



INDIAN PERFORMING ARTS: DANCE MUSIC DRAMA

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Abstract:

India has been a land of rich cultural heritage. The Indian traditions and practices are deeply rooted and date back to early centuries. Indian Art, specially- Dance, Music and Drama is believed to have originated from Vedas, the first textbooks of the Early Aryans. The Vedas have rules for chanting of hymns and also lay down guidelines for pitch and accent of singing different hymns. They reflect the socio-religious practices of rural people earlier and have now become a part of the modern living. Songs are sung and Dances are performed to celebrate- the homecoming of warriors, birth of a child, marriages, mundan, naming of the child, to invoke Gods and Goddesses, announce the joy of a new season, to share the happiness of harvesting the crops and for various other reasons. These art forms have also been used to propagate religious and social ideas in the forms of bhajans and kirtans. Therefore, music, dance and drama accompany us in the life-cycle events. In my paper on performing arts, I intend to bring forth the development and the changing perspectives of dance drama and music, from Ancient and Medieval times to this contemporary era.

Keywords: Hindustani music, classical, music, art of dancing, Veda, Sangeet Natak Academy

How can we define art? It can be defined as an expression of all characteristics of the human mind 'aesthetically'. The word aesthetically differentiates between a simple narration and performance. Arts not only arouse our senses and emotions but also reflect the human emotions. These human emotions are known as *ras*. The literal meaning of the word *ras* is sugary juice. It signifies the ultimate satisfaction or *anand*. There are the following human emotions: *Hasya* (laughter); *Bhayanak* (evil *Shringar*); *Rudra* (chivalrous); *Karun* (pathos); *Vir* (courage); *Adbhut* (astonishing); *Vibhatsa* (terrifying glory); *Shanti* (peace); *Shringaar* (beautifying one's self). N.A. Jairazbhoy wrote about Music that:

Music in the Indian subcontinent is a reflection of the diverse elements- racial, linguistic, and cultural- that make up the heterogeneous population of the area. The extraordinary variety of musical types is probably unparalleled in any other equivalent part of the world. Music plays a vital role in the religious, social, and artistic lives of the people.

(Basham 212)

Indian music dates back to a tradition of nearly 2000 years and those parts of India that have remained isolated from the mainstream still preserve Ancient musical forms relatively unchanged. The fundamental element of Indian classical music is the use of a 'drone', to make a continuous low humming sound, provided by a wind instrument (trumpet, clarinet, harmonica, tuba, etc.) or a plucked stringed instrument (*manjira*, *sarod*, *sitar*, *veena*, *tumbi*, harmonium, etc.). Classical music is performed by small ensembles, usually consisting of one main singer or instrument. One or more secondary instruments are used for echo. *Ragas* and *taals* are the two main elements of Indian classical music. Melodic entities are called *ragas* and melodic patterns are called *taal*. Indian *ragas* are based on seven notes or *svar*, this system is known as *sapataka*, that is, group of seven. These *ragas* are derived from the modes or *jatis*. The seven *ragas* and their *jatis* are as follows: Sa (*Shadjagrama*); Re (*Rishabhgrama*); Ga (*Gandharagrama*); Ma (*Madhyamagrama*); Pa (*Panchamagrama*); Dha (*Dhaivatgrama*); and Ni (*Nishadgrama*). Out of these seven, Sa and Pa are pure notes for they have no other forms. All others have two forms- *Shudh* and *komal* or *teevra*.

There are various types of ragas, and each