraordinarily high levels of aid received by post-conflict countries, which often ranges from 50-100 per cent of GDP, considerably exacerbates this problem. In order to avoid this, greater attention must be paid to how aid is utilized during this the economics of peace to ensure that it supports, rather than weaken the process.

Policies during the economics of peace must be focused on the speedy creation of an economy that is inclusive and self-sustainable. Post-conflict societies receive a large amount of humanitarian aid to save lives and ensure minimum levels of consumption. If prolonged, however, this aid would discourage production and labor supply. By contrast, reconstruction aid is key to create investment and employment, to make life worth living and to ensure that the country can stand on its own feet[15].

Conclusion

Drama is natural communication that can be a very effective tool in development support communication. It entertains, counsels, informs, stimulates debate and educates. About conferences and symposia, people complain that after all is said and done, there is more said than

done. Not so with drama. In drama there is more done than said. In the process, human happiness is maximized through the resultant development, in the true principles of the utility theory. A belief in drama as a vital tool in development support communication is not a mistaken belief, is not a misplaced trust, but a guarantee that those communities will adopt development projects as their own and therefore an investment in the future.

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Social Relevance of Indian Folk Theatre-A study on the concerning issues/character of society portrayed by Indian Folk theatre

Dr. Neeru Prasad

Abstract

When I started teaching Folklore to MA in Culture & Media Students, I went through a deep study about folklore and folk-life. At this stage I am in the position to give this statement that 'Folk is not only our culture but the originator of our cultural life.' There are number of songs, dances, theatres and other arts belong to classical arts of different state or community in context to India, like Odishi dance, Bhangra Dance, Kathak, Kuchipudi,

Bharat-Natyam etc. these come under classical arts; but as per my study and opinion these are nothing but the advanced and polished forms of folk arts. As soon as we develop and come into the main stream society or civilized society we restructure and polish our folkArt-form, and make it worthy to present before civilized group. Since thousands of years we kept on doing this and the result is Classical Arts and other cultured forms of art.

By elaborating this concept regarding folk I definitely not wanting to explain about the refined forms of Indian folk-arts, I just wanted to explain the folk on the basis of my studies and own opinion. This concept intended to explain about the importance and values of folk in our culture. In this paper I am going to discuss about few famous folk theatres of India and their relevance to our society. I have chosen two famous folk-theatre, Charan Das Chor and Amar Singh Rathore Nautanki Theatre form of Rajasthan. This paper will try to find out the Epistemological and political approach of folk narration in folk theatre by discussing Charan Das Chor and Amar Singh Rathore.

Key words: Folk Theatre, Charan Das Chor, Nautanki, Folklore.

Problem definitions of this study:

This study started with raising few questions about the folk theatre of India, these are, whether folk theatre narrates societal issue or represent societal characters genuinely or it is based on hypothetical narration? And if they present societal issue, whether they exaggerate problem of society?

Folk Theatre: An Overview

Folk is defined as a common people in general. Folk means people in general. The people who are not related to a modern society but traditionally they are very rich. They know and value their rituals, cultural rites, traditional way of enjoying festivals and changing seasons.

And Theatre is a form of drama with dialogue, sound effect and music. Folk theatre is a platform where a team of artists act on a folk-tale. A tale that has no historic date and time, even not place.

A Folk theatre is a platform where folk tales are played on different themes. Themes like epic, anecdote, heroic character etc. folk theatre based on more narration and dialogues to establish the scene.

Bandit Narration in Folk theatre/Folk Play and Charan Das Chor

In banditry narrations the bandits are portrayed as the hero of the society

because they never loot poor people or harm them they generally steal things from rich people, who dominate poor people of the society; and bandit also help poor people of society so why they are worshiped by peasant society. Bandits are heroic characters among peasants. They also symbolise as struggle for justice (*Shail Mayaram, Kings versus Bandits, 2003*). After reviewing Shail Mayaram's King versus Bandit: Anti-colonialism in a Bandit Narrative I found many examples about bandits and their heroic act's narrations. He quoted Richards and Rao's analysis about papadu, and Telegu Folk story about a bandit who used to kidnap women from elite class. I observed the references in Shail Mayarams research; researcher reviewed extremely related literature on bandit narration as of Habsbawm, Sarad Chandra Mitra, Anand A. Yang, John F. Richerds and Velcheru Narayan Rao, M. S. S. Pandian, Ranjit Guha etc. I am quoting few of his lines from the literature:

Pandian describes 'heroic ballad' prevalent among the subaltern classes such as the story of Muthupattam about a rebellious bandit. Ranjit Guha refers to Sultana, Indian's Robin Hood who having known what it was to be poor never robbed from a poor man and never refused an appeal for charity. He also mentioned the Bhil community of western India and about the few communities of bandits from Rajasthan's Shekhawati area. And also about the Habib Tanvir's contemporary theatrical rendering of a story from the Chhattisgarh region called 'CHARAN DAS CHOR' who is again described as the thief or robber who robs the rich but help the poor people.

Here I would like to discuss about few scenes of the play, as when Charan Das was saved by the Guru from the Halwaldaar, then Guru asks him to make a vow but Charan Das offers to make four vows instead of one, the vows are, never to eat in a gold plate, never to lead a procession on an elephant that is in his honour, never to become a king and never to marry a princess, after his vows made by him he the Guru laughs on him by saying you are dreaming with open eyes, but Charan Das said that you never know about your destination it is just a chance, after listening Charan Das point of views Guru tell him to make one more vow that never lie in life, means now Charan Das is going to speak only truth in any situations and at any cost. But willing he promises to his Guru to follow all vows made by him.

In later scene it is shown that fortunately but for Charan Das, unfortunately on the other day he faces all those things which he promised to do in life. Lastly he was killed on queen's order and finally he lost his life by only one vow he made, which was offered by Guru that never tell lie. In the last

scene when queen offers Charan Das to marry her then thief denied and then queen said not to reveal this matter in public, then thief replied I promised to my Guru to never tell lie...! Then queen orders him for slaughter.

Amar Singh Rathore: A great warrior and patriot

Amar Rathore is a folk theatre of Rajasthan, as Amar Singh Rathore hails from Rajasthan state, he is known as a great warrior and patriot during the Mughal period of Shah Jahan. He was associated with Delhi Sultanate of Shah Jahan. In this theatre it is shown that Amar Singh Rathore asks leave for some personal reasons (Marriage purpose); but the Salabat Khan, the brother-in-law (Brother of Shah Jahan's Wife) of Shah Jahan was against this request and tried making understand Shah Jahan not to grant leave to Amar Singh Rathore, as Salabat Khan is shown for his disliking towards Amar Singh Rathore because Shah Jahan trust him more than Salabat Khan. So on the very first day Salabat Khan not liking Amar Singh and always try to search his loop hole or weaknesses so that he could complaint Badshah about Amar Singh. On the other day he got chance to punish Amar Singh because he could not reach on time after availing leave granted by Shah Jahan. Before permitting for leave Shah Jahan told to Amar Singh very clearly that he will have to resume his duties after seven days immediately otherwise one lakh per day penalty will be made for him. Now on eight day Salbat Khan reminds Shah Jahan for his penalty but king said who will have the courage to take penalty from Amar Singh Rathore then Slabat Khan said that he will take the charge to take penalty from Amar Singh. After few days Amar Singh was called in the court and king decided that there will be a sword fight between Salabat Khan and the Amar Singh Rathore. But Salabat Khan repented for various causes and was not ready to fight, Amar Singh Rathore killed him. Then king announced that who so ever kill Amar Singh Rathore will be awarded by the 'Jagir' (land). After listening this announcement his brother-in-law (brother of his wife), killed Amar Singh Rahtore. But after his death king was so said and discloses publically his love and respect about Amar Singh Rathore.

In this theatre form Nautanki in the last this lesson is taught that we should always respect and appreciate the honesty, bravery and devotion of people whether they belong to Hindu or from Muslim community.

After reviewing literatures related to Charan Das Chor and watching the play of Habib Tanvir, and Amar Singh Rathore, I reached to this point that honest and genuine people have to lose their lives and people realise them after their death. Even in real society people are like same mind set

and they realize honesty, equity and goodness of people after their death. At this point of view these two plays are very near to our society's mind set.

But it is interesting and surprising to see a thief's commitment and his death due to his commitment. But in real society did we ever find a thief like Charan Das? If a person is so honest and genuine, why he chooses a profession of thief? A thief is negative character in our society and people do not except this character in main stream society; but Habib Tanveer portrayed a thief's honesty and his commitment in this play which is difficult to accept. But if we think in other view then it could be said that a person can change his or her thought or habit at any stage of his/her life. A thief may become a teacher.

Amar Singh Rathore was a great warrior and patriot, and known for his great honesty towards his king and state. But in this Nautanki when king ordered that after seven days Amar Singh has to give one lakh per day as a penalty, then why king denied to take penalty and said who has courage to ask penalty to Amar Singh? In that scene it was quite confusing because order was public and very clear; if so, then why there was sword fight?

We say that folk is a real mirror of our society. But why we forget that folk is fantasy only. It is only word of mouth and people transfer these culture generation to generation. There is nothing wrong in portraying and presenting character like Amar Singh Rathore and Charan Das Chor, but to relate these stories in our society by saying them truth just because they portrayed as folk stories is not justified.

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Mughal Tamasha, Vibrant Folk Theatre of Odisha

Sony Parhi

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Abstract

Folk Theatre is an art form in with a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, epic and ballad recitation, graphic arts, religion and festival peasantry. The Folk theatre provides mass entertainment, helps Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication. Mughal Tamasha as a unique, satirical form of folk theatre in Odisha is distinct for its flavor and purpose. It is the outcome of the cultural interaction between the locals the migrant representative of the Muslim rulers in 18th Century A.D. It develops and promotes communal harmony and also provides social criticism of state of affairs prevailing at that time. This paper discusses this folk theatre form and need to popularize this form.

Key words: Folk theatre, Interpersonal communication, Participatory, Documentation

Introduction

Theatre is a collaborative form of fine art that uses live performers to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place. The performers may communicate this experience to the audience through combinations of gesture, speech, song, music, and dance. Elements of art and stagecraft are used to enhance the physicality, presence and immediacy of the experience. (1)

India lives in her villages. At a time when modern means of entertainment were yet to penetrate the borders of our villages. Artistic expressions in the form of folk theatre gripped performers and audience alike. TV and cinema becoming all pervasive mass media, we still root for familiar *jatra, pala, daskathia* or a theatre performance with flavors of the rural and the rustic. A few prominent folk theatre forms of Odisha are *Suanga, Mughal Tamasha, Leela, Jatra, Danda Nata, Sakhi Nata and Dhanu Yatra*. This study shall look at Mughal Tamasha form of folk theatre.

As long as India lives, the traditional media of communication will exist. It is almost an impossible task for any government which comes to power

to transform the sixty percent of the villages in such a manner as to usher in the electronic era overnight. India is a developing and fast progressing nation. It is on the backdrop of factors as the economic, industrial, social and cultural background that the traditional media of communication will continue to be more effective than the electronic media.

Das, Sheelita (2013) opined that folk theatre is an indigenous form and it breaks all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and appeals directly to the people. (7)

Wang and Dissanayake (1984) defined it as a communication system embedded in the culture which existed much before the arrival of mass media, and which still exists as a vital mode of communication in many parts of the world presenting a certain degree of continuity, despite changes. (9)

Kidd (1984) opined that the plays grew out of the situations, experiences, and analysis of the actors who are themselves villagers. They create their own dramas out of their own collective analysis of their immediate situation and the deeper structures in which they are embedded. (10)

Theatre is a composite art in India with a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, epic and ballad, recitation, graphic and plastic arts, religion and festival peasantry. The Folk theatre having roots in native culture is embedded in local identity and social values besides providing mass entertainment helped Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication for ages. Folk theatre has been used extensively in India to propagate critical social, political and cultural issues in the form of theatrical messages to create awareness among the people. As an indigenous form it breaks all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and appeals directly to the people.

History:

Raja Mansingh defeated the Afghans and established Mughal rule in Odisha. However, he did not dismiss the Afghan officers who surrendered before him. These officers became the Muslim residents of Odisha. For more than two hundred years that the Muslims ruled, Persian remained the court language. Afghan Officers who remained in power indulged in a luxurious lifestyle. This affected in the administration. Mughal Tamasha deals with loose and slack administration of the Mughal officials in a comical way. When the Marathas ruled over Odisha in the second half of the 18th Century A.D, people became open and fearlessly criticized and made mockery of the Muslim rulers, their style of rule and administrative slackness. The satire was primarily aimed at the luxury and display of

wealth that Mughals indulged in. The form did not promote communalism, since it ridiculed the filthy rich rulers and their oppressive mannerisms which put both communities at a receiving end. Mughal Tamasha was popular amongst both Hindus and Muslims and both communities participated in it.

Mughal Tamasha in Odisha is distinct for its flavor and purpose. Satirical in nature, the art form is very unique to Odisha. Mughal Tamasha is unique in the annals of Folk Drama in India. It is the outcome of the cultural interaction and confluence that took place between the local inhabitants and the migrant representative of the Muslim rulers in 18th Century A.D. While attempting to develop and promote communal harmony, it also provides social criticism of state of affairs prevailing at that time which is of relevance. The incredibly fertile imagination of a single genius poet Banshi Ballav Goswami had created seven works of Tamasha; the most outstanding and unique amongst them being 'Mughal Tamasha'. This form is the only that is still alive but struggling for survival with ever decreasing performances and patronage.

The other six forms like Bhil Tamasha, (2) Radhakrushna Tamasha (3) Chauda / Chahoda Tamasha (4) Jogi Tamasha (5) Fakir Tamasha and (6) Lolin Mazabai Tamasha, ceased to exist long ago and are virtually lost to posterity except for manuscripts in incomplete form.

Reach:

Historically speaking Mughal Tamasha evolved in Sangat village as a variation of the traditional Chaiti Tamasha in Bhadrak region of Odisha in the late half of 18th century. Subsequently, it spread out to other places like Sahapur, Januganj, Garadpur and Kuansa. It remained confined within the region though sporadic attempts were made to perform the same in some other areas of Northern Odisha.

Keeping in line with the tradition and a continuation of Odisha's indigenous regional version of Tamasha, a specific version which is identified as Mughal Tamasha is possibly unique, unprecedented and unparalleled in the annals of theatre on account of its simultaneous employment of five different languages within course of the performance of a single play – Odia, Bengali, Hindi, Persian and Urdu. The uninhabited use of language spoken by people in actual life is another aspect which is indicative of the realistic daring which guided the composition of this popular genre, while the creative use of his mastery over the different languages is unbelievably unique feature of Mughal Tamasha.

Couched in the form of a musical farce, music and songs play a predominant role in advancing the action in an epigrammatic manner and

a confluence is noticeable in the use of indigenous musical instruments along with their more exotic counterparts. Mughal Tamasha is the outcome of the cultural interaction and confluence that took place between the local inhabitants and the outsiders when historical forces brought in to their midst.

The plot of Mughal Tamasha:

Tamasha in local language can be loosely translated as farce. As had been customary with large empires in the past, the rulers based at their capitals ruled the distant regions through representative who from time to time visited the different localities placed under their charge. The inhabitants of these territories became the victims of exploitation by many of these representatives whenever they visited such localities. In Mughal Tamasha, the Mirza Sahab is one such regional representative who is on a visit to a particular locality placed under his disposal.

The inhabitants of these territories became the victims of exploitation by many of these representatives.

"In Mughal Tamasha, the Mirza Sahab is one such regional representative who is on a visit to a particular locality placed under his disposal. Through the various interactions amongst the different characters of the play, it is sought to portray that if the moral fabric of any society is not discreetly and judiciously protected and preserved by its ruling fraternity, the decay and destruction of values- both social as well as personal will percolate to every level of the social hierarchy from the top to the bottom. As such Mughal Tamasha has no definite plot. Most of the characters are unrelated. They are mostly the Sebayats (people who render personal service) of the rulers or administrators. They are Vestiwalla (Waterman), Jhaduwalla (Sweeper), Farras (person arranging beds), Hukawalla (person who arrange Huka for Smoking), Pankhawalla (one who fans), Bhat (person who recited praises), Nanakshai (Followers of Guru Nanak), Daptari (Peon), Khansama (Cook), Zamindar (Landlord), Gumasta (Manager of the Landlord), Bhandari (Barber or Hair-dressers), Doodhawali (The Milkmaid) and others. All these characters are summoned to the stage one by one summoned by the Chopdar as desired by the Mirza, the Mughal administrator. All of them sing songs to introduce themselves and their profession. Family life is also delineated. Most of the songs are farcical and arouse humor. While singing the songs, they also indulge in mild dancing and gesticulations. Unlike other folk theatre the costumes plays an important and integral role in Mughal Tamasha. The characters like Chopdar, Vestiwala, Farras and Totibardar are dressed with Muslim dresses. Mirzasahab uses the costumes of royal style, which are

decorative, glaring and garish. The dress of Zamindar is very simple like the Vaishnavite Hindu. The costume of milkmaid is like the typical rural Hindu lady with saree and who enters the stage with a milk pot in her head. The performance of Mughal Tamasha continues throughout the night. The people enjoy the entire drama sleeplessly". (3)

Ambience with music:

A confluence of indigenous musical instruments and their more exotic counterparts is noticeable. The use of different musical instruments like Kubuji, Violin, Sitar Pakhawaj, Duggi- Tabala, Harmonium along with the indigenous Kahali (Desi Clarinet), Jodi Nagara or Dhola- Mahuri create an atmosphere that takes the audience to the period depicted in the play. The music is played prior to the commencement of action on the stage. Before the beginning of the play loud music is provided with Sahanai (Mahuri), Dhol and Jodi Nagara. The music continues for hours to attract the crowd. When the audience settles down the members of the orchestra come to the stage and occupy their seats, just in front of the acting area.

Challenges:

"The same is the pitiable condition of folk theatre form of 'Mughal-Tamasha' of Bhadrak, though it was once enjoyed and accepted by the people as the most thrilling and popular folk form. Ideas and taste of the people are changing fast with the march of the time. The popularization of radio, TV and VCR as source of entertainment has diminished the loyalty of the people towards the folk plays. Now aggressive consumerism has mesmerized the people's mind due to advent of electronic media. At this stage one may ask the question of utility and relevance of reviving the traditional multiple streams of folk plays when cinema and TV are giving enough entertainment to the people. The folk drama has got twin purpose of both entertainment and education. Folk theatre has contributed immensely for creating social consciousness". (2)

With urbanization of the country, industrialization, globalization and development; folk culture is no more cradled in the rustic hamlets of the country side. One does get to see some forms frequently manifested in city suburbs largely because of a huge section of the rural audience has moved to the city in search of a new life and better livelihoods. Therefore, in spite of the rapid urbanization folk art still remains the art of 'people' living both in urban and rural areas.

These art forms are faithful to rural life, have an authenticity and a charm of their own and are amongst the most valuable legacies of our long and varied rural heritage. Folk arts in form of have nourished a rich tradition. The coming of popular mass media like television, cinema and the internet

and other urban forms of entertainment has posed challenges to folk theatre forms.

The old order changeth yielding place to the new. Influences from around the world and impact of globalization are one and many. Intercultural communication has, in its wake influenced theatre forms of our nation. A western influence is evident in our performing arts.

Role of media:

Mughal Tamasha with its visual elements, quick witty delivery and lessons in socialism and religious unity and amity is food for thought for audiences and media alike. There are advantages of using such traditional media and even integrating them into the mass media. In India, such media have played a role in the communication and promotion of new ideas and the adjustment to a new and evolving political situation. Interpersonal exchanges are the key points in the area of changing ideas and behavior. Folk media are flexible, familiar and participatory.

Conclusion:

India is a treasure trove of folk theatre. Media can make citizens aware of the amazing variety of our folk theatre. Folk theatre like Mughal Tamasha with its unique flavor can bridge religious divides. It can be used as an effective tool in promoting behavior change communication. Integrating the concept, themes and musical scores in electronic media will be a wise blending of both media.

It is a matter of concern that many in the generation of today in our nation have no knowledge of a form of theatre called Mughal Tamasha. The youth especially in the internet era have no idea of this form of folk theatre. Jingles in radio and television and characters in print media could boost popularity of dwindling folk theatre forms and at the same time promote development ideas. Family welfare, small savings schemes, no to dowry, no to female infanticide, drive against liquor consumption, health hygiene, road safety and education are areas where folk theatre can create awareness. To advocate the use of folk media is not to take a stand against modernism. Again, invoking the folk does not mean that the electronic media must be relegated to the background.

According to noted film maker, Shyam Benegal, the government should bring more authenticity to their efforts of using folk media. Artistes belonging to the area where the form is popular should be selected instead of asking members of Song and Drama Division to play a role. The indigenous media will be accepted better because of the various parameters of familiarity, accent, mannerisms etc than the person who has

been 'groomed' to perform.

"Folk theatre or culture has flourished when the rich or urban middle class population has turned their attention to it. Now time has come, to bridge the gap between modern and traditional forms. We must rescue our identity from the challenge of being rootless and remain floating in the mono-cultural idea of the West", said theatre activist Subodh Patnaik. (6)

Dhira Mallick, theatre activist stressed that the unique feature of folk theatre is spontaneous. One can derive a lot of significant lessons from the rural drama. There is more focus on performance with minimal use of mechanical support. Moreover, they serve the dual purpose of entertainment and education. Folk theatre has been a tool for creating social consciousness for ages.

There is diversity of media in each region. A sincere effort on the part of government media units NGOs and cultural groups is the need of the hour. However care should be taken that the form is not vulgarized. Sentiments and intelligence of the audience must be respected.

Folk media are indeed the most effective form of communication in developing nations. Efforts to document and research the rich repertoire will go a long way to promote the development of nations like India. Given institutional and social support these forms can be revived, preserved and fostered as unique art forms for both rural and urban populace. Institutions that teach the art of drama at the national and state level have prepared courses influenced by western drama and its practices.

"A happy combination of the modern and traditional media would make for a practical approach, though it must be seen to it that folk media are not crushed in the unequal competition with the new media".(5)

Folk arts are evolving in nature. They continually adapt themselves to changing times and needs and thus continue to lose a bit of their original form. Therefore it becomes difficult to recall the history of their form and existence. It is only through studies, research, methods of recall and repeated performances that we attempt to trace their original form and historical evolution. There is hardly any significant feature in the syllabi to know and understand our own indigenous culture or theatre or names of experts. It is not surprising that this situation prevails due to negligible efforts in documentation or failure in giving an academic shape to our folk forms.

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Negotiating the patriarchal ideology of the *Mahabharata*: A Study of Bisham Sahni's *Madhavi* and Saoli Mitra's *Five lords yet none a protector*

Dr. Shymasree Basu

Abstract

The Mahabharata has proved to be a fertile ground of artistic inspiration

for writers who have tried to question its ideology. The epic lends itself to critical enquiry and writers who tried to critique the dominant discourse of *The Mahabharata*, have consistently interrogated patriarchy's concerted victimization of the women characters who have tried to resist or challenge its designs. Bhisham Sahni's *Madhavi* and Saoli Mitra's *Five Lords, Yet None a Protector* are essentially revisionary attempts to critique the patriarchy of the Aryavarta as manifested in the behaviour of the male characters in the text. The epic consistently cast women in the role of the other. These plays maybe critiqued as mythopoeic exercises whereby the unarticulated female discourse is given a legitimate voice and space. However these authors are not essentially creating feminist texts but trying to counteract the ideology of the epic by making an alternative counter-ideology seem feasible and also imperative. As texts of protest they are a courageous attempt to resist an uncritical absorption and circulation of the epic ideology.

Keywords: Mahabharata, patriarchy, mythopoesis, counter-ideology.

Introduction

The ideology of *The Mahabharata* is clearly patriarchal and this discourse is sustained as well as circulated in the canonical editions of the epic. Thus 'Aryavarta' or the land of the Aryans is a space where the patriarchal ideology flourishes since there is no resistance or counter ideology to challenge it. The reader perceives the social structure of such a society as one where the hierarchy of caste is as strictly observed as that of gender. Women in *The Mahabharata* are idealized only when they are dutiful wives or caring mothers. The canonical readings of the text have circulated this male-centric version of the epic without trying to probe deeper into the actual status of women in such a society. Readers seldom encounter a dissenting feminine voice in the epic. The resistance to a patriarchal ideology is sporadic and never effective. Amba and Draupadi have the potential to challenge patriarchy and its gender bias but their resistance is contained within a greater design; that of necessitating the Dharma Yudh and enabling the Pandavas to triumph over the Kauravas. As women who have been wronged by high-born Kshatriya warriors they cannot claim redress unless they cast in their lot with one of the empowered groups of warriors (in this case the Pandavas). In other words their grievances are legitimized only when they concede to unite their cause with the more prominent patriarchal struggle for political power or with some other male agenda. Thus it is clear that the women have no agency of their own and remain the disenfranchised 'other'. This paper will seek to explore

how Bhisham Sahni's *Madhavi* and Saoli Mitra's *Five Lords, Yet None a Protector* critique the patriarchal discourse of *The Mahabharata* by choosing two female characters from the epic and making their hitherto unarticulated discourse the subject of enquiry. The paper will also try to observe whether these plays are successful in their attempts at mythopoesis by choosing to re-read a canonical text by prioritising the trajectory of female experience and by foregrounding questions of their self-identity and sexual autonomy which have been obscured in the traditional readings of the epic. Finally, the paper will also try to establish whether these plays are able to create an effective counter-ideology by virtue of which Madhavi and Draupadi become figures resisting the patriarchal oppression or are the plays mere texts chronicling the eternal victimization of Indian women; reinforcing a discourse which is still prevalent in twenty-first century India.

Sahni's *Madhavi* (2002) is a tale of a woman who is mentioned only cursorily in the epic. She is Yayati's daughter and figures as the woman who becomes the medium through which Galav is able to fulfil a promise given to his guru Vishwamitra. Madhavi has been blessed with twin boons: she will always bear Chakravartiy sons who will grow up to become kings and she will be able to renew her virginity by performing the necessary rituals even after giving birth to her sons. Thus *The Mahabharata* with its patriarchal ideology reduces Madhavi to her metonymic function. She is valued for her womb which becomes the instrument or the organ by virtue of which she enables Galav to procure aswamedhi horses for his guru-dakshina. Madhavi is taken to all the kings of Aryavarta who own aswamedhi horses and co-habits with them and gives birth to sons whom she has to abandon in order to go to another king. Jaidev in his Introduction to Sahni's text points out that dramatists or writers who have engaged with the epic, have done so at the level of ideology. Their critique is levelled at certain vulnerable points of the text which disclose the gender and caste bias of the textual discourse. Thus myth-making as a creative enterprise is revealed to have its own set of agendas and most importantly these narratives reveal the epic to be a privileged discourse and not a polyvalent or plural one. Jaidev regards these sister-texts as attempts to resist patriarchal ideology by revealing its fallacies which inevitably empower the males, the Kshatriyas and Brahmins over others. He remarks:

These modern sister-texts continually foreground the artificiality of this ideology and thus point to the possibility of its replacement by another that is less unjust and the more equitable. (p.vii)

Madhavi dramatizes the dialectic between the patriarchal ideology operating at the level of the myth and the modern gaze which chooses to address the problematic areas regarding the rights and privileges of the women in the epic world.

Saoli Mitra's *Five Lords Yet None a Protector* (2006) addresses the sexist bias at the core of the myth-making in the entire text of Mahabharata especially with regard to Draupadi. Unlike Sahni, Mitra uses a Kathak who narrates the crucial episodes of the text and enacts Draupadi's role as well as those of the others as described in the epic. However this enactment or performance is only a mediated form of reading that enables the modern viewer to perceive the gender bias of the primary text. The Kathak's narration gives the viewer/reader a female or perhaps a more humane lens to interrogate and critique the epic. Draupadi's narrative running parallel to the objective epic narrative voice (also narrated by the Kathak) gives the text its dialectical texture whereby Draupadi interrogates the actions of the Kshatriya princes and calls into question the principles underlying the definition of Kshatriya valour endorsed by the epic world.

Both Sahni and Mitra try to explore the ambiguity inherent in the concept of Kshatriya 'dharma'. The male characters in *Madhavi*: Yayati and Galav, try to justify their action by pleading the cause of 'dharma'. Galav's dharma as a disciple makes it imperative that he deliver the promised guru dakshina to his guru. Yayati's dharma also makes it imperative that he keep his reputation of being generous by enabling Galav to fulfil the promise made to his guru. When Galav comes to Yayati's ashram to ask for his aid, Yayati readily tells him to take his daughter Madhavi as she would be able to produce Chakravarthy sons which in turn would induce the kings to give up their Aswamedhi horses. Madhavi's shock is registered in her first reaction: "Madhavi: If Mother were alive would she have let you gift me away like this?"(p.10)

Madhavi's artless question makes the reader realize that patriarchy seldom understood the real worth of daughters. Moreover her reaction also underscores the sexist bias inherent in the code of Dharma. It was necessarily an ideological construct which effectively reduced the woman to an object to be appropriated and bestowed, as and when the patriarchal society deemed convenient. The impassive, inhuman dimension of patriarchal ideology is manifested through Yayati's instant reply: "Yayati: Madhavi, the only thing that matters at present is *my* [italics mine] dharma."(p.10)

Yayati's curt reply succinctly establishes the authority of the 'dharma'. He does not feel that he needs to justify his action to his daughter.

Canonical texts which have been the ideological framework of societies often circulate a male centered world view and encoded the role of women as the vulnerable sex. Thus revisionary readings needed to address this in the founding myths of societies. Alicia Ostriker(1986) remarks:

Whenever a poet employs a figure or story previously accepted and defined by a culture, the poet is using myth, and the potential is always present that the use will be revisionist: that is, the figure or tale will be appropriated for altered ends, the old vessel filled with new wine, initially satisfying the thirst of the individual poet but ultimately making cultural change possible.(pp.212-'13)

Ostriker's contention applies equally to Sahni. Sahni's artistic gaze is engaged in an attempt to revision the Mahabharata myth. This is evident in his creation of the character of Ashramite². This nameless character has the audacity to question Yayati's understanding of Dharma and denounces his decision to gift his daughter to Galav.

In Mitra's text Draupadi's disrobing or *vastra haaran* episode raises the same questions and once again forms a critical indictment of the Kshatriya's conception of Dharma. The Kathak chooses to question Yudhistir's role in staking Draupadi as the pawn in the dice game. The Kathak ironically comments on Yudhistir's reputation as the Dharma-Putra (the son of Dharma Raj) to make the audience appreciate the depth of his depravity. The Kathak quotes Yudhistir thus: "Kathak: ...And Yudhistir says, 'She who is not feeble, she who is not puny, this supremely beautiful and beloved Draupadi...I stake her!'"(p.31)

The Kathak chooses to ponder the implications of Yudhistir's decision and raises the question of his distressing lack of moral integrity:

Kathak: Just think, Yudhisthir actually says this. The son of *Dharma*[italics mine] without once pausing to use his judgement. He thinks neither of the husband's moral obligations, nor of the wife's rights. He just goes ahead and stakes Draupadi the beloved of the five Pandavs.(pp.31-32).

A little later the Kathak declares:

Believe me, Sirs. Sometimes I feel if I ever got the chance to go to heaven I'd ask why Yudhisthir wasn't sent to hell for this sin!What for heaven's sake is the rule up there?(p.33)

This is an ironic comment on *The Mahabharata* itself where it is narrated that Yudhisthir attains heaven as does Duryodhan.

Like the Ashramite 2 in Madhavi there is only a maiden voice of protest. It is from Vidur who is not a Kshatriya. He is the son of a slave. The Kathak

muses:

So shouts Vidur. He who is not a Kshatriya. He who is the son of a slave. And who as the son of a slave is given no honour in court. It is Vidur who, unable to bear it any longer, protests. Duryodhan showers abuse on Uncle Vidur. But Dhritrashtra is silent. Bhishma silent.(p.38)

Quite like Yayati's refusal to defend his action before his daughter, the court consisting of the Kaurava elders remains silent and is unable to protect Draupadi or protest against Duryodhan's attempt to dishonour her publicly. The Kathak's narration forms the frame while Draupadi's reaction is the inset and this double narrative gives the readers a twin set of dissenting voices: one subjective and involved and the other objective and distanced. Thus patriarchy is doubly indicted by the victim herself as well as by a modern day chronicler. This tenor is sustained throughout the play to give it its unique discourse.

Commentators like Kevin McGrath(2009) have remarked that it is Draupadi's wrath which propels the epic towards the climactic Kurukshetra battle. Draupadi becomes with her wild, uncombed tresses becomes a metaphor of wronged womanhood. McGrath also describes her as a figure of 'charged femininity' who finds greater acceptance in modern India where women are challenging the evils of institutional patriarchy.

However, it is Draupadi's suffering on which Mitra concentrates rather than her fiery presence. Even after the dice game Draupadi remains the faithful wife of her five husbands. The play moves forward in time to record Draupadi's debasement at the hands of Kichak. Even while retelling Draupadi's woes, the Kathak ponders on the question of Draupadi's sexual fulfilment in a marriage where polyandry was imposed upon her when she was actually legitimately married to Arjun. Draupadi's love for Arjun remains unrequited and she hardly shares any physical intimacy with him. Arjun's intimacy with other women pains her but she cannot protest as she is bound by the code of polyandry to be a dutiful wife to all her husbands. The Kathak dwells upon Draupadi's sexual longing. But like Madhavi Draupadi cannot win the love of Arjun. Arjun, like any Kshatriya king, marries for political advantage as well as love whereas Draupadi is denied any kind of sexual preference amongst her husbands as she has to follow the code of a polyandrous marriage as laid down by the patriarchal ideology giving her husbands the prerogative of deciding the time of sexual co-habitation. In this retelling of the epic, Mitra appropriates the epic to interrogate its glaring biases and flaws. The feminist reading is oriented towards exposing the central tragedy of Draupadi's life: she is a woman married to five great princes but none of them could protect her. Mitra is

most critical of Arjun and Yudhisthir. While the latter is more concerned about protecting Dharma, the former's quest for valour gives him very little time for Draupadi. The Kathak expresses Draupadi's dilemma in the following manner:

How much of him did Krishnaa get? How little? Yet it was for him that he pined. And on that horrible day, the day of the dice game? Arjun had remained silent. Why, he had not come forward to protect the honour of his beloved Panchali.(p.45)

In fact Draupadi's questions become all the more insistent and probing. She asks Krishna when he requests her to forget her humiliation and advises her to concede to a peaceful truce. The Kathak records her angry response:

Kathak: Convenient, isn't it, Good People?...Forget them-for the sake of political expediency...

If I forget the humiliation inflicted on me, dear friend, will it usher a Dharmarajya, the rule of Virtue, into this world? Can you promise that in future no woman will ever be persecuted or demeaned like I was? Will my forgiveness usher in that heavenly state? Tell me, Krishna[with an agonized cry] tell me!(p.60)

However Draupadi's ire dies down as she grows old. It is the inevitable compromise or the silencing of the other when he/she finds the dominant ideology too powerful to resist. Even after the Battle of Kurukshetra her life does not become any better. Yudhisthir is busy ruling the land and Arjun is always moving from one heroic quest to the other. At the end of the play the woman who chooses to accompany her husbands on their final journey to heaven is just a tired wife who undertakes the journey because the patriarchal law ordained it such. The Kathak comments: "Good Sirs, Draupadi's suffering was very real, the suffering of flesh and blood. The suffering of life itself... Draupadi endured the agony of a corrupt, decadent era."(p.64).

Thus patriarchy appears to have contained the rebel woman. Draupadi, at the end seems to have lost to the mightier institution. While comparing her with Madhavi, it is clear that both are victims of patriarchy. Madhavi does not have any standout moment of grand defiance like keeping her tresses uncombed, but she is intelligent enough to know that patriarchy has denied her any real agency. Thus her final decision to opt out of her swayamvar and refuse Galav because he wants the earlier version of Madhavi(a virgin with youthful beauty) and she is most reluctant to change. Thus she asserts her subjectivity in this final act of refusal. Patriarchy fails to reduce Madhavi to a helpless other. She refuses to

perform the necessary rites to become young again. Madhavi informs Galav of her decision:

Madhavi: I am still the same Madhavi. The Madhavi whose very presence tormented you. But now I know that I was only something for you to use, only an instrument. Even when you told me that you were grateful and full of respect, you were lying. You have only loved one person and that is yourself. I knew that but refused to believe it. Instead, I deceived myself into believing that you were a man of truth and principles...I was only trying to look into your heart, Galav...I can perform the rites to become regain my beauty and virginity again, but I no longer feel young at heart. (p.66)

Madhavi decides to leave her swayamvar and her father's ashram too. She decides to go away to the forest. Thus she forsakes the patriarchal human society for the more humane and perhaps compassionate realm of nature. This is her protest and also her most effective act of self-definition.

Draupadi's destiny is somewhat similar. As she lies dying she realises that it was Bheem the middle Pandav who was always her protector and perhaps his devotion was the only true love she ever had. She dies with her head cradled in his lap praying that in her next birth she would want to have a husband like him. While this is not exactly a moment of self-definition it is one where the character attains self-knowledge and is no longer the victim with no agency of her own.

Adreinne Rich in 'When the Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision'(1971) speaks about re-vision as a feminist act of protest aimed at rectifying the flawed discourse of canonical myths. She writes:

Re-vision—the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction—is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for women, is more than a search for identity: it is part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society.(p.18)

Thus Sahni's and Mitra's attempt at revisioning the ideology of *The Mahabharata* critiques patriarchy and tries to articulate the concerns of the women in a patriarchal society. The myth of the *The Mahabharat* is one of the most enduring ones in the Indian society. Jaidev in his introduction to Madhavi speaks about its power and dominance. According to him:

These 'canonized' ways of reading [the epic] have also endured because there has been no real revolution at the ideological level, and since the Mahabharata ideology has all along been quite supportive of the

dominant groups, there has not been any great demand to question or change the ideology.

It is not accidental that the challenge has come from artists who have an alternative ideology with which to counter it. Like all myths the ones of the Mahabharat too are adaptable, but this quality does not by itself guarantee a redressal of the ideological balance; nothing less than a superior counter-ideology is required for that.(p.xii)

Perhaps Sahni and Mitra's attempts are not as powerful to be defined as a concerted counter ideology but these texts ask the relevant question to challenge patriarchy if not totally dismantle it. Draupadi and Madhavi are survivors in the inimical patriarchal space but they try to articulate their resistance and seek a safe space for themselves with only a modicum of success.

Karen Armstrong in *A Short History of Myth* (2005) has spoken of the need to admit the authority of the myths and their persistence in the modern imagination. The book is an introductory text to the Canongate Series of Myths which showcases different authors who challenge the received versions of various universal myths in an exercise of creative mythopoesis. Armstrong says:

We must disabuse ourselves of the nineteenth century fallacy that myth is false or that it represents an inferior mode of thought. We cannot completely recreate ourselves, or cancel out the rational bias of our education and return to a pre-modern sensibility. But we can acquire a more educated approach to mythology...We cannot counter these bad myths with reason alone, because undiluted *logos* cannot deal with such deep-rooted, unexorcised fears, desires and neuroses. That is the role of an ethically and spiritually informed mythology.(pp.135-136)

Sahni's *Madhavi* and Mitra's *Five Lords, Yet None a Protector* may therefore be adequately defined as texts which represent a new kind of mythology where the female presence needs to be inscribed and given a voice despite its location in a society or space which disenfranchises them as the other. These texts have inaugurated a feminist myth making or revisioning which has contemporary relevance as well universal resonance.

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Evolution of Street Theatre as a tool of Political Communication

Sangita De

&

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Abstract

In the post Russian Revolution age a distinct form of theatrical performance emerged as a Street Theatre. Street theatre with its political sharpness left a crucial effect among the working class people in many corner of the world with the different political circumstances. In India a paradigm shift from proscenium theatre to the theatre of the streets was initiated by the anti-fascist movement of communist party of India under the canopy of Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). In North India Street theatre was flourished by Jana Natya Manch (JANAM) with the leadership of Safdar Hashmi. This paper will explore the background of street theatre in India and its role in political communication with special reference to historical and analytical study of the role of IPTA, JANAM etc.

Keywords: Street Theatre, Brecht, Theatre of the Oppressed, Communist Party of India (CPI), IPTA, JANAM, Safdar Hashmi, Utpal Dutta.

Introduction

Scholars divided the history of theatre forms into the pre-Christian era and Christian era. *Aristotle's* view about the structure of theatre was based on Greek tragedy. According to the scholar Alice Lovelace "*He conceived of a theatre to carry the world view and moral values of those in power,*

investing their language and symbols with authority and acceptance. Leaving the masses (parties to the conflict) to take on the passive role of audience.....The people watch and through the emotions of pity & grief, suffer with him." Bertolt Brecht expressed strong disagreement with the Aristotelian concept of catharsis. He raised the question about the relationship of stage and audience. He opined that audience should react with their intellect not with emotion. African-American writer & actor *John O'Neal* was highly influenced by the thinking of Brecht. In the year of 1963 O'Neal, *Tom Dent and Gilbert Moss* established *Free Southern Theatre* in New Orleans which was an inspiration for those who supported Civil Rights Movement. From the post WWII era the conception of Theatre for Development (TFD) emerged. In 1970 Brazilian educator and philosopher *Paulo Freire* published his notable book *Pedagogy of Oppressed*. Brazilian theatre artist and political activist *Augusto Boal* was highly motivated by the critical pedagogy of his country mate Paulo Freire and obviously by the the philosophy of Brecht. He outlined the remarkable theory the "*Theater of the Oppressed*" in 1979. Today's street theatre is intensely influenced by the conception of Theatre of Oppressed proposed by Paulo Freire.

Genesis of street theatre as a distinct theatrical form

History was witnessed street theatre as a major component of urban life in London approximately from the period of 1500-1642. According to the theatre historians street theatre was exist during the French Revolution (1789-1799) in France. Historians also mention about the Walnut Street Theatre of Philadelphia in USA near about 18th century. But Russian Revolution left a powerful impact on modern street theatre. The eminent personality of street theatre in India Safdar Hashmi wrote in an article *The First Ten Years of Street Theatre: October 1978- October 1988* –

"Street theatre as it is known today can trace its direct lineage no further than the years immediately after the Russian Revolution of 1917.....This was a beginning of a new type of agitprop theatre performed on the streets, at factory gates, markets, dockyards, playgrounds, barnyards and so on."

He gave the example of China where Communist Party used street theatre to mobilize the workers and peasants. Like its birthplace in Russia, this was later spread in the USA, Cuba, Sweden, Spain, and Africa and all over the Latin America. Hashmi also commented that within a few years along with the Soviet, street theatre expanded its foot-hold in all over the world.

Historical perspective of theatre in political communication: Indian experience

In the year 1859 Dinabandhu Mitra wrote Nil Darpan (The Mirror of Indigo Planters). India's first significant political drama perfectly portrayed the actual situation and exploitation of poor indigo planters. Nil Darpan was first staged in Dacca in 1861. It was the first anti-British production and purely political in nature which created public opinion against the British rulers. After the acceptance of Nil Darpan by different levels of society a specific trend was formed. Some prominent drama of that period was *Zamindar Darpan* by Mir Massarraf Hosan, Tea Planter's Mirror and Jel Darpan by Dakshinaranjan Chattopadhyaya. At the same time a considerable number of nationalistic theatres performed in North India, Maharashtra, Assam, Mysore, Andhra Pradesh etc. All this theatrical representation was helped in creating an anti-british standpoint. As a result British Govt. imposed The Dramatic performance Act 1876 to suppress the freedom of Indian theatrical sphere. Theatre also left a major impression during the anti-partition movement in Bengal (1905-1911). Another important example of theatre in political communication was an IPTA production of 1944 – Nabanna (Harvest) written by Bijan Bhattacharya. Based on severity of Bengal famine (1943) it became a landmark in Bengali theatrical space. Many thespians divided the timeline of Bengali theatre in two categories – pre-nabanna and post-nabanna theatre

Street theatre in political communication: Indian experience

Street theatre adopted its political nature from its inception stage. The root of street theatre in India was strongly related with the anti-fascist political ideology of the leftists and the progressive political theatre in the '40's in Kolkata'. The Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) was formed as the cultural front of the Communist Party of India (CPI) in 1942. The street theatre movement in India began with IPTA (Indian People's Theatre Association). Subir Ghosh in his book *Mass Communication: an Indian Perspective* stated that –

"The structure of street theatre in India has been greatly influenced by the German playwright Bertolt Brecht's (1898-1956) 'Epic Theatre, British producer Peter Brook's (1925-) 'Rough Theatre' and Badal Sircar's (1925-) 'Third Theatre'."

Jana Natya Manch of Safdar Hashmi played a very significant role in promoting street theatre in India. He utilized street theatre as a weapon for political responsiveness of poor mass.

Veteran theatre activist Utpal Dutta successfully applied street theatre and he also took street theatre for political campaign during the general elections of 1950's and 1960's. *Samajtantrik chal, din bodoler pala, kalo*

hat, Chargesheet etc. were his remarkable works in the context of street theatre.

Student Federation also employed street theatre for election campaign. *Japan k rukhte hobe* (1938) was a very popular street theatre led by Student Federation.

Praja Natya Mandali established in 1942 and it was the cultural squad of IPTA which operated in Andhra Pradesh. It applied the theme of Burrakatha, folk form of that region with street theatre. They raised voice against the atrocities on working class and highlighted peasant struggle of Telangana by their performances. Their innovative excellence owned immense popularity.

During the 21 month span of internal emergency (25th June, 1975-21st March, 1977) Indian citizen experienced the darkest chapter of democracy. All fundamental civil rights were suspended. Many street Theatre activists in different parts of the country were attacked, imprisoned, and even killed by police and political hooligans.

Indian theatre and various forms and genres generates all kinds of cultural varieties identifies the plurality and diversity of the country. But it always presents some kind of interconnectedness, commonality across the regional, linguistic, and cultural boundaries in its orientation- specifically contemporary social-cultural and political significance. Street theatre is one of such art forms.

Political ideologies in various art forms and emergence of IPTA:

The use political propaganda through cultural performances of theatre became very popular and used both by nationalist and social reformers for communicating messages to large audiences like Guntur *Sarasa Vinodini Sangam's* a political social drama on life of Tilak and Gandhi. In Madras city, S. Satyamurthy, supporter of the performing art, creatively used this art for national purpose to voice for the freedom in a way of popular art form. The popular theatre introduced political comments and symbols of nationalism which was taken to the interior corners of the country and these trends intensified vastly by the execution of Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries. National also appreciated the work of the theater in the Nation's cause.

Those theatre groups which earlier from 1930s staged religious, mythological plays started performing plays on the theme of self rule through the symbols like *Charka, Khaddar*. To suit the local contexts and circumstances the innovations and varied forms as folk music, ballads, *Harikatha*, street plays, with social political themes were performed to

reach wider audience.

Another theatrical form from Pin Pattu was used as a backbone of stage performances for political propaganda. This form was used during picketing activities.

During 1920s, the left came in the political scenario of India as a dominant socio – political group. With its Marxist socialist ideology, it emphasized on the mobilization of various sectors of society especially workers and peasants. Their emergence changed the thinking of all the sections of society beyond imagination through their anti- colonialism radical ideologies. The political – economic circumstances of the time also had intense influence on the aesthetic and artistic perception.

The Cultural Movement linked with these circumstances, developed not only in urban areas of Eastern India but also in the distant corner of Bengal, Assam, Manipur. The localized spontaneous activities led to the formation of a central organization – Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA).

An Anti – Fascist people's war line (to support British war efforts) was adopted after much debate by the CPI after Germany's attack on Russia in 1941. The imperialist war transformed into people's war for Communist Party of India (CPI). They were disseminating pro war propaganda and anti fascist resistance. Though intellectuals and educated sections can realize their ideologies, it was incomprehensible to the mass. And for gaining support for their war thesis they formed various cultural organizations with the active participation of well known intellectuals, writers, artists, etc. to disseminate message to the mass.

In these years Marxism gained a significant influence over the cultural life of the middle class of Kolkata. With the intensification of Japanese aggression in east Bengal the cultural squads were set up by the party to mobilize the masses to anti-Fascist-Nationalist. Anti Japanese people's play, anti-Fascist songs (in the form of Kabigan by Nibaran Pandit), and plays were organized by Anti Fascist Writers and Artist Association in the remote areas of Bengal. These localized cultural effort used for political mobilization gained momentum and appealed immensely to the politically oriented audience.

Culture squads and touring squads by a Student squad from Calcutta visited inner most districts of Bengal in 1942 and in Assam and produced cultural performance for propagation of messages for generating awareness among less conscious people.

Local cultural units were also formed from among the urban workers and

they used folk forms of *Jarigan, palakirtan* to disseminate the political messages.

Plays with anti-Fascist Nationalist theme by Anil D' Silva in Bengal and Bombay women's squad performances on Bhagat Singh's Martyrdom showed similar effort from outside Bengal. These local performances communicated political messages very effectively to the various sections of people.

Famine of Bengal in 1942 inspired many progressive writers and artists. Bengal cultural squad organized by Binoy Roy performed on the impact of famine on the people and for relief work to collect money for the victims. This squad travelled throughout the country and presented performance „*Bhookha Hai Bengal*’. Usha Dutta was part of the squad. The Central squad visited Punjab in Nov. 1943 and another squad which visited Bombay Gujarat Maharashtra in April 1944 raised considerable amount of fund for relief work. *Bhookha Hoon*”, a play by Binoy Roy and Usha Dutta's *Hunger dance* generate sympathy for Bengal in those areas. Other cultural groups were also formed. The efforts of the youth cultural institute of Calcutta in 1940-42, was setting up of people's theatre at Bangalore by Anil' Silva in 1941, who also assisted in formation of people's theatre in Bombay in 1942. These various progressive cultural groups and theater groups functioned successfully in disseminating messages and to organize these cultural activities at National level. P.C. Joshi, the then secretary of the CPI, played an important role and Sajjad Zahir also contributed in the formation of Indian people's theatre Association in 1943. From 1942-46, the influence of communist grew in the certain areas of national struggle and for theatre movement (IPTA) it was also the period of growth. As a cultural wing of the CPI, IPTA succeeded in the promoting of radical nationalist consciousness. Folk forms were widely used for promoting consciousness. Various innovative forms and subjects were used by the organization to reach out to the people.

IPTA vastly used traditional folk forms like “Burakatha”, “Veethi Natakam”, “Harikatha”, “Yakshagana” in Andhra Pradesh, Tamasha(Aklechi Goshte-A Tale of Wisdom in 1944 by Annabhav Sathe) in Maharashtra, etc. (Richmond, 1973: 325)

Jyotirmai Moitras' *Navjeevaner Gan* (dance drama) with traditional folk form, Dr. Andhra's *Burakatha, Harikatha*, folkdance of North India, folk songs in Marathi, Magai Ojhas' Assamese folk instrumental music also found place in the movement. Shadow plays and extempore plays were also experimented during this period.

Street plays based on issues and stories directly concerned with the people such as hunger, famine, poetry, communal violence, feudal and colonial exploitation created impact on the society deeply divided by class, caste and religion through these common grave concerning issues.

IPTA's central troupe produced dance drama □ *Bharat Ki Atma* (Spirit of India) and *Amar Bharat* (India Immortal). "Spirit of India" had a narrative commentary, composed by Prem Dhawan and sung by Binoy Roy. It depicted misery of the people under imperialism, feudalism and capitalism. The play ended with a note of hope of arousing unity among the people. *Immortal India*, another ballet, narrated the colonial exploitation and suggested possible ways to release from it. *Jabanbandi* □ a one act play on famine and *Nabanna* (New Harvest) were the important dramas on theme of Bengal Famine produced by the central unit of IPTA. *Nabanna* is a folk cultural festival of Bengal to celebrate the harvest. This Bengali drama directed by Sombhu Mitra, portrayed the evils of the Bengal famine of 1943 and the shameful indifference of British rulers, and upper strata of the Indian society towards the plight of millions dying from the famine. Thousand of people came to see it in public theaters and also in open –air arenas.

The development of theatre movement was provided by the convening of conferences of different mass organization of the Communists. Two AFWAA conferences were held in Calcutta in 1944-45. At these conferences, Calcutta IPTA performed plays like *Jabanbandi* and *Mai Bhookha Hoon*. Kishan Sabha conferences at Bihta in Bihar (1942), Bazwada in Andhra (1944), Natrakona in 1945 were the occasion for cultural performances. These were attended by varying audience.

IPTA started to set up its local branch from 1944 in Calcutta, Mumbai and Assam. Branches of Assam staged plays on Bengal Famine. In Hoogly, Dayal Kumar used *Panchali* form, Dulal Roy adopted *Kirtan*. Bombay Squad's talented artists Annabhau Sathe and Gavankar, used *Tamasha* and *Powada* forms to disseminate messages among Bombay workers. IPTA gave new direction to the Indian theatre and bring theatre to the people to generate awareness about social responsibility and national integration. Indian street theatre always has a political orientation and IPTA is a political wing of the communist party and it always gives political messages through its performances besides social- cultural issues. According to Som Benegal in "A Panorama of Theatre of India" that IPTA was –

"Took up issues of social abuse, religious bigotry, political oppression and economic exploitation" (Richmond, 1973:323).

Utpal Dutta is perhaps the most prominent exponent of IPTA. He wrote political plays since 1947 and in early 50s he adopted "pathanatika"(Street corner play) to give messages on communist ideologies. This form of play can be improvised and contemporary in themes. Chargesheet (1949) was among the earliest street plays in Calcutta produced by him. This play asked for the release of political prisoners and to support C.P.I. in the 1952 elections in Bengal (Richmond,1973:327). . Chargesheet was performed at Hazra Park, Kolkata to an audience of thousands of workers, and later was repeated many times across West Bengal. In terms of form, early street theatre seems to have imitated the stage, with the action often taking place in front of a wall or some other backdrop, and actors entering from and exiting into makeshift wings(). Dutt's other play are "Anger" (coal)in 1960 against unsafe coal mining and consequent labour death, "Teer" (arrow) in 1967 romanticising peasant guerrillas brutalized by the police and soldiers at "Naxalbari" ,a secluded area of Eastern India seems to be refuse for radicals. Dutt's play "Din badaler pala" (Tale of Changing Times', 1967) was a courtroom drama written around the same time against the hypocrisy of the establishment and said about how west Bengal is colonized by New Delhi acting as a foreign agent of America, Soviet Union and Great Britain.

During the 1960s realistic and naturalistic dramas emerged in the theatrical arena. It happened due to contemporary social issues like industrialization and urbanization of vast areas, and consequent changes of village and city life, unequal distribution of wealth, failure of any major economic growth from the period of 1951 to 1979, wars with China and Pakistan, and a huge insurgence of refugees from Bangladesh besides uprising of Naxalite movement due to the exploitation of the peasants and land labours in almost all over Bengal during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

These momentous events instantly moved middle class, educated, urban intellectuals such as Badal Sircar and found representation on the stage and in the street. In terms of form, Badal Sircar's work had great influence. Abandoning mainstream drama, he went to open-air performance, which communicates directly in a face to face mode with the dissatisfaction working class in an intensely physical style. Although he does not participate in the movement, many street theatre groups benefited from the workshops he held all over the country.

IPTA regularly performed short skits and plays in working class apartment buildings where all the people assembled to watch the performance. One of the few street plays performed was *Shanti Doot Kamgar* ("Working

Class: Harbinger of Peace"), inspired the Chinese Revolution and another is Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena's *Bakri* ("Goat"), based on contemporary politics. With the Naxalbari uprising in Bengal and the Emergency declared by the central government in 1975, the growing intensity of political unrest of the turbulent 1970s was also felt in the movement of street theater. A number of such productions were performed in the streets of India, by artist-activists.

Street theatre performers were attacked by police leading to the death of at least two activists, *Ashis Chatterjee* of Theatre Unit in 1972 and *Prabir Datta* of Silhouette in 1974. Many others were arrested, beaten up, tortured. Bengal continues to have a vibrant tradition with regular shows performed by such persons as *Probir Guha*. Street theatre continued its journey of bringing social change in several other Indian states too. A number of such productions were performed in the streets of India by artist-activists.

Post-independence, with several internal conflicts within the communist movement, IPTA gradually became inactive and dysfunctional. By the late 1950s, it was formally dissolved as a national organisation, but independent states units remain exist.

Jana Natya Mancha (JANAM)

In 1973, when the Delhi branch of IPTA almost became inactive and dysfunctional, a few members came out of it and formed *Jana Natya Manch (JANAM)*. *Safdar Hasmi* was the main exponent of the Mancha. In small groups they went to factory gates and neighbourhoods around the city, collected money and distributed pamphlets and throughout they used to sing. [Hashmi 2007: 78].

Its early plays, though initially designed for the proscenium, were performed on makeshift stages and chaupals in the villages of North India and also in small and big towns. It also then started performed street skits. Its first play was *Mrityur Atit (After Death)*, a Bengali play by *Utpal Dutt*. Then it took *Bharat Bhagya Vidhata*, a satirical play in Hindi by *Ramesh Upadhyay* on the misuse of election machinery and it was shown in the many working class colonies and factory gates and also in colleges, public parks and middle class areas.

JANAM made a short skit called *Kursi Kursi Kursi ("Chair Chair Chair")* in direct response to the judgement of Allahabad High Court of the invalidity of the midterm assembly election which Indira Gandhi wins as a prime minister. The play was about never ending zeal for power at every possible way. An "elected king who is sitting on a chair and a new king is elected. He gets up from his chair but the chair rises with him and no

matter how hard they tried to separate the king from his chair, it was impossible" [Hashmi 1989:156]. It was their first attempt at street theatre, and they performed it at the Boat Club, then the centre of oppositional activity. On 25 June 1975, Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency. This was a severe attack on civil rights and freedom of speech and expression in the country, and JANAM stopped performing and for the next few months, it remained inactive.

Due to the high cost and resources involved in these full length proscenium plays and unavailability of both necessary money and resources the need for low cost and need based topical theatre was felt. So the transition from proscenium theatre to street theatre happened. The members of JANAM took a decision of writing plays themselves. Its first post-emergency street theatre *Machine* depicts the machinations of the establishment in collusion with the police and security all within 27 minutes. They write it based upon an incident at a chemical factory on the outskirts of Delhi. Six workers were killed in the police firing to stop the agitation between the people hired by the management and on the workers' strike for their demands of a bicycle stand and a canteen. The play used the machine as a metaphor for the system, in which *"five people (three workers, the guard, and the owner) come on and start constructing a machine in motion, making all kinds of sounds,"* after which the worker comes out of the machine and it stops working. This play is performed for the first time on October 15, 1978, at a meeting of progressive writers.

In December 1978 JANAM prepared a play called *Hatyarey ("Killers")*, which was set in Aligarh and used the metaphor of the lock to explain the interconnectedness of Hindus and Muslims after the communal riots over lock making industry at Aligarh, a town of Uttarpradesh.

On January 1, 1989, an event occurred which the foundations of JANAM and the very art form in the country. In the early winter afternoon, *Janam* was performing their play *Halla Bol ("Raise Your Voice")* for a group of workers at Jhandapur, Sahibabad, on the outskirts of Delhi, as a part of its campaign to support the CPI (M) in the local election campaign. A candidate from the rival party backed by a gang of hundred goons armed with guns and sticks, ordered JANAM to stop the performance and in consequence Safdar Hashmi was murdered in the agitation.

JANAM continues its performances in working class areas and has developed several new plays over the years, both street and proscenium. It always maintains a close association with the trade union movement. JANAM goes back to Sahibabad, where Safdar Hashmi was murdered, and performs a play, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Trade

Unions every year on 1st January. It has been a regular event since then and is widely attended by people from all parts of Delhi. It led the movement of Indian street theatre. Till 2002, it had notched up about 7000 performances of fifty-eight street plays, many of them later translated or adapted by groups across south Asia.

Expansion of Work:

In its work, JANAM has never moved away from topics that both reflect and define the experiences of the oppressed sections of society. So far they have produced plays on industrialization, condition of the laborers, price hike, unemployment, government policies, communism, trade union rights, education, women rights, gender issues, globalization etc. Some popular production of street theatres of recent times are – *Yeh Dil Mange More Guruji* on the rigidity of Hindutva to obliterate India's democratic framework and secularism, *Aakhri Juluos* on the right to protest for all, against injustice, *Yeh Bhi Hinsa Hai* on growing violence against women, *Honda ka Gunda* on the condition of workers in Gurgaon, *Naarey Nahin To Naatak Nahin* on industrial laborers, *Rehri-patri Nahin Hatenge* on the issues of concern for hawkers' union, *Kafila Ab Chal Pada Hai* on AIDWA)etc. *One Two ka Four* is a reworked version of an earlier play, *Nahi Qubool* is on the nuclear deal; *Yeh Hum Kyon Sahen* is on the conditions of workers in and around Delhi.

Political Significance and Orientation:

"By its very definition, street theater has to be ideologically deep rooted. And politically, it has to be Left wing." (Deshpande, 2007, p. 64)

The street theatre came specifically from the political orientation of the communist party. It works as a political wing of the left party. Its first such play, *Machine (1978)* is a classic; *Aurat ('Woman', 1979)*, *Hallabol ('Raise your voice', 1988)*, and *Artanad ('Scream', 1996, on sexual abuse of children)* exemplify a popular political theatre that features direct confrontation and energy as well as artistry.

The prime objective of street theatre specifically JANAM is the upliftment of the working class leading them towards the sphere of mainstream democracy and shaking up establishment. Though it began its journey for presenting their political ideologies through theatrical aesthetics, it uses theatre for generating awareness over each and every social issues and gained wide acclamation of every sectors of the society. It always stand firm on its ideology. Though safdar Hasmi insisted on using both proscenium and street theatre, some of its members like *Habib Tanbir* give more emphasis on street theatre over proscenium theatre as according to him it is more powerful than proscenium theatre. It needs not

only low production cost but also generate wide awareness and receives ample public goodwill. The proximity between actors and audience and direct communication is strong features besides its colloquial language structure. JANAM came into the fore with its political orientation and it never moves away from its ideologies and represent it always in their theatres whatever the themes are. JANAM promote the journey of street theatre as a tool of anti establishment and thus empower the common people to take the centre stage in socio-political transformation through theatre which is participatory in nature and represent their voice.

Conclusion

The aim of street theatre is always for the upliftment of the working class people, the mass and to raise their voice to make them aware of their rights and to help them to take the central position in the socio-political diaspora of the democracy. And to attain this, it is necessary to amalgamate community development and proper education. To ensure participation, street theatre has to have acquired the community's cultural forms. Education can build proper mind set and generate awareness through relevant information dissemination. And the forums of street theatres continue to do it through its infotainment street theatre formats by performing in almost every nook and corner of the country, both urban and rural areas. The exponents of street theatre would have to know the particular communities, their language, their dreams, needs and desires for future, concerning issues of the community and shape the content according to communal expression in entertainment format and ensure active audience participation and invoking action in democratic system. Now-a-days the scenario of media system in India changed dramatically with the emergence of satellite television channels, 24x7 news channels, social media like facebook, twitter etc. But according to the recent statistics 179.6 million people live in below poverty line both in urban & rural areas of India. In case of problems like illiteracy and digital divide, street theatre can play a crucial role for disseminating political ideas, views, values, ideology to the poor people at grass root level. So that poor mass can actively take part in participatory democracy. It can also reduce the difference between information have and information have-nots which will enable the proletarian people to make right decision in multi-party system of our country with political consciousness.

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Theatre as a Vehicle of Communication

Arunima Mukherjee

Abstract

As the world moves towards greater democracy and decentralization, it is vital for people to stimulate their awareness and participation. In this situation a decisive role can be played by communication in promoting human development. Communication is a crucial part of development process because it enables people to acquire the information they need to understand any process as participatory practice must be at its core, *theatre* can be a great tool for *communicating* complex social messages and creating understanding. All over the world, the theatre has now become not just a medium of communication but an increasingly indispensable aspect of human awareness. Theatre is one of the oldest ways of effective communication methods across the world. Still today, in a developing country like India, in rural areas where mass media reach is very low, the relevance of theatre as a traditional medium for Developmental issues is very much relevant. Theatre gives people the opportunity to tell their own stories, and addressing matters that are relevant to them. This is one of the most effective ways of participatory communication where people can participate and talk about the taboos of the society freely and frankly. This is a tool for exploring issues, difficulties, problem-solving and improving communication. Consequently, theatre is regarded as a tool or instrument for development. This article analyses, relevance of theatre arts as a communication tool and evaluate the changes brought by theatre.

Key words: Theatre, Communication, Agent for social change, Theatre for development, Participatory Approach, Reflections of individuals.

Introduction

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being" Thornton Wilder, an American playwright, novelist and winner of three Pulitzer Prizes, once said very significantly. [*1]

Social change is an inevitable and necessary part of the transformative process. But the question is ; in the age of new media and information technologies will theater as a form of traditional media become extinct? Carl Weber, Professor of Directing and Dramaturgy at Stanford University asks **"How can theater evolve its unique mode of 'live' performance so that it will stay competitive in a market where all kinds of electronically created and enhanced performance will dominate the merchandising of entertainment?"** [*2] This is reasonable fear, but there are indications that 'live' performer will not be replace electronic

actor. It emphasizes dialogue, ensuring audience-oriented feedback, and joint participation. Without participation effective communication is compromised. Theatre as a medium gives the opportunity to exchange of ideas, to achieve the objectives of development and encourage local participation in development. To define theatre as a tool of communication, it is important to analyze the basic functions of communication. Communication as a concept implies that through communication, individuals can share information and thereby increase their knowledge and develop a sense of community. Similarly, audience members after watching the theatre can communicate its messages to others within the community. The message is communicated through interactive dialogue participated in by the actors of the theatre and the audience. In the field of communication the role of theatre is same similar to that of the opinion leaders. Theatre is used as a particular form of development communication. Communication for social change is the heart of theatre arts. Through this medium people describe their behaviors in their professional and personal spheres as if they were performers on the stage of life.

What does theatre mean: The word 'theatre' comes from the Greek word 'Theatron', meaning 'seeing place'. Theatre does not mean that people do not just get up onstage and pretend. Theatre is representation of 'live performance'. Theatre that can be seen in different types and styles, involved the activities of different groups or organizations who accomplish such dramatic play or show openly to render their message to the public widely. A view to draw the public attention as well as generating the awareness within them through the delivered messages. It remains as one of the most powerful media of mass communication, as it evolve from an attempt to understand ourselves and the world around us. Theatre enhances three qualities:

- > It is collaborative art form
- >It is about human beings.
- >It is live in form.

The essence of theatre:

- Theatre that covers the various performances that relate to express all events and facts, ideas and thoughts of the respective society through the presentation in the manner of pleasure and enjoyments. Theatre can mould the numerous illiterate villagers effectively. What it caters for the people are mostly in easy and understandable manner.

- It applies very common and widely used languages of the respective society which make any presentation understandable quickly by rendering useful informations.
- Theatre caters its major programs through 'face to face' presentations to the audience.
- It can earn 'credibility' through its live presentations easily from the audience by delivering its messages.
- It is true that this traditional medium has significant contribution towards bringing the success of many developmental programs. It can impact the audience with an immediate effect through its catered program exchange of lesser expenses that it can afford easily.
- Drama engages people in creative problem-solving and decision –making.
- Drama builds cooperation and develops other social skills.

The problem of theatre:

Theatre plays an important role in informing people. It is means of public communication reaching a large audience. Theatre has a purpose beyond entertaining . Theatre has been used as a tool for upliftment which was demonstrated by a UNICEF Puppet Theatre Program after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. But there is no support as such from government. The government or any other private or public organizations are hardly found patronizing the art of theatre. Now, theatre is facing hindrances in various ways with the threats of closure .Funding is the major crux .Today technology is guiding our routine of everyday life. For this reason, the mass media has become a major source of information in 21st century. I want to address the tension that media technology and globalization create for this traditional form of communication. For instance, television in many cases has replaced traditional media. Theatre as a form of folk culture began to fade away following the development of modern mass media. But how can it be forgotten as a form of traditional medium? Theatre is an important vehicle that delivers information and culture to people. In this paper I will make clear that the theatre arts is still a powerful means of communication. It deserves to be called the medium of mass communication. The boom of electronic media cannot undermine the significance of this medium.

Why theatre?

Theatre will be taken to mean the vehicle through which messages are

carried from one end (variously or specifically called source, artist) to another (receiver, listener, reader, or viewer).

A basic communication model showing the sender, message, and receiver.

This model includes three basic elements of communication. Through this model, it can be easily understood. That here sender refers to artist, receiver refers to audience members and the remaining element, and message is speech by the actor. Theatre will therefore refer to the vehicle 'the common people'. Perhaps, we could look at the theatre in at least four ways. I shall now discuss the relevance of theatre as a communication tool or instrument towards performing the various communicative functions:

1. Information Function:

Communication programs have tended to fulfill the role in development thinking and practice. **"To inform and persuade people to adopt certain behaviors and practices beneficial to them".**[*3] Theatre as a medium of communication constantly mirrors and reflects the society. It can function to bridge understanding among audience members in a community. Theatre plays an important role to inform people. Theatre has a purpose beyond entertaining an audience. This purpose is generally to change the knowledge, attitude and behaviors of audiences. Theatre is being used as a medium of information. The use of theatre to inform audience members has many names. The terms 'infotainment' and 'theatre-in-information' are most often used. Although television and the internet have dominated mass media, but also theatre plays a powerful role in culture, as do other forms of media. Theatre arts form a major form of communication through which individuals can inform and persuade their thoughts. Theatre is involved in the dissemination of the information in a particular community. I give an example here:

Paul Lazarsfeld (American Sociologist) and his associates in their "hypodermic needle theory" implied mass media had a direct, immediate and powerful effect on its audiences. Mass media in the 1940s and 1950s were perceived as a powerful influence on behavior change. The core assumption of this theory is that the mass media could influence a very large group of people directly and uniformly by 'shooting' or 'injecting' them with appropriate messages designed to trigger a desired response. This model is a classic example of the application of theatre arts.[*4]

Conceptual Model:

Magic bullet theory model

Source: Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955)

Similarly, theatre is as exactly how the theory worked. Theatre is an effective means of communicating an idea. Theatre can change the mode of perception of the audience through information. Thus theatre arts play an important role in shaping people's view.

Theatre as a mode of communication in the Development of society:

Many researchers stress that there is no guarantee that greater access to information will automatically lead to increased participation in development. Theatre for development aims to offer an alternative approach by which theatre can be of direct service to the marginalized urban and rural poor masses.

"When real life experiences are captured within the dramatic form, strong emotions and resonance can be aroused among audience and powerful outcomes such as change in attitudes, behaviors or even causes of life are possible"-Said Somers(2008)[*5]

For instance, the dramatic representation of real stories brings the hidden values in the society to peoples' awareness. It has been proved that traditional forms of media are more effective to set the mind of illiterate masses.

Many theorists and communication workers think that the use of local and traditional media automatically ensures people's participation with rural people. As a form of traditional media, theatre is alive to new ideas. Theatre is fostered through local dialect. The nature of theatre arts is, this form is personal and more credible. People could easily identify themselves as part of this art form. The main motto of theatre as a popular form of traditional medium is to tell people a certain story through melodrama, attracting a heterogeneous audience at a time. While creating awareness about the reality is not easy in rural areas, where education levels are generally low and poverty is widespread. Therefore theatre can contribute to awareness building among the rural mass. Stage shows like theatre can target a large number of people at a time and have a profound influence on the spectators. 'Koottu'(theatrical form of Kerala) or 'Pandavani' (folk theatre form of Chhattisgarh) are some of the traditional forms of storytelling and narrative theatre. Theatre has a high effect in creating awareness and influencing the attitude of the audience. Example is given below in the form of a Case-study.

Case Study on Effectiveness of Theatre in Development

communication:

Kerala Sangeeta Nataka Academy deals with socio-political issues and gender discrimination. Shankar Venkiteswaran, artistic director of this academy has stated that, "**When the entire world considered Palestinians as terrorists, we were trying to express the identity of Palestine people in front of the world,**" he said. The world should know what is happening in Palestine. Innocent people have been portrayed as terrorists and sent to jail. They are undergoing cruel human rights violations, the activists said. The theatre should be able to express the plurality of society, stressed a discussion held at the seventh International Theatre Festival, here on Tuesday. It discussed the devices to take the theatre to villages. (The Hindu, 14th January, 2015)

In fact theatre has some added advantages like local appeal, direct personal contact, local dialect which make this medium so unique and useful. Thus theatre will help in developmental activities. Having wider flexibility, theatre as a folk medium can include any fact or event for delivering the same through their presentation, to the audiences immediately. No other medium of mass communication, has got any such opportunity or way to execute the same. Beside this, a very quick or instant interaction between the audiences and the communicator is possible satisfactorily in an easy environment. Such interactive part done satisfactorily, can command a successful communication which may lead in developing the rural society with the utilization of rendered ideas and thoughts as available from it. It is also, adored by urban people equally.

People's Participation and Interactive power: As a means of communication, in many developing countries theatre is easily accepted. Theatre may also be used as a means to identify problems and to seek solutions with the participation of the community. Theatre for development may be very effective in addressing communities in their own ways of understanding. Theatre also serves as a participatory tool by involving audience to participate in the act, making it a genuine two-way medium for communicating information.

Everett Rogers (communication scholar) in his theory "Diffusion of Innovation" (1962) described -An innovation is "an idea, practice, or object that is perceived to be new by an individual or other unit of adoption". "Communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another to reach a mutual understanding" (Rogers, 1995). Here Rogers first deals with innovation of an idea, He cites that *diffusion* is the process by which an *innovation* is communicated

through certain medium over time among the participants in a social system. So it is an absolutely participation based research work. Similarly, theatre for development is a participatory theatre practice which allows communities to write their own stories and perform in a drama based on the messages that emerge from the storytelling process. It is a practice which operates from their perspectives, using their own language.

Sometimes, spectators are encouraged by the tradition to stop the play, make comments and ask questions during the performance. Thus using of theatre in a development environments has involved performing plays to convey strong social messages. Yerima (2007) who quoted Shakespeare " **Theatre is a mirror for highlighting man's humanity and also a tool for understanding why man also finds it so easy to transgress that same humanity**"[*6] Theatre as a medium of communication constantly reflects the society. The dramatic representation of real stories engages people's emotions. When real life experiences are captured within the dramatic form, powerful outcomes are possible. For this reason theatre projects reality to direct participants and targeted audiences to analyze their own situations. Thus the theatre medium has been able to aid in national development since a long time.

Entertainment Function: Theatre is the indigenous means of communication. Theatre is not merely outdated forms of entertainment. But at the same time theatre too has some entertainment ingredients in it. It allows people to see life as an entertainment with their own perceptions. Theatrical performance which has been worked out in practice over the past few decades .Theatre gives a flavored and juicy entertainment wrapped with feelings, motives and sometimes full of reality. It is really educative as well as an entertaining instrument of communication. But the presentation as a catered by the theatre always comes to the people in the form of entertainment and enjoyments as well. Theatre in general, is significant to all because it goes straight to the heart. It helps to say and address things that peoples may not know how to say or address themselves. Theatre provides many of them an escape from everyday life and transports people to completely different world and with entirely different people.

Theatre for social change: Theatre has power. Theatre is an outstanding tool due to its accessibility to a wide range of audience. Yes, it can entertain but it can also tell stories that can convey important ideas and change the perspectives of the audience. Theatre is trying to give plurality of voices. Theatre is a way of social change is characterized as the "**Significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns**

through time". (Harper, 1993)[*7]

Bertolt Brecht (Theatre director) became the first to influence what theatre for social change is today. (Willet, 1992, 138). The reason for Brecht's importance in theatre is that his work attempted to bring about a change in the whole relationship between the actor and the audience. What Brecht most disliked and reacted against was the professional's view of the theatre as an end in itself. He wanted the theatre to accept its responsibilities as the social art with the utilitarian purpose of communicating with ordinary people about the matters that most concern them. (Bradby and McCormick, 1978) [*8] Theatre is a powerful tool for social justice and change. It's a space that holds multiple truths and allows people to explore the human condition. By using theatre as a catalyst for discussion, people can create empathy, affirm experience, raise awareness and hold folks accountable for action and inaction and offer a way through.

Theatre provides many of them an escape from everyday life and transports peoples to completely different world with entirely different people. Theatre is relevant to influence social change. Theatre is an outstanding tool due to its accessibility to a wide range of audience. The combination of oral communication, physical expression, image, music can capture and maintain the attention and interest of a great number of people over time (UNESCO, 2006) .[*9] This medium widens its audience by includes those groups who are illiterate or incapable to understand the other languages. The meaning conveyed by theatre essentially lies in the audiences' own interpretations. Theatre as a tool thus deserves an outstanding tool for social change.

Critical Evaluation of the medium of theatre:

Role of theatre in our society difficult to define. But sometimes theatre had been used only for the tool of entertainment. But there should be a responsibility to look into the problems that confront society and solve those problems. One of the peril of theatre is people don't want to pay to see the theatre in the era of television, laptop or handheld device. My suggestion is to theatre permeates every aspect of everyday lives of peoples and will give the ideas which would not otherwise be exposed. Theatre artists express themselves more effectively. It develops their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings to others. There should be a proper balance between entertainment and information in content material. There is a lot we can do on film that we cannot do on a stage due to budget. To maintain its ideal form, theater needs to be subsidized. It is very essential that the performers establish the correct

mood for the play, convey the proper meaning which is important for audience members.

We have seen that theatre can efficiently be used even in the modern world. It is an authentic, acceptable and reliable tool of communication now. Theatre is a sophisticated expression of human need, Theatre brings people together, contributes to development and influences how people think and feel about their own lives. Theatre is a great way to learn. Theatre is a cultural space where society examines itself in a mirror. It develops the ability of peoples to communicate their thoughts and feelings to others. Many people feel that theatre is a way for them to escape their lives for a while and enter a new reality where there are lessons to be learned. Theatre then has the potential to significantly change lives of audience members. It is summarizing that theatre should be viewed as an instrument of sustainable development. We make this affirmation because it is the basic role of theatre. Let us promote communication through this art form which is more credible, personal and appeal directly to the daily lives of the people.

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The role of Theatre as a Medium of Communication

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Abstract

Communication as a social tool includes a wide range of functions such as instruction, persuasion, education, entertainment, development and so on. Over the ages, all the communication mediums have evolved themselves to accommodate the various functions of communication in the dynamic world where day by day people learnt from society by these tools and this is true of the theatre as well. In the early time theatre playing a virtual role to provide the information to the societies which were interlink with removal of social abuses or some running experiences of the society. This paper is a humble endeavour towards interpreting the theatre as a communication medium that can significantly contribute towards ably performing the various communication functions. It also seeks to deliberate upon the need for approaching the study of communication in the Indian perspective.

Key Words: Theatre, Communication, Information,

Introduction

A concoction of vivid cultures impacting the people, their mien, vantage, credence and lifestyle – that is what Indian culture is about. Indian culture has travelled through several eras and has adopted a lot from them. It is not just about following some traditions, it is about the sense of belonging and homage to the civilization which was once represented by our ancestors. The culture you live in, gives you a distinct identity not just by means of how you celebrate festivals, dress up, or perform rituals, but also by your day today activities and the way you live. Even before the first family drive in the new car, a Nariyal-Nimbu is cracked open in front of it, deviating it from the road to any mishap; to start a new venture, a Muhurat or auspicious time is determined so that it prospers; Dahi-Peda is taken on the very first day of the new job or examination to ensure all goes fine; touching feet of elderly to seek their Aashirwaad or blessings; all this constitutes Indian culture. Some people stay true blue about it while some find it imposed.

Indian tradition of theatre is rich and evolved with the ancient rituals and

seasons of the country. It is believed that Lord Brahma created Natyaveda, the fifth Veda on Natya (action) as a mode of recreation for all class of the society by incorporating words from Rig Veda, music from Sama Veda, action from Yajur Veda and emotion from Adharva Veda. Sage Bharata who perfected the dramatic art and wrote Natya Shastra, a great comprehensive work on the science and technique of Indian drama, dance and music enacted the first drama to the audience of 'Devas'. Through the medium of drama, common man was presented with the Ithihasas, Puranas, and Mythology.

Indigeneous tradition as well as modern research traces the origin of Indian drama to the Vedas. In the Ramayana we hear of drama troupes of women while Kautilyas Arthshastra mentions musicians, dancers and dramatic shows. Drama is a performing art, which has also been practised since times immemorial. Drama could spring from a child's play. The child enacts mimics, and caricates which was definitely the beginning of drama.

Since early times mythological stories of war between the gods, goddesses and the devils is known. Bharata wrote Natyashastra and created the plays known as Asura Parajaya and Amrit Manthan.

Natyashastra is one of the greatest texts written in the field of drama and other performing arts.

Drama occupies a significant place in Indian culture. India has always been a paradise for art lovers, be it music, dance or drama. However, perhaps it would be fair to place drama a notch above music and dance because drama essentially incorporates both the forms. The various aspects of drama have been comprehensively discussed in a particular text composed in ancient India known as the *Natyashastra*. The *Natyashastra* ascribed to the Indian sage Bharata is generally considered to be the earliest treatise on dramaturgy. The Sanskrit term for 'Drama' is *Natya*. *Natya*, says, Bharata Muni, is an imitation of the various emotions and situations of the people through *abhinaya* (acting). The word Abhinaya is a combination of two words, '*abhi*' meaning 'towards' and '*ni*' meaning 'to carry'. Thus, *abhinaya* literally means carrying the performance of a play to the point of direct ascertainment of its meaning towards the audience. (Pandya, 1990)

But then, the question emerges as to how the actor shall carry the meaning towards the audience. Herein come the role and importance of communication. Communication refers to the act of transmission of ideas between individuals through the use of significant symbols. It is a process by which a person or a group of persons attempts to make another person or a group of person aware of its ideas on a particular subject. It is

of paramount importance to social living as social life can exist only when meaningful symbols are transmitted from one individual to another. Thus, communication essentially refers to the process of establishing commonness among the participants involved in the act of communication through the act of information sharing. When any communication process continues for a considerable period of time, particular attitudes and values are inculcated in the minds of the audience which ultimately leads to building of social relationships. Emphasizing the importance of communication in building up of relationships, Raymond Williams asserts that men and societies are tied together to relationships in describing, learning, persuading and exchanging experiences. This exchange of experience is facilitated by communication. (Mukhopadhyay, 1999).

India has a longest and richest tradition in theatre going back to at least 5000 years. The origin of Indian theatre is closely related to ancient rituals and seasonal festivities of the country. Bharata's Natya Shastra (2000 BC to 4th Century AD) was the earliest and most elaborate treatise on dramaturgy written anywhere in the world. The traditional account in Bharata's Natya Shastra gives a divine origin to Indian Theatre, attributing it to the Natyaveda, the holy book of dramaturgy created by Lord Brahma.

In Natya Shastra, Bharata Muni consolidated and codified various traditions in dance, mime and drama. Natya Shastra describes ten classifications of drama ranging from one act to ten acts. No book of ancient times in the world contains such an exhaustive study on dramaturgy as Natya Shastra. It is addressed to the playwright, the director, and the actor because, to Bharata Muni these three were inseparable in the creation of a drama. The Sanskrit word for drama, nataka, derives from the word meaning "dance". In traditional Hindu drama, expression was achieved through music and dancing as well as through acting, so that a play could be a combination of opera, ballet and drama.

Living traditions occupy a prominent place in the Indian social system. Any living tradition has a natural flow. There can be no doubt about the fact that traditional art forms reflect the ideals of the society, its determination to survive, its ethos, emotions, fellow-feelings, and so on. Drama in itself is a complete form of arts. It includes in its framework acting, dialogue, poetry, music, etc.

In community living, the art of singing has its own importance. In all the traditional theatre-forms, songs and the art of singing have an important role to play. Traditional music of the theatre is an expression of the

feelings of the community.

Thus, it is only fair that theatre is seen as a medium of establishing a relationship of commonness between the actor (communicator) and the audience (communicated) that hinges on the art of communication. Communication as a human function is multi-dimensional in nature. While communication has primarily been regarded as an information sharing process, the scope of communication is vast indeed. It includes a wide range of functions such as instruction, persuasion, education, entertainment, development and so on. Over the ages, all the communication mediums have evolved themselves to accommodate the various functions of communication and this is true of the theatre as well. We shall now discuss how the theatre as a communication medium can significantly contribute towards performing the various communication functions.

Command or instructive function

The main important function of communication is command or instructive function. Communication as a command or instructive function posits that the primary purpose of communication is telling the recipients of the information what to do, how to do when to do etc.

Theatre has always been a chosen medium of instruction since the ancient times. The Modern era in Theatre came during the rule of the British as a source of their entertainment. The idea of Realism started seeping in from the West and theatres were based on London models. Post-Independence nationalism was intertwined with this art. The Modern Theatre was given a new shape, colour and flavour. The year 1972 turned out to be a landmark for the Indian vernacular theatre when Vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play 'Ghashiram Kotwal' made waves by its brilliant use of traditional folk forms in modern contemporary theatre. This led to the birth of a new breed of directors.

Of course the advent of Indian Cinema proved detrimental to the Theatre. Nowadays there are hardly any eminent theatre personalities who have dedicated themselves solely to theatre. Theatre people have to keep some ties with Cinema to survive financially. But we can't let this culture die. It's one of the oldest sources of entertainment and we should resurrect it from its ruins. Catch a play at your nearest Theatre centre and be a part of your country's glorious history.

In the words of Bertolt Brecht, "Oil, inflation, war, social struggle, the family, religion, the meat market, all became subjects for theatrical

representation. Choruses enlightened the spectator about facts unknown to him....Right and Wrong courses of action were shown. People were shown who knew what they were doing, and others who did not. The theatre became an affair for philosophers, but only for such philosophers as wished not just to explain the world but also to change it. So we had philosophy, we had instruction." (Mukhopadhyay, 1999)

Persuasive function

And another important function of communication is the persuasive function. According to David Berlo (1960), the sole purpose of communication is to influence people and persuade them into any particular way of thinking or acting. The persuasive function of communication is extremely important for inducing people into changing their behaviour in any particular desirable direction. Communication embodies an important human behaviour and helps in the process of Social, Political and Cultural transformation of a society. Each and every society around the world evolves its own appropriate systems of Communication to perform the function of societal transformation which ultimately gave birth to various performing arts. In this process, tradition plays a vital role to create the artistic processes the indigenous tools of human communication.

Theatre, through repeated use of messages over long period of time, can persuade its audience in the formation of certain attitudes and behaviour patterns. History has shown us how the theatre has often acted as a vehicle for agitation and propaganda. The first significant drama of social protest in India was *Nildarpana* (The Mirror of Indigo Planters) by Dinabandhu Mitra, published in 1860. The play dramatizes incidents drawn from the revolution of 1858 in which Bengali indigo cultivators were mercilessly persecuted by the British planters for refusing to sow their crops. The play aroused considerable public sentiment in Bengal against British rule and paved the way for a host of patriotic works written along similar lines elsewhere in the country. (Richmond, 1973)

Education function

Education has always been one of the most important functions of communication throughout ages. However, communication for education has been generally limited to formal communication practices and has rarely been experimental in nature. However, theatre can be effectively used as a medium of education. The great sage Bharata narrates to us

the educational purpose of drama as declared by Lord Brahma. Thus says Bharata, *"This (Nṛtya / Drama) teaches duty to those bent on doing their duty, love to those who are eager for its fulfillment, and it chastises those who are ill-bred or unruly, promotes self-restraint in those who are disciplined, gives courage to cowards, energy to heroic persons, enlightens men of poor intellect and gives wisdom to the learned... It will [also] give relief to unlucky persons who are afflicted with sorrow and grief or [over]-work, and will be conducive to observance of duty (dharma) as well as to fame, long life, intellect and general good and will educate people."* (Ghosh, 1950)

Educational theatre and drama practitioners have believed in the efficacy of their work for a long time, but until now it has rarely been measured with scientific tools. In the international EU-supported project called DICE ("Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competences in Education"), several dozen educational theatre and drama practitioners from twelve countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom), with the widest theoretical and professional background, have allied forces with academics (psychologists and sociologists), to measure the impact of educational theatre and drama through a cross-cultural research study investigating the effects of educational theatre and drama on five of the eight Lisbon Key Competences.

Entertainment Function

Entertainment has emerged as an important function of communication. The entertainment function of communication was first proposed by Charles Wright. Prior to him, the utility of communication in Harold Laswell's opinion was limited to three functions – surveillance, correlation and transmission. While entertainment media are much more concerned with likeability and physical attractiveness, it is these characteristics that attract people to entertainment shows and can create attitude change via a peripheral route in entertainment settings. Generally speaking, the broadcast media such as TV and films best reflect this function. (Xiaoli Nan, (2004) However, the entertainment function of communication is by no means limited to the broadcast media. It is worth mentioning here that the theatre started as a medium of entertaining the masses. Entertainment, however, here is to be seen as an expression that addresses the broader canvas of providing relief to the people from the mundane concerns of life that includes multiple aspects of diversion such as delight, recreation, pastime or mere distraction from the problems of real life even if

momentarily.

Development function

Development media theory which relates to media structures and performance in developing societies provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding the relationship between theatre and development. This is because the theory encompasses what Folarin (1998) described as a great variety of socio-cultural, economic and political condition which borders on the effective use of the media for development purpose. Specifically, the theory considers the role of the media in society as essential target at stimulating and sustaining societal development in such area as cultural, social economic, political and technological development. The theory also advocates a situation where the media (theatre as one) should accept and help in carrying out the special development task of national integration, socio-economic modernization, promotion of illiteracy and cultural creativity (Folarin 1998). The 'Re- flective-Projective' theory of Broadcasting and Mass Communication by Leo Loevinger presents a similar position. The theory provides yet another basis for understanding the relationship of theatre and development. Leovinger position is that the media 'mirrors the society' and that while the media themselves reflects society as organized group, individual audience members project their own individual reflections into images presented. This is where the saying among theatre scholars that 'theatre is a creator's mirror of the whole universe' and the popular dictum 'the world is a stage where everyone plays his or her own part and leaves' finds justification. In this regard, the MacBride Commission in its report titled 'Many Voices One World' asserted, "Even when modern media have penetrated isolated areas, the older forms maintain their validity, particularly when used to influence attitudes, instigate action and promote change. Extensive experience shown that traditional forms of communication can be effective in dispelling the superstitions, archaic perceptions and unscientific that people have inherited as part of traditions and which are difficult to modify if the benefits of change are hard to demonstrate. Practitioners of the traditional media use a subtle form of persuasion by presenting the required message in locally popular artistic forms. This cannot be rivalled by any other means of communication." (Kumar, 2006) Theatre can be used as important mode of communication for development primarily owing to its certain qualities. It is one of the cheapest media available, it does not rely on literacy, it can be more flexible and topical than other media, and above all the audience can participate in the play making the

theatre a genuine two-way medium for communicating information. (Kasoma, 1974) The theatre holds more relevance in Indian perspective primarily owing to the fact that the Indian folk theatre is a composite form of containing songs, music, dance, and drama that seeks to fulfil all the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic needs of its spectators. It is more than entertainment, a complete emotional experience and creates a state of receptivity in which messages can be most effectively transmitted.

Theatre as an old form of Communication is a deep – rooted tradition in India's vibrant culture. Folk Theatre is a composite art in India with a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, versification, epic and ballad recitation, graphic and plastic arts, religion and festival peasantry. The Folk theatre having roots in native culture, is embedded in local identity and social values besides providing mass entertainment helped Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter – group and inter – village communication for ages.

Conclusion

The theatre by its very nature and particularly because of its communality and its fictionalized situations provides a forum, whereby communication can easily take place without the attending antagonisms which would normally occur in a directly realistic situation. As part of an educational and organizational process, theatre can play a range of roles: bringing people together and creating contexts for collective reflection and action; drawing out participation and expression of popular concerns, and analysis; overcoming people's fears and rationalizations and building confidence and identity; stimulating discussion and a critical understanding of problems, contradictions, and structures underlining everyday reality; clarifying the possibilities and strategies for action; stirring people's emotions and mobilizing people for action.

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Significance of Folk theatre as Communication for Development in Indian Context

Naznin Sultana

Abstract

Introduction

Theatre is one of the oldest forms of human communication. From the very beginning, it has been used for different purposes – religious, political, social. Its local approach and colloquial dialects makes it more personal and intimate and directly appeals to the heart and mind. In India, theatre is still largely accepted by different age groups in all areas. It is still considered more familiar and credible by the majority of the people. It is unique in effective communication because it has some specific cultural values. Theater has its different traditional forms in different regions which are known as folk theatre. Some of these popular forms are Tamasha, PowadaBhavai, Nautanki, Jatra, Therukoothu etc.

These folk theatres have many elements of entertainmentlike song, dance, drama, music etc. Folk theatre has deep root in tradition, culture and it has

greater reach than other mass media.

Tamasha – It is a 400 years old folk theatre of Maharashtra. It has its two forms –Banavat (artificial) and assal (real). Every performance starts with a prayer to Ganesh. The Vag (story) starts in form of song, dance and dialogues. Stories can be myth or social problems. Tamasha groups are also now working to educate on government sponsored family planning programmes.

Powada or Pawala– This 16th century folk theatre form of Maharashtra are generally based on historical tales. Some musical props like Majra, Daph, Tuntune are used.

Yakshagana – This Karnataka's folk theatre is basically "the song of the Yaksha". The main narrator is Bhagvata who sings.

Nautanki – North India's this famous folk drama is purely based on music. The main instruments used are makkara and dholak. This is made on contemporary social and political events.

Jatra – This is the folk theatre of Bengal and Orissa. It emphasizes on the episodes of Krishna and Radha. UtpalDutt used Jatra for political communication.

Bhavai – It is a popular theatre form in Gujarat. The main Characters are Ranglo and Naik. It starts with devotional song. Classical music is used in this form. Satire is an important element.

Therukoothu – It is Tamilnadu's street theatre and a combination of prose (iyal) music (isai) and drama (natakam).

Puppetry – It is another popular form of folk theatre. Four styles are used generally Sutradharika, Rod Puppets, Shadow Puppets and Hand Puppets. It is widely used by different NGOs, government educational programs to make aware the rural people. Bihar's 'Yampuri' puppetry is well-known for its activities.

Burrakatha– It is a integrated folk art form of narrative story. It is performed by a troupe of three artists – Kathakudu, Rajakeeyam and Hasyagadu. The musical instruments used in this form are tambura and dakki. This folk art belongs to Andhra Pradesh &Telangana.

Street Theatre- It is also a popular form of traditional folk theatre. It has been also referred as "nukkadnatak". The nomenclature of this includes 'street' word as it is performed in street corners, markets, roads. Attention has been trying to be grasped of the audiences through different actions, gestures etc. Social problems are generally addressed in this form. Jana NatyaManch is very famous as a street theatre group. The name of a renowned Tamil street theatre is 'Terukkuttu'.

Communication for Development

Communication that supports development activities is termed as Communication for Development. Nora Quebral (1975) explained Development Communication: "The art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth and makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfillment of human potential." At first, this term has come from agricultural communication.

The early thinkers of development emphasized on the economic growth of the country. The main focus was only on urbanization, industrialization and intensive capital growth. Rogers (1960) called this western model of communication "dominant paradigm". Later it was realized that this model is not suitable for the developing countries. Neo-Marxist scholars seriously criticized this model. Researchers and intellectuals were then trying to find some alternative ways for development. In the starting of mid-1970, E V Rogers played a significant role in the modernization of developing countries. He re-defined the meaning of development and explained development as "a widely participatory process of Social change in a society intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment." This new concept is focused on overall growth of the society including provision of basic need such as food, shelter, education etc. Dissanayake (1984) defined development as "the improvement in the quality of life". Rogers (1976) outlined some goals for the development of third world countries:

"A. equity in distribution of information and other benefits of development,

1. active participation of people at the grassroots,
2. independence of local communities (or nations) to tailor development project to their own objectives and
3. integration of old and new ideas, traditional and modern systems, endogenous and exogenous elements to constitute a unique blend suited to the needs of a particular community."

Wilbur Schramm was an eminent scholar, who first understood the importance of communication in the development of the third world countries. He expressed that mass media could improve the quality of life

through illuminating more learning opportunities. Communication is very important for self development. Later other researchers also gave importance to interpersonal and group communication in villages for grass root level development. Paulo Freire said that "for development communication practice, the central focus should be on face-to-face emancipatory dialogue". United Nations also put more weight on communication within the cultural values for national development.

Indian Perspective

Since independence in 1947, Government of India has made several development efforts through different plans, programs, schemes etc. These are all usually assigned for a five year time period.

A majority of people, especially the rural India have low coverage of media. But it is important for the upliftment of rural India because, 70% Indians reside there. Mass media doesn't have wide physical reach because of limited resources and technological growth and general rural mass doesn't have access because of low literacy level, low purchasing power etc.

In the 1970s theatre was used to educate the masses in Latin America, India and sub-Saharan Africa. Eckhard Breiting in his book "*History and theatre in Africa*" quoted that:

"The rise of Theatre for Development also marked a change in international relations. It was both the symptom and the result of the failures of 20 years of development policies that had insisted on the implantation of the materialist and technological culture of the north as the only possible road to the development, irrespective of the cultural and social environment."

MacBride Commission has also given importance on traditional media and in its report "*Many Voices, One World*" (1982) it is cited that:

"Extensive experience shows that traditional forms of communication can be effective in dispelling the superstitions, archaic perceptions and unscientific attitudes that people inherited as part of tradition, and which are difficult to modify if the benefits of change are hard to demonstrate. Practitioners of the traditional media use a subtle form of persuasion by presenting the required message in locally popular artistic forms. This cannot be rivaled by any other means of communication. Examples abound where song, drama, dance groups and the like are used to promote campaigns against social evils (such as alcoholism, burdensome dowries, discrimination against women, archaic taboos)/ or for advances

in farming, health, nutrition and family welfare, agricultural reforms, national integration and similar national goals." (p. 81)

Folk theatre: vehicle of development

Song and Drama Division, an important unit of Ministry of Information & Broadcasting is often described as 'Live media wing'. It works for the grass root level development through using traditional folk media. It was set up in 1954. It has many troupes which perform in the various places. The performances are very effective means of inter personal and group communication. The main purpose is to create awareness and educate people on different issues for overall socio-economic development. It has its headquarter in New Delhi and 12 regional, 9 sub-centers in different parts of the country. Directorate of Field Publicity also uses these old forms to disseminate various development messages.

Similarly, other governmental organizations and departments like Department of Science and Technology, Space Application Centre etc. are using folk theatre to inform the masses.

Along with the government departments, NGOs and SAGs (Social Action Groups) performs folk theatre for developmental purposes.

In 1971, Bank of India propagates a campaign through puppetry at rural areas in Uttar Pradesh on bank savings schemes. Ramaswamy used 'Tom-Tom' in the eradication of Leprosy. UNESCO and UNICEF even sponsor many hygiene awareness campaigns which are purely based on folk theatre.

Case Study

World Health Assembly has conceded for polio eradication in 1988. Pulse Polio Immunization programme was launched in India in 1995. Children in the age group of 0-5 years governed polio drops during National and Sub-national immunization rounds (In high risk areas) every year. The main objective was "of achieving hundred per cent coverage under Oral Polio Vaccine". It aimed to immunize children through better social mobilization. During the early years, this programme had little effect in West Bengal where parents did not consent to give polio drops to their children. Murshidabad is one of the prominent districts among those. The assumed reasons were poverty, illiteracy etc. To overcome this problem UNICEF and Kolkata Creative Art Performer jointly started campaigning for Pulse Polio. Kolkata Creative Art Performer was made up in 2000. Some students started working in this group with the hope of changing the

society and bringing development. This group performed street theater in different "polio prone" blocks like Suti I, Suti II, Samsherganj etc. It got good response and the performances were remained effective. It was widely accepted by large number of people. Parents went health centers for giving their children polio drops. After the performances, rigidity became 2-3% from 80%.

Conclusion

India is a big diversified country. Multiculturalism and Multilingualism is the specialty of Indian heritage. Every culture has its own unique traditional values. To get closer to the Indian masses, it is very important to touch their customs. To make them aware it is essential to appeal them through their language with proper dialectical touch. It is more applicable for rural India because of low literacy rate and lack of awareness. In this case, folk theatre can only be used for reaching them with the cultural approach. This deep rooted communicational instrument is very remarkable for bringing social change. The understandability power of folk theatre is really impressive. This social tool can be utilized community development as well as individual development. Many theatre groups like Rangshala, Nandikar, Mandap, Bohurupi, Indian People's Theatre Association etc. are also working on that. Folk theatre has also played an important role in creating strong cultural identity.

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Woman's quest for love: A few Tagorian insights in Drama

Kathakali Sen Gupta

Abstract

This paper wants to underline and at the same time explore the nature of woman's quest for love, as seen by Tagore in *Raja (The King of the Dark Chamber-1910)* and *Raktakarabi (Red Oleanders-1924)*. It seems that in these two plays Tagore attributed a rare quality of articulation to woman, engaged in finding out the terms of love, on which man and woman, engaged in finding out the terms of love, on which man and woman should accept each other. The result is a wonderful unravelling truth, mysterious and at the same time fascinating.

Keywords: Tagore, Drama, Woman, Quest for love, *Raja*, *Raktakarabi*.

In the present social context, gender-based discussions hold a major place of importance; but on the other the violence is being inflicted upon women —physically, morally and intellectually. In this context, Rabindranath Tagore's two major plays *Raja* and *Raktakarabi* and their female protagonists demand a careful reconsideration.

Love in almost all the major plays of Tagore is a social relationship between genders and their acceptance of each other. Love, for Tagore's characters is not only about physical happiness but also signifies a pure mental bliss. In the ultimate state the characters attain a mystical state of realisation about the powerfulness of love to transcend the limitations of human existence. For Tagore, "*Love is life in its fullness like the cup with its wine.*" (Sen, 140)

Tagore's concept of love is of three kinds: Physical, Spiritual and Mystical. At first, they are attracted at the external level but then attain a height of spiritual realisation. In this context *Raja (The King of the Dark Chamber-1910)* and *Raktakarabi (Red Oleanders-1924)*, two of Tagore's major plays that examine man-woman relationship to the core are felt to need special focus.

Besides the comic plays and the *Muktodhara-Sharodotsov-Dakghartrio*, *The King of the Dark Chamber* is the first major play by Tagore to focus on the debated question of external glamour in love. The play revolves around Sudarshana the damsel and the queen who seeks to see her king in the world of pomp and glitter. The play charts out the journey of

Sudarshana from illusion to realisation. Tagore himself attests his belief in this manner: *"the realisation of truth of oneness, the oneness of our soul with the world and of the world-soul with the supreme lover (i.e. God). (Sadhana, 116)*

In *The King of the Dark Chamber*, the King represents an allegorical figure that is omnipresent. He cannot be seen through naked eyes and meets his queen only in the dark chamber. As she tells Surangama:

"Sudarshana: I have not seen him yet for a single day. He comes to me in the darkness and leaves me in the dark room again...I must see him at any cost." (KDC: 26-27)

Surangama, however, is spiritually quite awakened and sustains the queen with the real self of the king. Like queen Sudarshana, the multitude of the state has not seen the king and doubts his existence. However, this signifies the basic spiritual ignorance of human soul.

As the ignorant human soul often does, the queen is also attracted by pomp, glitter and handsomeness and completely smitten by the imposter Suvarna. Led by the king of Kanchi, princes of Avanti, Koshala, Vidharbha, Virat, Panchala and Kalinga plotted along with Suvarna to possess the queen; king of Kanchi, sets the palace on fire after this incident. Having passed through such trials, tribulations and humiliation, the queen finds her ego shattered and then alone she is able to meet his king at his own level. The queen's quest for love achieves its final goal and finite meets the infinite.

The woman here lifts her soul to another level to achieve freedom through love. She realises the supreme power of the king but is so ashamed of her own deeds that she has no courage to meet the king. She renounces all her desires for worldly wealth to meet her king and surrenders her own self to him:

"Sudarshana: I am the servant of your feet...I only seek the privilege of serving you ...I was repelled from you because I had sought to find you in the pleasure garden, in my Queen's chamber; there even meanest servant looks fairer than you. That fever of longing has left my eyes for ever. You are not beautiful, my lord—you are beyond compare." (KDC: 111-112)

Prior to this, no other protagonist in Tagore's drama had reached this height of sublimity, having thus created *The King of the Dark Chamber* a landmark in Tagore's plays.

Raktakarabi (Red Oleanders) (1924) may be considered to be the next milestone. In *Red Oleanders*, *Nandini*, the female protagonist, exults while speaking about love between Ranjan and herself,

"I love Ranjan as the rudder in the water might love the sail in the sky, answer its rhythm of wind in the rhythm of waves."(RO,42)

Touched by his love Nandini becomes the torch-bearer of the message of love and delight for everybody in her world. To adapt the king's words she symbolises the rhythm of the world which makes her beauty simple yet perfect. At the end of the play when Ranjan arrives but as a dead-body she surrenders herself to her object of love and pronounces wildly (here she articulates the voice of the woman in quest of love or the woman who conquers by means of love.)

"My love, my brave one, here do I place this blue-throat's feather in your crest, your victory has begun from today and I am its bearer."(RO, 96)

This is the final proclamation, but ever since she arrives in Yaksha-town she begins to transform everybody by the worm touch of her love. In Yaksha-town greed for gold has transformed most of the human beings into lifeless machines. As Tagore himself says:

"Nandini is a real woman who knows that wealth and power are 'maya' and that the highest expression of life is in love, which she manifests in this play in her love for Ranjan...woman will one day prove that the meek in soul, through the sure power of love, will rescue this world from the domination of the unholy spirit rapacity."(Tagore, 1925, 283-85)

As hinted by Nandini the colour of Ranjan's love is red like the red-oleanders which she wears on her neck, on her breast and on her arms.

It is interesting to note how the adolescent who is successfully named 'Kishore' is touched by her love so much that he can dedicate his soul to her. The Professor is also touched by her but only theoretically. This love reaches its culmination when she says to Vishu about the king: *"He is hungry for love and wants desperately to live."(RO ,34)*. It is true that, as is usual with him, the king tries to overpower Nandini during their encounter but is finally overwhelmed by her touch of love. It is he who becomes a rebel against his own machinery, hand in hand with Nandini, though the local governors of the system refuse to be trampled.

It may be said that love of Ranjan has gone through a reincarnation in king in *Red Oleanders* as in *The King of the Dark Chamber*, Sudarshana's quest is never complete until she realises the king's love for her. As they stand these two women are strong examples of what Tagore thought women can do, not being separated from men, but hand in hand with them. This seems to contain a germ of what is called today 'androgyny' in feminist theory. Along with this very contemporary reference, one is reminded of Shelly's soul-stirring verse drama *Prometheus Unbound*, where the vision

of a better future can never be envisaged by Prometheus (symbolising humanity and its aspiration) until Asia (symbolising love and sympathy) joins him. A radical transformation through love which seems to be the message of the two women also whose roles Tagore under covers in his two major plays.

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Theatre as a tool for Social Development

Aniruddha Jena

Abstract

The Indian society is a complex with the presence of different caste, religion, creed and tribes as well. This paper is trying to enunciate how theatre works as a tool for the social developmental and how it is helpful for the developmental aspects of the society. And as a medium of mass communication, how theatre is helpful for the change and the change which results in developmental things of the society. Theatre is an effective medium for the social development and it foster growth. Realizing the importance of theatre and as it is one of the most powerful medium for developmental activities. And how it conveys messages for both social and economical development of the society. In India theatre emphasizes the themes such as agriculture, literacy campaign, social

harmony, girl trafficking, child labour, gender discrimination, religious tolerance, women empowerment, prevention of HIV-AIDS, family planning, pulse polio, nutrition, environment pollution etc. This proposed paper is an attempt to ensure the use of Traditional media like theatre to reach the common people in the process of change and development of the country.

Keywords: Theatre, Development, Development Communication, Participatory Approach, Traditional Media etc.

Introduction

Community development is increasingly using theatre as a tool. This article analyses this use, arguing that for theatre to be successful to support social change and development, participatory practice must be at its core. Social development means as overall development of the areas social, economic, political and cultural advancement and growth – so that the people can to lead a pleasant life. Communication is an important human behaviour and that helps in the process of Social, Political and Cultural transformation of a society. Each and every society around the world evolves its own appropriate systems of Communication to perform the function of societal transformation which ultimately gave birth to various performing arts. And the social transformation that invites development to stay on track and bring the developmental path to the society, which ultimately results in the betterment and wellbeing of the society. Different traditional forms of communication constitute a potential message which conveys messages for not only social development but also economical development. (Das-2013). According to Ranganath (1980) described folk media as living expressions of the lifestyle and culture of people evolved through the years. In India mass media proved impersonal and unbelievable in contrast with the familiar performance of traditional artists whom the villagers “could not only see and hear but even touch”. Traditional Media can be used to reach these people in the process of change and development of India. Even where modern media have penetrated isolated areas, the older forms maintain their validity, particularly when used to influence attitudes, instigate action and promote change. Extensive experience shows that traditional forms can be effective in dispelling the superstitions, archaic perceptions and unscientific attitudes that people have inherited as part of tradition, and which are difficult to modify if the benefits of change are hard to demonstrate. Practitioners of the traditional media use a subtle form of persuasion by presenting the required message in locally popular artistic forms. This cannot be rivaled by any other means of communication. (Many Voices,

One World, Communication and Society: Today and Tomorrow, 1982) . After an initial period we felt that theatre for development should not instruct people on what to do, as our project had been doing, but should rather arouse the people's capacity to participate and decide things for themselves' (MDA, 1990, p. 354).

Theatre as a medium of communication and tool for social development

'Development' is one term that has become very difficult to define. The various attempts at defining the concept have left the definers at the door step of subjectivity and or political and ideological coloration. As a concept that is broad, the term development as observed by Adesiyan and Arulogun (2005), has not subjected itself to a single definition. Theatre as an ancient form of Communication is a deep-rooted tradition in India's vibrant culture. But broadly speaking, development represents ideas and practices designed to bring about positive change in human societies. Folk Theatre is a composite art in India with a fusion of elements from music, dance and it is a medium of entertainment for the rural mass of the country. The important and most relevant thing of folk theatre is having roots in native culture, it is embedded in local identity and social values besides providing mass entertainment helped Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication for ages. Folk theatre has been used extensively in India to showcase critical social, political and cultural issues in a very simple and meaning full way in the form of theatrical messages to create awareness among the people. As theatre is an indigenous form it breaks all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and appeals directly to the people. And the public gets the direct message and they influence a lot from the theatrical presentation and that's why theatre is happens to be the most influential medium of communication as well. As per history, it was during the 15th - 16th century that the folk theatre emerged forcefully in different regions. It used different languages, the languages of the regions in which it emerged. Initially these were purely devotional in tenor and typically revolved around religion, local legends and mythology. Later, with changing times, it became more secular in content and began to focus on folk stories of romance and biographical accounts of local heroes. Then due to change of time it began to focus on the social issues in theatrical ways before the public just because to aware the public about the social evils. In the Third Development Decade there was a shift from the dominant paradigm model to people-centered development model, newer concepts of development such as self-help, grassroots participation, the two-way communication, development support

communication etc. came to be used. Because peoples participation is the most important ingredient in order to achieve the mark of development for the society. Theatre for Development aims to offer an alternative approach and medium by which theatre can be of direct service to the marginalized urban and rural peasant masses. The theatre for development approach which is gaining slow ascendancy in developing countries collectivism and participation. It stresses community and inter-personal participation in self realization and uses existing and familiar performance forms in the various communities such as songs, dances, music, storytelling, puppetry and mime to either validate those cultural forms or serve as an adequate instrument to bring about social change in those communities

According to Diaz-Bordenave (1989) "Participation is not a fringe benefit that authorities may grant as a concession but every human being's birthright that no authority may deny or prevent". Communication is inextricably related to participatory approaches. If development is to have occurred in real sense it must perceive the people's real own needs, their problems and solutions of these in their own terms. Before Independence, Folk Theatre was effective in arousing the conscience of the people against the colonial rule of the British. It became effective in many political and social campaigns launched by Mahatma Gandhi. After Independence the Union Government continues to utilize the Folk Theatre forms to convey messages and to generate awareness of the development programmes in the rural areas. In 1940s, Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), and it was aimed to reach the rural mass with the national message. And it was quiet successful so far the aim was concerned. Theatre successfully projects the social and the cultural needs of the people in the region and serves as a vehicle of political education. The author of History and Theatre in Africa Eckhard Breitinger opines "The rise of Theatre for Development also marked a change in international relations. It was both the symptom and the result of the failures of 20 years of development policies that had insisted on the implantation of the materialist and technological culture of the North as the only possible road to the development, irrespective of the cultural and social environment."

Generally theatre communicates with its viewer at interpersonal level & small group level of communication. Because of physical proximity, emotion, trust worthiness message content became more relevant to the viewer. Direct communication with live reality makes receiver active in communication process. Participation of local people, the use of local languages and dialects & addressing local problems increase the

acceptability of theatre. Viewer feels cultural affinity with the self development mode of the medium. As a result they spontaneously involves with the process of communication. Dialogical theatre initiates active participation of receiver. (Thakur- 2013) Traditional folk forms in India can be effectively utilised for social developmental communication. The communication potential of India traditional performing art has been proved time and again by many instances of national importance. The traditional media are close to the hearts and minds of the people, so there appeal is a personal, intimate level, Further familiar format and content, as also the colloquial dialects used. Make the clarity in communication cross-cultural communication hurdles are not encountered here. The numerous groups and different forms available for specific homogenous groups and for specific purposes can be exploited to cater to people of different region. The Folk media in India seems to be used as supplement to the mass media rather than as the centre of communication efforts to reach 80% of India's total population who live in the villages. In India, mass media continue to be limited largely to the urban population traditional arts forms have survived for centuries and they will survive in future for their flexibility. They could be the media for the social change and social development in rural India. (Kumar- 2006). 'Theatre for development' was initially inspired by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian cultural and educational theorist and practitioner, who believed that people possess knowledge through life experience but are persuaded by the oppressor to believe that their knowledge is irrelevant. Stimulating people to become conscious and to generate knowledge in their own interests is called the pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire,1970). And that has influenced his own student Augusto Boal, who developed the 'Theatre of the oppressed' a form of popular theatre, of, by, and for people designed to help people learn ways of resisting oppression in their daily lives (Boal, 1982). (Scott-Danter, 1999) has realized that the use of theatre in a development environment has involved performing plays to convey strong social messages, with little or no audience participation. Gradually, the potential of theatre as a platform of discussion and of exploring pertinent issues within a particular community in order to tackle the adverse situation of the society. Theatre also serves as a participatory tool by inviting audience to participate in the act, making it a genuine two way medium for communicating information (Kasoma, 1974). Forum theatre or playback theatre, for instance, transforms the audience into actors and creators of the drama. Members of the audience are encouraged to actively engage themselves in the process, critically reflect on, challenge and change the course of the play and try out different solutions. They can

interrupt a performance and suggest different actions for the actors who in turn carried out their suggestions, thus giving the spectators themselves an opportunity to come up with different solutions of a collective problem.

Conclusion

Theatre as a medium of mass communication has been one of the most effective medium and at the same time it is also a medium which helps the society in achieving the developmental goals and objectives. In order to adequately evaluate the role of theatre in development, it is vital to understand the nature of the theatre and the concept of development.

Theatre is a mechanism of social analysis which can make deep impression among the audience. The principle of participatory communicational nature of theatre is very much impressive. The need-based approaches of theatre in India empower the marginalized people of grass root level. As it is the way of traditional medium of communication and it enriched the cultural heritage of the society. And basing on that it has the potential to convey messages of social and economical advantage, which will results in both social and economical development of the society. But the participation from the common man's side should be high and effecting in nature. So the people should come forward to ponder about this thing and how they can develop the idle things of theatre for the social development.

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Theatre as a Medium of Mass Communication

Padmaja Priyadarshini

Abstract

Communication is one of the most important elements for the existence of the human society. Communication plays a crucial role in day to day life of the human being. And communication which is meant for the mass is known as mass communication. There are various mediums of mass communication. And out of the various mediums of mass communication, theatre is one of the most oldest and influential medium. Theatre is an ancient form of media in India which was used as a means to convey messages to people. Not only in India, theatre is also one of the most effective methods of mass communication but in the whole world. This theatre form of mass communication is well known and appreciable among the rural people of the country. As a medium of communication it has to accommodate various functions of communication as well. This paper is a simple understanding to interpret theatre as a communication medium and also its importance in the sphere of communication especially in developing country like India.

Keywords: Theatre, Communication, Mass Communication, Medium, Theatre Communication, *Natyasastra*, Drama.

Introduction

"Theatre is a mirror of highlighting man's humanity and also a tool for understanding why man also finds it so easy to transgress that same humanity." -Shakespeare

In India theatre was an eminent and important medium of mass communication. It is an oldest form of mass communication and it is being one of the most appreciable medium of communication. And as it communicates to the mass, that is why it is a medium of mass communication. It emerged sometime between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD and Flourished between the 1st century AD and the 10th, which was a period of relative peace in the history of India during which hundreds of plays were written. The earliest form of theatre in India was in Sanskrit. Theatre has its root from the ancient time of human communication. From the childhood days of theatre it caters preliterate community member's information, education, entertainment, socialization & also creates the platform of debate & discussion (Thakur, 2013). And theatre in India developed after the development of theatres in Greek and Rome and also in some other parts of Asia. Modern Indian theatre developed during the period of colonial rule under the British Empire; from the mid-19th century until the mid-20th century. Theatre is the live performance or physical enactment in form of dance, singing or drama before a particular group of audience. Theatre is a best source of communication and it deals with the social problems and it presents in various forms before the wide range of the audiences. Theatre occupies a huge space in Indian communication system. Because Indian society is much favorable and idle place for art and theatre is one of the most praiseworthy art we have in our society as it communicates with the audience in the form of emotions, one of the major factor to get connected with the audience. And the word 'Drama' is more associated with theatre because mostly theatre programmes are presented in form of drama. And so far the history of drama is concerned it is '*Bharat Muni*' who is considered as the earliest treatise on dramaturgy. The Sanskrit meaning of drama is '*Natya*'. The various aspects of drama has been texted in ancient India known as '*Natyasastra*' and as per *Natyasastra*, *Bharat Muni* is the master of all emotions, actions and situations as well through *abhinaya*. '*Abhinaya*', literary meaning is to carrying the play of performance through actions to the audience with some messages. (Pandya, 1990).

But the toughest part is how to carry these meanings to the audience. Then the process of communication came into existence, which is how the actors use to communicate to the audience or in other words 'receivers'. It is the role and importance of communication. Where the communicator is the actor and the audiences are the receivers. As communication is one of the human functions and it is multi dimensional in nature, the whole aim is that one person or a group of individuals tries to make the other one or group of individuals aware about the thing which they are projecting before them. So communication refers to establishing commonness among the individuals and theatre is the platform where the establishment of commonness is fulfilled by the 'communicator' means the 'actor' and the 'receivers' means the 'audiences'. (Kapil &Debastuti, 2013)

Review of Literature:

In his book "Theatre: An Introduction", Cassady (1984) defines theatre as 'imagination emotions and intellects which embraces all the world cultures and perspective, answers questions, predicts our tomorrows and mirrors our today.

For Shakespeare "theatre is a mirror for highlighting man's humanity and also a tool for understanding why man also finds it so easy to transgress that same humanity" (Yerima,2007). Bernard Beckerman offered a broader definition when he said that 'theatre occurs when one or more persons, isolated in time and or space, present themselves to another or others (Cassady 1984). Though definitions abound, practitioners seem to be in unison in what constitutes the nature and very essence of the theatre. They also seem to be in agreement that theatre is a highly collaborative endeavour and that it takes the form of drama, comedy or musical theatre. It is also widely held that theatre, with its artistic content emanating from the dramatist to the producing artistes to the audience through an ever widening and deepening symbol, is essentially symbolic in nature. As an art form, theatre represents an experience of an event or experience which can be real or imagined and which is communicated to an audience through a medium. Theatre can also be dramatic and non-dramatic. When it is dramatic, it is imagined and representational whereas when it is non- dramatic, theatre is real and presentational in form and characters. (Akashoro, 2010). Theatre is a very effective & responsive tool to foster the growth of development procedure. It starts off by the history of theatre in international & Indian context and with the origin & nature of development communication in third world perspective. Theatre remains

relevant for its participative & flexible nature. In India theatre emphasizes on the social problems and themes such as agriculture, literacy campaign, social harmony, girl trafficking, child labour, gender discrimination, religious tolerance, women empowerment, prevention of HIV-AIDS, family planning, pulse polio, nutrition, environment pollution etc.

Theatre as a mass media in India

The passion to express, to communicate & to share the ideas-opinions-emotions-beliefs gave inception to performing art. Performing art has an enormous artistic value. Theatre is a major functional & spontaneous expression of performing art. The presence of theatre in India has been very ancient and the worker of theatre has also been passed away since a long time ago. But the popularity of theatre is still there in everyone face because of its uniqueness. And the unique platform to project and present the social problems and giving solution and also aware the receiver about the concerned theme on which theatre work is based on. Before going to the detail description of ancient Indian theatre workers mentality towards theatre communication, it is important to understand who the theatre workers in ancient India were. In the thirty fifth chapter of the *Natyasastra*, there is a list of members of a theatre group, which helps us to understand about the people who were considered as theatre workers or theatre related persons in ancient India. A theatre group (according to *Natyasastra*) should have persons specialized in seventeen types of works like, *Bharata* (stage manager or producer or a person who can perform everything related to a production, a multidimensional person); *Vidusaka*(person to make fun i.e. Jester); *Tauripta* (Person skilled in music, expert in all musical instruments); *Nata*(person perform as an actor-Dancer); *Sutradhara* (person specialized in applying the songs and music during the performance) ; *Natyakara* (one who in accordance with the *Natyasastra* expresses the various *rasa-s* ,*bhava-s* natural to the the people though different character); *Nandi*(person praising in Sanskrit or Prakit);*Nayaka*(person engaged in directing dance during a performance); *Mukutakara*,(person engaged in making head-gears for every character); *Abharanakara*,(person engaged in making ornaments for a performance); *Malyakara* (person engaged in making garlands for the characters of a performance); *Vesakara*(person engaged in making costumes for a performance); *Chitrakara*(person engaged in painting for performance),*Rajaka*(person engaged in cleaning the costumes); *Karukara*(person engaged in decorating hall with wooden idols or sculpture); *Kusilava* (person who can dance and play musical instrument during performance. (M.L Varadpande, 1983). This list helps us to understand the components of a theatre group.

Interestingly, *Natyasastra* not confining itself to the discussion of the work of acting, includes name of each and every allied works considered necessary for a performance. (Malabyan, 2013). Theatre, as an old form of Communication is a deep-rooted tradition in India's vibrant culture. Folk Theatre is a composite art in India with a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, versification, epic and ballad recitation, graphic and plastic arts, religion and festival peasantry. The Folk theatre having roots in native culture is embedded in local identity and social values besides providing mass entertainment helped Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication for ages. Folk theatre has been used extensively in India to propagate critical social, political and cultural issues in the form of theatrical messages to create awareness among the people. As an indigenous form it breaks all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and appeals directly to the people. Each folk theatre form has a particular community, language, area and way of life. But music is the only binder which attaches all the forms together. Theatre in India started as a narrative form, with recitation, singing and dancing becoming its integral elements. This emphasis on narrative elements made our theatre essentially theatrical right from the beginning. That is why the theatre in India has encompassed all the other forms of literature and fine arts into its physical presentation: literature, mime, music, dance, movement, painting, sculpture and architecture – all mixed into one and being called '*Natya*' or Theatre in English. It involves the traditional use of music, dance, drama and religious rituals to express human emotions and feelings. Folk theatre in India made its first presence in Vedic and Buddhist culture. Based on oral tradition, it was used to disseminate the stories of human lives in real context. (Das, 2013)

Theatre as a mass medium is very much ancient and popular in Indian context. It is regarded as the peoples medium because, through this mass medium, a common man is able to get awareness and critical nuances about the things which is happenings around him/her. And most importantly in developing country like India, where sixty five percent of people lives in rural areas and for them theatre is the prominent and most reliable medium of mass communication. Due to theatre common people get an opportunity to get involved directly and will try to find out certain solution to the existing problems which is hampering the lifestyle of the common people and which is blocking the road of development of the society. So it is not only a medium of mass communication but also a tool for development as well. (Manukonda, 2013).

Conclusion:

After all communication is required to express, share, convey the meaning of the message to the recipient of the message. It establishes commonness and uniformity among the individuals who are residing in the society. It is this feeling of commonness and uniformity that is the driving force of communication in this universe. The theatre being a miniature representation of the same is no different. Theatre communication and theatre as medium of mass communication has been one of the most reliable and effective means of communication, it deals with the social problems and it engages the people from the society directly and creates a sphere of consciousness, so that the common people can be aware and will avoid the existing problem of the society to some extent. (Das, 2013). Theatre can play a range of roles bringing people together and creating contexts for collective reflection and action; drawing out participation and expression of popular concerns, and analysis; overcoming people's fears and rationalizations and building confidence and identity; stimulating discussion and a critical understanding of problems, contradictions, and structures underlining everyday reality; clarifying the possibilities and strategies for action; stirring people's emotions and mobilizing people for action. (Warritay, 1988)

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BALWANT THAKUR: A ONE MAN INSTITUTION

Interview

by

Archana Kumari

"He is shy, hesitant to talk about himself or his work almost as if act of speech would be a desecration of art. It is not easy to corner Balwant Thakur. But it is important to know how this 30 year-old from Jammu had managed to produce bewilderingly brilliant plays twice in succession. Once going he let off steam!"

- Kavita Nagpal, Delhi based theatre critic wrote in **Hindustan Times**.

Those who have even the slightest interest in theatre must have heard this

name once in their lives – “Balwant Thakur” – known as the magic man of theatre, is one of the most creative theatre directors of the country who has given a new identity to Indian theatre with his highly innovative theatre productions. Decorated with the highest Indian honor in performing arts i.e, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Direction in theatre, Balwant Thakur is credited for being the youngest theatre director of India who has participated in over two hundred National Theatre Festivals as a director, which is a record in the country. His outstanding visual poetics on stage like ‘Ghumayee’ ‘Bawa Jitto’ ‘Suno Eh Kahani’ and ‘Mahabhoj’ have vibrated the theatre scene of North India. It was indeed a matter of pride for the interviewer to get to see a glimpse of this incredible personality. It’s a small endeavour to bring forth his mesmerizing journey to you.

Q.1. How did you get attracted towards theatre?

Ans. I was born on 25th of December 1960 in a hilly village, Bakkal, Distt. Reasi of J&K which is a repository of traditional performing arts. It had an indelible impact on my early childhood where I grew up singing and dancing with traditional performers. My father Hari Saran Thakur was a patron of traditional performers, so he represented the State at many national events. It inspired young artist in me further. After completing my primary education in this village, I was shifted to Jyotipuram (Reasi) town where I studied till 12th standard. Jyotipuram being a metropolitan town gave me a diverse cultural exposure in these formative years by which I developed leadership qualities. I joined an evening group and started assisting them in all their allied jobs including, publicity, back-stage work, house management etc. I formed a group with the help of his six friends ‘**Seven Stars**’ and staged plays like ‘**Sabhya Saanp**’ and ‘**Kanyadaan**’. Thus I got inspiration for theatre around me and my passion kept me attached to it wherever I went.

Q.2. Did you take any formal training in theatre?

Ans. No. I didn’t take any formal training in theatre. However it was deeply imprinted in my mind and my heart followed it. Like the son of the soil, I learnt theatre from my surrounding and improved my vision. When I shifted to Jammu for graduation in Business Management and Economics from MAM College, I started writing for Radio Kashmir, Jammu and presented talks, short stories, poetry, and short plays in their Yuva-Vani service. I continued acting, directing and writing plays for the inter-college competitions during this period. That was how I groomed a perfect theatre person inside me.

3. 3. What challenges you faced while your journey to become a theatre personality?

Ans. Despite my ultimate ambition to do post graduation in dramatics, I was forced to join LLB (professional) to fulfill parental aspiration. Three years in the University turned out to be a turning point in my career where in quest of achieving excellence I strived hard, contributed in the renaissance and brought top honours in Dramatics for University of Jammu in Zonal and National events. However, there were unnecessary interference and less creative liberty with which I had to struggle hard.

4. 4. How 'Natrang' came into being and gave you a separate identity?

Ans. I established '**Natrang**' in 1983 with the help of my colleagues in order to get creative freedom. In the first year of the inception of Natrang, we won the State Academy award for best production '**Chauraha**' directed by me. Within a short span of time Natrang became a brand name for producing and directing successful plays like '**Neeli Jheel**' '**Nanhen Kandhey Nanhen Pair**' '**Singhasan Khali Hai**' and '**Rang Nagri**'. In 1984-85, I wrote two plays '**Ek Sangharsh Ka Ant**' and '**Yeh Laash Kiski Hai**', the later won best short play award in many All-India play competitions. Gradually I made my presence felt in Punjab, Himachal and Haryana by winning best director awards in the All-India cultural competitions and central Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi selected my play '**Kaun Nachaye Naach**' for the North Zone theatre festival held at Chandigarh.

5. 5. It is said that inspite of being very well recognized, you were unable to make it to national festival, that's why you shifted to Dogri plays? How far is it true?

Ans. Though I established myself as creative and innovative director but could not make it to the national festival. This gave a new turn to my theatre work and I started exploring new possibilities in the themes rooted in my own soil and the language. I had not done any play in Dogri till 1986. The first Dogri play '**Bawa Jitto**' surprised everyone at the North Zone

Theatre Festival at Kurukshetra organised by Central Sangeet Natak Akademi and was selected for National Theatre festival, New Delhi. Bawa Jitto, a premier play became a much vaunted production and I travelled with it to the whole length and breadth of the country and covered the distances from Jammu to Travandrum, Madhurai, Kolkata, Bhubneshwar, Bhopal, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bhilwara, Kota, Lucknow, Nanital, Haryana and Shimla. Later I devised its format and staged its twenty shows in open-air on Indo-Pak borders.

Q.6. You got a very attractive offer from Himachal Pradesh Govt. but you rejected it. Kindly throw some light on it.

Ans. Himachal Pradesh Govt. gave me a major project to devise an opera on the cultural history of Himachal covering the history from Rig-Veda to present day. The work required extensive research and study of the history and heritage of Himachal Pradesh and in a record time of six months I produced a mega musical performance '**Himachal**' with the help of sixty performers on stage using all major performing modes of Himachal which was staged for over hundred times within and outside the state. At this time I was prompted to continue my stay in Shimla and was offered to head the centre for performing arts but I left Himachal for Jammu and started working on a fellowship project on the regional performing traditions of Jammu awarded by the Ministry of Human Resource development. This further gained momentum with the help of my wife Deepika- a journalist who was expertising in theatre criticism.

7. 7. In 1989 in order to set the innovative conventions of theatre, you dared to experiment with Manu Bhandari's popular novel 'Mahabhoj'. Tell us your experience in this new venture and its outcome.

Ans. In order to explore new alternatives, this idea of converting Manu Bhandari's popular novel '**Mahabhoj**' into drama, came into my mind. The idea was to transform the text into images, using actor's bodies to have better and deeper communication across language barriers. Realizing the actor's potential, I have always been advocating that in most of the conventions their creative vocal and physical resources are not being utilized to the fullest. But unfortunately my lead actors deserted me for not being convinced with this new methodology. Thus I mounted '**Mahabhoj**' with almost new actors and resultant work was declared best

in the North zone and was selected for National theatre festival, 1990. Like Bawa Jitto, Mahabhoj featured in almost all the major theatre events of the country.

- 8. You also encourage new comers and young actors by providing them proper training under the banner of Natrang and provide them a platform to perform. Kindly tell us about it in detail.**

Ans. With a view to extend the horizon of Natrang's work and also to introduce young crop of actors two new annual projects '**Theatre Camp**' for freshers in 1989 and '**Children's Summer School**' in 1990 were started. Theatre Camp used to be a residential production oriented training programme and brought much successful plays like Badal Sarcar's '**Bhoma**' '**Ghera**' based on Brecht's '**Caucasian Chalk Circle**' and Mahesh Elkunchwar's '**Holi**'. Theatre camps strengthened Natrang team further which enabled the group to put up over hundred shows a year.

In children's theatre altogether a new concept was introduced. We have been thrusting adult theatre on children and no serious effort has been made to evolve a theatre which suits to their needs and has the power to explore immense possibilities in them. I am in the process of evolving a theatre which is different both in content and form. The theme of my children plays focuses the world as seen by them. My first project with children '**Mere Hisse Ki Dhoop Kahan Hai**' (Where is my share of sunlight) was supported by UNESCO. This play also broke the tradition of children's theatre 'Last rehearsal final show' and the play was staged over fifty times at a stretch within and outside the state. Later its film represented India in Asia-pacific week at Bangkok (Thailand).

- 9. In 1992 for outstanding contribution to theatre you received the National 'Sanskriti Award' and with it in the same year you got The Ford Foundation (USA) Grant Award. What was its outcome?**

Ans. Yes I got **The Ford Foundation (USA) Grant Award** for work '**Search for a new Theatre language**'. From this grant I established a theatre laboratory and started experimenting on the further exploration of theatre of images, a visual poetry which not only transcends language barriers but

also heightens the multi-dimensional theatrical impact. These magical images create a new language, which have not only the poetic sensibility but universality too.

10. **10. Simultaneously you needed to expand Natrang too. What steps you had taken to improve its infrastructure and activities?**

Ans. In the process of the expansion of Natrang's jurisdiction and the activities an equipped Studio Theatre, a Resource centre and a Rural touring theatre wing which started staging plays based on the highly socially relevant themes, were established. Plays like '**Suno Eh Kahani**', '**Aaj Ki Aurat**' '**Is Gran Gi Surg Banai Lo**' '**Anpaden Da Hall**' '**Jalo Khala**' '**Mere Bi Ehen Kish Khaab**' and '**Aag**' were written and staged in 240 remote villages of J&K including in the most inaccessible areas of Udhampur, Doda, Rajouri and Poonch districts to shape up the rural minds through the magical power of theatre. On the other hand children's theatre got a new momentum when the play '**Aap Hamare Hain Kaun**' was created. The play created vibrations and Natrang became the first group of the country which started travelling with a group of forty children to almost all the major cities of the country which included Chandigarh, Shimla, Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Jodhpur, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Goa, and Bhubneshwar.

11. **11. You were assigned the challenging task of reviving the cultural life of the troubled state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1995. How did you meet the challenges in the new assignments and did justice to your old love of creative innovations?**

Ans. I joined the state Govt. as Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages- an organisation of 317 employees responsible for the development of art, culture, languages, literature, arts education of the state. In the process of re-building the cultural infrastructure of the militancy affected state and rejuvenate its art, literary, and cultural activities as the Principal Chief Executive officer, I gave a shape to over 3000 programmes including many National and International events in over eight years of service. Here also I tried to bring top honours

for the state and made a history by winning best Tableaux award five times in eight years in the Republic Day Celebrations, New Delhi. Despite being busy with the new assignment I continued my creative endeavour and gave yet another innovative production '**Ghumayee**' in Dogri. 'Ghumayee' broke all-time record and became most demanded production of the times which was staged on repeated requests even in non-Dogri speaking areas like Kolkata (Thrice) and Mumbai (Twice). Another mega production '**Hum Hain Na**' with 325 children on stage will be remembered for years to come for creatively handling such a large group on stage, its emotionally charged content and stunning visual imagery.

12. 12. After that you introduced two new projects in Natrang. Kindly throw some light on them.

Ans. After quitting the job of Secretary J&K Academy of Art Culture and languages in the October 2003, I started giving full-time to my ultimate passion theatre and introduced two new projects. The first was Natrang Theatre Festival- an annual event featuring the running repertoire plays of Natrang. In this series the group broke all the records in 2007 and created a history in Indian Theatre by showcasing seventeen major plays by the same group of actors in Seventeen days and most of them were directed by me. The second historic initiative was the starting of a weekly show 'Sunday Theatre' in the year 2004 which will complete non-stop 500 Sunday Theatre shows by the end of this year. History has never witnessed this kind of longest sustained regular theatre activity in this part of the world. Despite having curfews, Bands and disturbances in Jammu, Natrang actors sacrificed everything but never allowed this rarest weekly theatre happening to stop. There have been instances when the main group of actors was touring with productions, within the country and outside but Sunday Theatre series was never stopped. One group of actors always stayed back to let this longest living weekly theatre show to continue.

Q.13. Which new innovations took place in Natrang and how it unified the otherwise disturbed and scattered regions of J & K?

Ans. In 2005 the horizons of the group was further extended and a wing of traditional and contemporary dance performances in Natrang was introduced. The first major event was 'Jashen-e-Kashmir' organized at

Delhi Haat featuring the diverse performing art traditions of Jammu & Kashmir in a thematic order. With the introduction of this new wing in Natrang, the state of J&K witnessed the beginning of new era of professional presentations based on the diverse variety of the performing art traditions of the region. This project touched the ultimate heights when Jammites witnessed 'Jammu Festival-2007' at mini Stadium Parade Jammu on a multi-level stage featuring 500 artists demonstrating the cultural strengths before an audience of over 20,000 people. This followed series of such presentations like 'Rangla Jammu', 'Bhadarwah Festival', 'J&K Utsav', 'Jammu Mega Cultural Show' 'Celebrating diversity' These programmes were the virtual cultural statements, professionally crafted and designed to showcase the celebration of diversity through a unique cultural album of Jammu region showcasing the variegated variety of different colors, rhythms, costumes, design patterns and artistic expressions comprising the dances, narratives and theatre of J&K. This amazing bouquet of rarest cultural traditions beautifully unfolds the mesmerizing artistic expressions of this part of the world. The programmes used to culminate into the presentation of unity in diversity of J&K, the harmony and the cultural co-existence of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, thus performing a major cultural responsibility and cause. This initiative carved a new role for culture in the troubled state of Jammu & Kashmir which aimed at bringing people together being divided by vested politics. Taking a step ahead, I scripted and devised two major travelling open-air theatre shows 'Kahani Hamari' and 'Choon Hai Aasmaan' addressing the issues of larger public interest and staged at all the district headquarters of the state for lacs of audiences. Rooted in the cultural soil of the state these plays played the role of a catalyst by bringing a new cultural renaissance in the region and inspired many smaller groups to follow such initiatives. This was followed by my mission 'Theatre for Peace' which was an eye-opener for all those who never recognized the role of arts and culture in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and ever undermined its utility and relevance.

14. 14. How you blended theatre to the lives of common people in Jammu and inspired them?

Ans. A new dimension was given to the age old festivity 'Jhiri Mela' which is organized annually to pay obeisance to a farmer hero 'Bawa Jitto'. In 2005, I brought live before an audience of over 50,000, the performance on the life of legendary folk hero Bawa Jitto using the live performance supported

by video projections on a huge open-air stage. Earlier Jhiri Mela used to be an affair of mere ritualistic performances but with the introduction of the presentation of mega theatre show, a new attraction has been added to the Mela which has the participation of Lacs of devotees who get mesmerized on being transported through a electrifying theatrical performance to a 15th century saga of supreme sacrifice. This is perhaps the only theatre happening of the country which has the largest public participation and is all set to become a global cultural destination.

15. 15. What is your contribution it the growth of local theatre?

Ans. In 2009 I took the Dogri theatre to International heights by making it to four theatre festival held in Russia, Germany, Hungary and Poland with highly acclaimed Dogri play 'Ghumayee'.

The initiative of the revival of age-old theatre tradition of Kashmir 'Bhand Pather' is recognized as one of major contributions to Indian Theatre. In the year 2010 a major initiative was taken to revive the dying cultural tradition of Kashmir. Involving over 1000 traditional Bhand Pather performers, with the help of eminent playwright Moti Lal Kemmu I brought together twenty prominent Bhand Pather groups spread over the entire length and breadth of Kashmir Valley and trained them in new performatic idiom by infusing in them the latest developed techniques of play scripting, production and direction. The resultant work witnessed 40 new productions in Bhand Pather style which vibrated the entire Kashmir Valley through new innovations and attracted huge crowds. This initiative not only revived the dying theatre tradition but is also seen as a major community mobilization effort which saw the participation of over two lac audiences.

16. 16. What message you would like to give to the lovers of theatre?

Ans. We should encourage our children and family members to inculcate the habit of going to theatres. It adds value to life and strengthens culture. Everybody who works sincerely and thoughtfully in the theatre adds something, however small, to the art: theatre is for man, not man for theatre.

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BOOK REVIEW

An account of the People's Theatre

Mohammad Amir Pasha

- **A History of The Jana Natya Manch: Plays For The People By Arjun Ghosh. New Delhi: Sage Publication India, 2012. 293pp. Hardcover, 695 rupees. ISBN: ISBN-10:8132107284**

This unusual book is divided into two parts. The first part of this book is historical and tells us the story from 1973 to till now. How street theatre evolved at that time in our country when there were many ups and down in the political and social scenario a comprehensive analysis has been given on that. On the other hand, the second part elaborates the experience of drama and street theatre and this section starts from chapter six.

Overall this book has tried to give a detailed account of all information about Jana NatyaManch. How Janam's street play worked for social

change, is also trying to illuciated. G. P. Deshpandey has defined this book as a biography of Janam.

In the earlier days, CPI (M) didn't have any strong cultural wing to propagate any strong form mobilizing social change; makeshift platform had been used with self-scripted play by Janam.

The first chapter "The early year (1972-80)" explains the foundation year of Janam. This chapter also informs about the performance of all self-scripted street plays of Janam 'Machine', 'Gaon Se SadakTak, Hatyare', 'DTC Ki Dhandhli', 'Aurat', 'Samarth' and 'Raja Ka Baja.' How Janam started its journey with limited resources – everything is elaborated here.

In the next chapter, a factual scenario of emergency period has been portrayed. It was trying to portray that how government is imposing emergency. When Indra Gandhi disagreed to give resignation from the post of Prime Minister, Janam made skit – 'Kursi, Kursi, Kursi'. To show the excesses of the emergency, they produced 'Ab Raja Ki Bari Hai'. The writer put an effort to show Janam's communication motive during the emergency period. The writer also gives an account of producing many plays and their contexts like 'Machine' (Hering – India worker strike), 'Gaon Se ShahaTak' (Migrant labor searching for job), 'Hatyare' (communal rights), 'DTC Ki Dhandhali' (Hike on bus fare by DTC), 'Aurat' (based on working woman), 'Samrath: Madari-Jamura' (price hike) etc.

In the third chapter "An Eventful Decade (1981 – 1988)", the writer describes various activities. The writer states here: 'Janam needed to develop organizationally so as to attract talent not only through its art but also through its commitment to a progressive politics'.

AsifNaqvi, Vijay Kalia, SanyaSirohi Gupta were the new-comers at that time and their memories are also quoted here. This chapter also gives an informative part about communal separatism in Punjab and Janam's activity. Some dialogues are here quoted from 'Veer Jaag Zara':

"Man: O people, Punjab is burning...

Voices: Opposition parties are responsible.

Man: Communalism is on the ascendancy.

Voices: Opposition parties are responsible...

Man: Regionalism, Sectarianism, Secessionism is growing.

Voices: Opposition parties are responsible.

Man: Poverty, Unemployment, Starvation, Corruption is on the rise, prices are touching

the sky, crops are failing, peasants are being ruined.

Voices: Opposition parties are responsible.

Opposition parties are responsible.

..... ”

The author also makes an attempt to show Janam’s work on politics and communalism through putting some dialogues from their plays:

“**Jamura:** Yes sir, from there turn right, then straight, then right again, then straight, then

rightagain...

Ring Master: Only right turns,no left turns!

Jamura: No, no, no, no, never turn left. Or else you will reach Bengal.

JyotiBasu is in

government there. He has thrown Sampradayikta into the Bay of Bengal.

Ring Master: Thrown it into the Bay? How did he have the audacity to be so cruel on an

innocent, helpless animal?

Jamura: Let alone wild animals, if he gets to know that you are here to help

Sampradayikta, then he will kick you out. He is very strict in these matters”.

In the next chapter “Martyrdom and After (1989 – 1994)” the post martyrdom (after the murder of SafdarHashmi) works of Janam are elucidated. SafdarHashmi was murdered at Jhandapur in Sahibabad during the performance of ‘HallaBol’ (1989). Janam decided to return there and finished the interrupted play. It is also discuss that how Janam received help from different activists and artists. Author also studies Janams work during the period of 1990s (in changing political and economic climate).

The last chapter of the first section “New Directions (1995 – Present)” this chapter is focused on the remarkable works of Janam and tries to explain the plays on ‘communal violence, globalization, displacement of working-class slums, and attacks on democratic rights’ (pp.18). This chapter explicatesJanams response to communal riots of Gujarat (2002).Janam also used new techniques and improve their work.

The sixth chapter “The experience of the streets” gives well explanation of the performances of Janam in different cities. It is also mentioned that Janam’s campaigns are only for creating awareness, not for influencing the mass opinion.

The chapter “A Different Proscenium” reveals the works of Janam and New

Theatre. The activity of Habib Tanvir also has occupied valuable space. Author mentioned two plays while discussing this- "Moteram's Nonviolent Resistance" (which is focused on the British Policies), "Ek Aurat Hipeshiya Bhi Thi". This chapter also describes G. P. Deshpandey's Satyashodhak and Brijesh Sharma's Shambuk Vadh. Safdar Hashmi and Habib Tanveer jointly worked in many plays during this time. It is a good chronicle of street plays of that period.

The eighth chapter has told us about the new-comers of Janam. It has also given a new direction on how new talents can be utilized as collective creativity through showing the functionality of Janam. Along with this, it provides an insight to their economic condition. The experience of four decades is well arranged in this part.

In the ninth chapter "Players, Spectators and Bazaars", Arjun Ghosh has shown a clear picture of Janam's struggle in Delhi. The life style of inhabitants in Delhi was different. At that time, Delhi was occupied by the people of different economic status – upper middle and lower class. Slum areas were become the result of heavy population. Economically poor people were easy prey of the Govt. for gaining vote. In such circumstances, Janam had made an attempt to reach all kind of audiences and to make them aware. It has been also told how Janam selected proper place for performance to reach a wide number of people. It was quite challenging for them.

The tenth chapter has tried to explore the connection between the CPI (M) and Janam. He gives an account of the nature of their links and the degree of sovereignty of Janam. During the Cultural Revolution in China and the left movement, it has been described how Janam worked and helped them in disseminating the ideas and concepts of the party programs in Delhi.

In the end, the writer refers to how Janam sustained itself under different threats and challenges; how they overcome their financial crisis and performed in many festivals. He also quoted: "I have demonstrated how in their use of street theatre the parties of the establishment make suitable alternations to street theatre. They put in place a top-down structure which is in consonance with their politics." He also briefed the scenario of Janam in both pre-independence and post-independence period. Arjun Ghosh also scanned the role of Janam in present day. Janam's performances were become very popular and these were also used by the political opponents to attack others.

Overall, it can be clearly understood how culture can be used as an effective tool for political communication after reading this book. This

book can be considered as a great contribution of ArjunGhosh towards the history of drama and theatre. The effort made by ArjunGhosh is really appraising. Anyone can have clear idea about writing a good biography on theatre after reading this particular book. It is an important asset for the people who are interested in theatre.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE THEORY OF THE THEATRE

Priyanka Sharma

EBook on The Theory of the Theatre by Clayton Hamilton, New York; Release Date: October 3, 2004 [EBook #13589] Publisher: Project Gutenberg

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." This phrase that begins the monologue from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, correctly compares the world to a stage, life to a play and men and women to actors. Clayton Hamilton's eminently practical guide *The Theory of the Theatre* also reverberates with the same ideology. In today's modern world where motion pictures readily solve the purpose of entertainment and recreation, people hardly pay much attention to theatres. But in fact theatre has a crucial role to play in one's life. It brings people together. It focuses on human beings, their existence and their relationship with life, thus forces one to emphasize, since what we experience is much more realistic, organic and vital.

Projecting the same concept, in the first chapter, "What is a play?" the author begins by dissecting the definition of a play. According to him, "a play is a story devised to be presented by actors on a stage before an audience." The phrase "devised to be presented" distinguishes it from all other forms of narrative. Nowadays we look upon Aeschylus as a poet rather than a playwright, reason being his plays no longer fit the modern theatre. With the change of time, the critics and students over the generations have shifted it to the genre of poetry, being immortalized thus. We realize that even if the playwright doesn't write greatly, he must have a literary excellence to transcend his work over generations and find a place in the closet of literature. In fact "excellent plays have often been presented without the use of any words at all" – like Pantomime. Reference is made back to the period of the so called "commedia dell'arte", the sixteenth century Italy where the dialogues were written only at the end after working out the complete scenario, production

arrangement and selection of actors. One can appreciate a play only when it is acted on the stage rather than read as the master dramatists like Shakespeare and Moliere have always been men of theatre rather than men of letters.

Tennyson, Browning, Stevenson, Maurice Maeterlinck failed as dramatists since their drama appealed only to individuals and not to the crowd. The true essence of a play comes forth only when one sits amidst the crowd as an audience and watches it being performed. This whole idea has been discussed in the second chapter, "The Psychology of the Theatre Audiences". According to M. Gaustave Le Bon "a crowd is less intellectual and more emotional than the individuals that compose it. It is less reasonable, less judicious, less disinterested, more credulous, more primitive and more partisan..." Ferdinand Brunetiere's "No struggle, no drama", has become a catch-phrase in dramatic criticism. A crowd readily believes what it sees, is volatile to emotional contagion, more sensuous and receptive of common, conservative, traditional themes and ideas rather than innovative and new. In fact Hamilton correctly states that Shakespeare is popular because he did the old thing better than the other men had done it! Now, theatre audiences differ from other kinds of crowds since they are more heterogeneous than those at any social, political or religious convention. The important difference between the two crowds is that the theatre audience's purpose is mostly recreation and not any other specific agenda, which is also one of the reasons of inattentiveness. Victor Hugo, in his preface to Ruy Blas divides the theatre audience into three classes; thinkers, who demand characterization; women who demand passion; and the mob, who demand action. Nowadays it is necessary to appeal to women since the crowd which forms the matinee and evening audiences are entirely or chiefly women. But among any theatre audiences, there consist some individuals who do not belong to the crowd, who do not let their self-consciousness merge with the general self-consciousness of the multitude. They are professional critics or frequenters to the theatres. A true dramatist should never neglect these individuals while writing for the crowd.

In the next chapter, "The Actor and the Dramatist", the author effectively portrays how the range or restrictions of actors directly affect the author's task of character creation. A dramatist selects his actors first and then writes his dialogues which befit them when delivered upon the stage. Hence, the actors have tremendous influence upon the dramatists contrary to that of the novelists, the story-writers, or the poets.

The evolution of English drama and how it has been broadly classified into

three different categories has kept the discussion lively in the fourth chapter named, "Stage Conventions in Modern Times". The first is the 'Drama of Rhetoric', which existed during the sixteenth century where emphasis was laid upon high astounding sounds, stately speeches replete with poetic passages due to lack of scenery. An example of it is the Elizabethan theatre. The actors then were gaudy, robust and considered themselves as all-in-all upon the stage. Theatres were shut in 1642. When restarted in 1660, the physical atmosphere of the theatres underwent a change. Thus began the era of 'Drama of Conversation' which existed throughout the eighteenth century and focused on the brilliancy of dialogues employing wit and repartee while the stage was known as the "apron" stage. For instance, the Restoration theatre. Naturalness in the conventions of acting could be seen unlike the actors during Elizabethan days. Finally, it was with the invention of electricity that the "apron" stage gave way to 'Drama of Illusion' where the stage have become pictorial, curtain-fall after the scenes customary and which represents faithfully the actual facts of life. Here actions speak louder than words. Soliloquy and asides have disappeared now as the dramas have moved towards being more natural. Dramatists consider these as lazy expedients. Our forefathers had the natural ability to imagine the atmosphere with respect to what the actors spoke. They could imagine star studded sky while sitting under the bright sun even though no props were used back then. While nowadays it's difficult for the audiences to imagine unless they witness the action live.

Chapter five, "Economy of Attention in Theatrical Performances" highlights how to economically grab the attention of the audience during a stage performance upon the most important element on the stage. This has been discussed from the point of view of the dramatist, the actor and the stage-manager. Dramatists must state every important point at least three times during the exposition, they must not keep any secret from the audience unlike in a novel, must avoid over-elaborateness of detail and any sudden shock of surprise to avoid scattering of attention. Also it is always wise to use conventional characters like "the comic valet, the pretty and witty chambermaid, pathetic old family friend" and familiar breaks like the "comic relief" to avoid digressions from the main plot or characters. Such a setting is also known as "star-system" which has its own disadvantages as the actors who have always been occupying the centre of the stage and are the "star performers" often find it difficult to keep themselves at the background at moments when the scenes should be dominated by other actors, thereby drawing undue attention. Not only the dramatist or the actor but also the stage manager should therefore avoid

any unexpected or startling innovation at crucial situations, magnificence of the setting, unfit music and be on guard of not sacrificing the major to the minor.

In the sixth chapter, "Emphasis in the Drama", the author lists certain elements which are to be emphasised since they are vital to keep the audience glued to their seats. The scene should be built such that the background or minor elements which are scarcely noticed should contribute to the central plot taking place. Emphasise by position where the scene before intermission, curtain fall, the last and the first scenes should be made effective. Pause in action and use of repetition are also equally important for the idea to sink within the mind of the audiences. Emphasise by proportion where dramatist should wisely allot significant scenes and dialogues to strong characters and accordingly decide the share of the minor characters. Antithesis, "comic relief", unity of mood, use of climax, emphasis by suspense, verisimilitude of the set are the various tools which should be employed by the dramatist for the same.

In "The Four Leading Types of Drama", Hamilton discusses subtle differences between tragedy and melodrama on one hand and comedy and farce on the other. Although tragedy and melodrama are alike yet they differ in certain essential points. The melodramatist exhibits what may happen while the tragedist exhibits what must happen. In a tragedy the characters are themselves responsible for their doom, they determine and control the plot showing inevitability of the disaster which is exactly the opposite in the case of a melodrama. Element of chance predominates a melodrama and not character. Similarly, actors dominate the action in a comedy while action dominates the actors in a farce where both being humorous plays. The only two essential elements in a farce is that it should be funny and should make the audience believe the situation for that very moment but in a comedy apart from these two factors there should be credibility of the action being performed.

The modern social drama popularly known as the problem play which began during the fourth decade of the nineteenth century can also be called a modern tragedy. It belongs to the category of the third type of tragedy where the individual is in conflict with the environment discovered by Victor Hugo and perfected by Ibsen. The other two categories are, the one where the individual is in conflict with Fate as in a Greek tragedy and the other, where the individual is in conflict with the defects inherent in his own nature as in the Elizabethan drama. Hamilton, in this chapter "The Modern Social Drama" further adds that its origin is based on the struggle between the ideology of the early eighteenth century literature which dealt

with the exaltation of the society and the early nineteenth century literature which believed in individualism. It is therefore realistic by nature and is the product of nineteenth century. The individuals here do not go by the conventions of the society hence struggle is seen. Protagonists are exceptional outcasts which has narrowed the subject matter of modern social drama. Since it's difficult to make a good case out of a murderer or a robber hence majority dramatists deal with the man and woman involved in sexual relation bringing upon the censure of the society, thereby naturally instigating the question : Is a drama that does this moral or immoral? The author here remarks that instead of this question, the critics must essentially check whether the playwright tells the truth about people in the drama and how positively or negatively does it affect the audience.

The second section of the book, "Other Principles of Dramatic Criticism", takes the discussion a notch higher with critical outlook by the author towards various other factors related to the theatre. In "The Public and The Dramatist" the author in clear terms explains that unlike in a novel, a painting, or a sculpture where the end product is directly appreciated by the public, in a drama since the dramatist indirectly presents it through the actors, the public may not interpret and appreciate it if the artists on the stage fail to convey the exact thoughts of the dramatists accurately. Hence, the play will be misjudged. The general public mostly watches a drama for they are more interested to watch the actors and not because it is a particular dramatist's work. In simple words the dramatist does not get his due.

"Dramatic Art and The Theatre Business" shows the interconnection between the drama and the manager producing it. Drama is one such art which cannot be dissociated from the business of the theatre. A dramatist not only has to study the technical laws of dramatic art but also commercial laws of theatre business unlike other artists. In today's world the quality of the drama produced, the business strategies of managers are undergoing degradation which should be checked.

"The Happy Ending in the Theatre", as the title suggests, brings forth centuries old discussion that whether or not a play should have a happy ending. If seen from the point of view of the box-office or production managers, in order to make more profit, they would always want the dramas to have a happy ending whether it is a comedy or a serious drama. But, the ending should be fair, justifiable and credible in accordance with the plot. Serious plays logically demand unhappy ending instead of a happy ending which the audience cannot believe. The public

wants to be pleased but also it wants to be satisfied in the end.

"The Boundaries of Approbation", presents the simple fact that there should be a consistency or balance in the type of the play presented to the wide range of audience keeping in mind the upper and lower bound for approbation, which should neither "insult their intelligence nor trifle with their taste".

"Imitation or Suggestion in the Drama" discusses that a drama appeals its audience in two ways. One is by imitation of what we have already seen around us and the other by suggestion of what we have already experienced within us. The latter stimulates the responsive activity of the mind hence we enjoy the play we witness, unlike the former where the faculties are not stimulated hence no real enjoyment.

A drama should be like a magic mirror which must reflect only the essential and relevant and refuse to reflect non-essential and irrelevant. Like a concave mirror it should juxtapose all the scattered ideas of life in one channel and present before us a single great idea to help us understand the true meaning of life. This is the crux of the chapter "Holding the Mirror up to Nature".

Lyric, narrative and dramatic are the three types of blank verse known in English literature, where the Elizabethan playwrights wrote all the three kinds, the modern dramatists exclude the narrative and lyric unless used occasionally for a specific dramatic purpose. A poetic drama should be drama first and then poetry, asserts the author in "Blank Verse on the Contemporary Stage".

"Dramatic Literature and Theatric Journalism" sincerely draws a thin line of distinction between the two terms. Journalism is external, belongs to the moment, portrays facts and provides what the public wants, while literature is internal, belongs to eternity, is an expression of personal and particular belief. Nowadays a significant amount of contribution to the theatre is classed and judged as journalism. By expressing the true, pure and inmost experience thereby adding to the already existing knowledge of humanity, can the plays rise from being theatric journalism to dramatic literature.

"The Intention of Permanence" is a critical discussion on the transience and permanence in the work of art especially drama. Often a layman finds it difficult to distinguish between a genuine drama which incorporates the Intention of Permanence and a theatric entertainment merely for immediate pleasure. A genuine drama through its acting will portray some eternal truth about human life which is similar to the real phases of an individual whereas the other merely puts the actors to exercise. Nowadays

we see more of the latter but it is always better to do the lesser thing perfectly than to attempt something greater and not justify it.

"The Quality of New Endeavor " suggests that, contrary to the popular belief, a critic should open the doors for a new dramatist who has the urge in him to get into the queue of his work being recognized rather than only considering the already established dramatists who have been enjoying the appreciation of the public. A critic should carefully judge the work of an unknown playwright and give his unbiased opinion as to whether the audience can expect promising works from him in the future or not. This judgment requires forward- looking and far-sightedness.

"The Effect of Plays upon the Public" introspects upon the fact that it is not always necessary to depict pessimistic shades of life in a play, exhibiting unnecessary misery, exacting societal laws which leaves behind doubt, despair and disgust. Sometimes it is nobler to show the joy of living and that life is better than to show its weariness. In fact that play is better which evokes healthiest and hopeful emotional response from the audience.

In his preface to *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*, George Bernard Shaw explains these two terms which have been redefined by the author here in the thirteenth chapter "Pleasant and Unpleasant Plays". An unpleasant play is the one "which interests the intellect without at the same time awakening positive response from the emotions", while a pleasant play "not only stimulates thought but also elicits sympathy". The latter are better suited for theatres because it leaves the audience cold and it stirs only the intellect but the former also stirs the emotions of the audience to sympathy as the audience visit a theatre in pursuit of happiness.

In "Themes in the Theatre" we find a correct observation that the theme in a play is of utmost importance. A play which has no theme is like a human being without a soul, like the modern day American plays. Theme helps the audience to remember the drama and instill it within themselves and in their lives.

The last chapter of the essay, "The Function of Imagination", discusses how the usage of a dramatists imagination can make a play interesting to the audiences. Nowadays, the plays seem conventional and repetitive. There is no novelty in the themes. The author seconds the fact that for new plays old material is the best. It does not mean imitation but an imaginative invention of newness from the old thereby making it real.

Hence, on the whole, *The Theory of the Theatre* by Clayton Hamilton is an indispensable work for any would-be play writer who seeks to learn the basics of playwriting. This is found not only in the first eight chapters but

also in the succeeding critical material namely, "Other Principles of Dramatic Criticism" comprising of perfect fourteen chapters which are equally significant, thereby presenting a clear-sighted and deft picture of the same. The author beautifully compares and contrasts works by various dramatists right from the evolution of drama to the present day modern drama, wherever illustration and explanation of the same is necessary. Although in some of the places we find that he centers his criticism upon modern day American drama, playwrights, actors, theatre and stagecraft, yet the views or guidelines he states are applicable equally to every other drama.

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BOOK REVIEW

CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ENGLISH DRAMA

Sanaa Parween

Name of the book: Contemporary Indian English Drama: An Overview; Author: Anita Myles; Publisher: Sarup Book Publisher, New Delhi; ISBN 978-81-7625-629-2; Hardcover; Pages: 151.

Tracing back into times, we come across that the history of Indian Drama is embedded with a number of plays and playwrights who contributed in development of the genre "Drama". Though the genesis of Indian Drama is traced to Sanskrit literature, but it was only after the regime of British government that India experienced the revival of Indian Drama. And

"Indian-English Drama" was born with the publication of Krishna Mohan Banerjee's *The Persecuted* in 1831. Followed by works of dramatists like Sri Aurobindo, C.S Nazir, Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Girish Karnad, Mahesh Dattani and many more. Indian English Drama didn't step onto the stage anytime sooner, as the belief of extinction of Indian English Drama preceded the attempt to stage the plays. It was believed for much longer that the standard of Indian English Drama will fail to meet the popularization of Classic Drama and hence will not be able to survive for long. Still it managed to spread its root with some outstanding playwrights and stage performances.

In her book "*Contemporary Indian English Drama: An Overview*", Anita Myles enlightens the aspects of Indian English Drama. As this genre established its root firmly in the middle of twentieth century, it is quite obvious that there are not many books appreciating the attempts of rare playwrights, who stepped forward and dedicate their writing skills into this. The author in this book attempts to establish a comprehensive approach along with historical perspectives. The book began with a chapter throwing light on the advent and gradual development of Indian English Drama and an outline about the playwrights to be discussed in following chapters, thus providing required information in a nutshell before continuing with the detailed contributions of various contributors to this genre. Chapter wise peep into different playwright's works, achievements and contribution in brief let the reader grasp and interpret quite easily.

The introductory chapter "*Evolution of Indian English Drama*" provides a base for the reader, it displays works of some famous and shining Indian dramatists like Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, Bharati Sarabhai and many other famous playwrights. Apart from mentioning well known works of dramatists, there is an extract from Chattopadhyaya's famous play *Siddhartha: Man of Peace*, centering its futuristic theme in the form of prophecy. Precise idea about different texts can also be found in paragraphs, and establishment of relation between works of author helps in broadening the surface of understanding. Specialization, style, interests of dramatists contributes majority of the chapter, symbolization is common in many of the works, portrayal of brief character sketch adds up to the interests. The first chapter ends with a powerful quote of Mahesh Dattani mentioning India's rich cultural heritage, the last paragraph anyhow encourages the evolving playwrights to keep producing plays despite of unsympathetic criticism, negligible stage facilities and other hurdles.

The second chapter, "*Asif Currimbhoy*" portrays an in detailed study of the dramatist's achievements, style of writing, areas of interests, critic's quotes and reader's response towards his works. There are extracts from his play *The Refugee* depicting the pain and agony of refugees around the world. His plays *Inquilab or Revolution (1970)*, *The Refugee (1971)* and *Sonar Bangla (1972)* constitute the Bengal trilogy, which was also translated in Bengali language and successfully produced in Bengal's regional theater. The chapter so on continues with the brief touch up of themes and its relation with his other works as well as tracing the similarities. There are description present from his plays like *The Restaurant (1960)*, *The Hungry Ones* which was first performed on stage in the year 1966, *Goa (1964)*, *The Miracle Seed (1973)*, *Angkor (1973)* and many more from his total of 29 works.

The third chapter, "*Nissim Ezekiel*" as per the motive of the author, is an in-depth study of the dramatist's work which has been discussed along with bits of extract from the plays. Few quotes by the dramatist are also mentioned in order to relate with his opinion and thought process, as it gets necessary to understand the playwright's point of view while going through the work. An interesting fact mentioned about Nissim Ezekiel is that he considered women as the weaker sex, inferior to men and different from them in many ways. But surprisingly in his play *Nalini* he portrayed the character of Nalini as an independent, strong and positive female. She creates a new world for herself by breaking conventions, traditions and all the outdated formulae that prevents a woman to move forward in life. The play *Nalini* is actually accompanied by two other plays that contribute to *Three Plays* of Nissim Ezekiel, *Marriage Poem* aptly subtitled as *Tragi-Comedy* and *The Sleepwalkers* subtitled as *An Indo-American Farce*. In order to bring out dramatist's view on women, the author makes a contradictory analysis of female characters in the above plays. There is a brief discussion on *Song of Deprivation*; a one act play subtitled *A Comic Morality*, this play comes under the category of absurd play. Anita Myles discussed precisely about the setting and characters in order to present a clear picture of the dramatist's variation in composition of a play.

The Fourth chapter is titled "*Girish Karnad*". Girish Karnad evolved as an outstanding playwright with his excellent plays like *Yayati (1961)*, *Tughlaq (1962)*, *Hayavadan (1970)*, *The Fire and the Rain (1998)*, *Naga-Mandala(1990)*, *A Heap of Broken Images (2005)* followed by many other great plays. His plays were originally written in Kannada and later translated into English. Girish Karnad is marked for extracting the material for his plot from history and mythology mostly. But he makes it a point to interpret the past in the contemporary relevance, a system which he

evolved from his very first play *Yayati* which examines a myth from *The Mahabharata* in modern context. This chapter discusses his use of myths, folk tales and legends for the base of his plot. While discussing the style of his plays, the author does not fail to present the various responses of critics and readers. *The Wedding Album (2008)* is Karnad's recent play, and in this chapter there is a brief outline mentioned along with its episodic division and characters. His play *Flowers* was performed in the year 2007, as mentioned in the chapter, its theme being unsuitable for dramatization as it was a reinvention of Karnataka's popular folktale from *Chitradurga*, it ended up as a flop among the audience. According to the author's study, she derived that the play *Flowers* has invited more attention to its theme rather than to its dramatic conversion because the issue highlighted was the perennial question of gender equality. And the chapter ends with a positive outlook towards the playwright's inspirational and enlightening works, bringing out the true essence of literature and giving meaning to the love of literature.

The fifth chapter is titled "*Vijay Tendulkar*". Vijay Tendulkar as a former journalist observed the post-independence Indian social setup and felt deeply concerned about the predicament of certain sections of society especially the marginal position granted to women. This chapter highlights the major themes in his plays and about how they cater to the social lot. His plays like *Kamala (1981)*, *The vultures (1970)*, *Ghasiram Kotwal (1972)*, *Kanyadan (1983)*, *His Fifth Woman (2004)* pinpoints the indisputable fact that religiosity and sexuality are mis-utilized as means of exercising one's power. He believed that power when institutionalized can be found in the media, in a stage, society morality and social mores, indeed a powerful belief that made him one of the great Indian English dramatists. As playwright he combined the power of character delineation with the versatility of dialogue writing without compromising with the compactness of the plot.

Sixth chapter, "*Mahesh Dattani*", Mahesh Dattani a versatile playwright who succeeded in attracting attention of the theatre going audience till the end of each performance. He became the first Indian English Dramatist to be honored with the *Sahitya Akademi Award* in 1998. Among the themes taken up by Dattani in his plays religious tension, sexuality and gender issues also find expression. Though a worthy successor of Girish Karnad, Mahesh Dattani does not make use of myths in his plays. As depicted in this chapter by Anita Myles, Dattani's plays become exceptionally stimulating because they reveal the complexities of modern day life. As seen in previous chapters, the author Anita Myles makes it a point to present brief outlook of important plays of a playwright, with the

mention of few characters and their position in the play, how the play connects with the main theme etc. Important plays of Mahesh Dattani like *Where There is a Will (1988)*, *Dance like a Man (1989)*, *Do the Needful (1997)*, *Bravely fought the Queen (1994)*, *Seven Steps Around the Fire (1999)*, *Tara*, *Final solutions (1994)* are depicted here with precise understanding of their themes and thus doing justice to the dramatist and helping the readers in having a brief idea about the plays as well as about characters.

And the Final chapter, "*Postscript*", one can notice without fail that all the chapters catered to the popular male population of playwrights, now the author makes it a point to wind up the book by mentioning some of the female playwrights and their contribution towards Indian English Drama. The last chapter contains brief outlines from works of famous female dramatists like Uma Parmeshwaran, Manjula Padmanabhan, Dina Mehta and Ninaz Khodaiji. There is also a precise paragraph on Ramu Ramanathan, a contemporary writer director who is known for the production of his most powerful play *Mahadevbhai*, a play in response to India Politics, especially the anti-Gandhian wave and the bold attempts to discrete democratic institutions. Anita Myles saved this playwright to mention in the end pages.

This book on "*Contemporary Indian English Drama*" can be useful for student as well as the teachers to enrich the student's knowledge about great playwrights born in India. Their immortal and enlightening works in the field of drama will provide a concrete base for the Indian students in understanding the social, political and literary issues of different periods. Having precise idea about the achievements of such great playwrights will escalate the inspirational value among the readers.

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[1] The *vyabhicharibhavas* or the transient/inconsistent emotional states of mind are 33 in number, viz. *nirved* (indifference), *glan*(debility), *bank*

(apprehension), *asoyā* (envy), *mada*(intoxication of pride).

ārama(weariness), *ālasya*(indolence), *dainya*(depression), *chintā* (painful reflection), *moha*(delusion of mind), *smṛti*(recollection), *dhṛti*(contentment, steadiness), *vriṣṭā*(shame), *chapaḥatā*(unsteadiness), *harsha*(joy), *āvega*(agitation), *jaṭatā*(immobility), *garva*(arrogance), *vishāda*(despondency), *autsukya*(impatience) *nidrā*(sleep, drowsiness), *apasmāra*(dementedness), *supta*(dreaming), *vibodha*(awakening), *amarsha*(animosity), *avahittha*(constraint), *ugratā*(ferocity), *matī*(resolve), *vyādhī*(sickness), *unmāda*(madness), *maraṇā*(demise), *trāsa*(alarm), *vitarka*(trepidation), (Kapoor, P.105).

[2] The word Dalit has been originated from Sanskrit word 'dal', which means broken, ground-down, downtrodden, oppressed, persecuted, or exploited. The roots of the term Dalit can be traced back to the *Purusha Suktam* of *Rig Veda*

[3]

https://www.academia.edu/1787353/Drama_as_a_Form_of_Critical_Pedagogy_Empowerment_of_Justice

[4] <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2FBF02310582#page-1>

[5] <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/drama>

[6] <http://archive.lib.msu.edu/DMC/African%20Journals/pdfs/africa%20media%20review/vol11no1/jamr011001008.pdf>

[7] [https://www.google.co.in/url?](https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CFQQFjAl&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.artsCouncil.org.uk%2Fmedia%2Fuploads%2Fdocuments%2Fpublications%2FphpuSGWg5.doc&ei=Yf5JVeGON8-puQT3tIFQ&usq=AFQjCNFWwEIUuYdLFO5CgYL2j_skfS5cw&bvm=bv.92291466,d.c2E)

[sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CFQQFjAl&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.artsCouncil.org.uk%2Fmedia%2Fuploads%2Fdocuments%2Fpublications%2FphpuSGWg5.doc&ei=Yf5JVeGON8-puQT3tIFQ&usq=AFQjCNFWwEIUuYdLFO5CgYL2j_skfS5cw&bvm=bv.92291466,d.c2E](https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CFQQFjAl&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.artsCouncil.org.uk%2Fmedia%2Fuploads%2Fdocuments%2Fpublications%2FphpuSGWg5.doc&ei=Yf5JVeGON8-puQT3tIFQ&usq=AFQjCNFWwEIUuYdLFO5CgYL2j_skfS5cw&bvm=bv.92291466,d.c2E)

[8] <http://thenationonlineng.net/new/dramatheatre-and-society-what-relevance/>

[9] <http://www.usu.edu/markdamen/ClasDram/chapters/02lorigins.htm>

[10] <https://www.linkedin.com/company/interactive-drama-for-education-and-awareness-in-the-schools-inc.-i.d.e.a.s.->

[11] http://catalog.ucmerced.edu/preview_course_nopop.php?catoid=2&coid=1413

[12] <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/drama-for-development>

[13] <http://www.sprucegrove.org/business/tourism/events/festivals.htm>

[14] <http://economicsandpeace.org/>

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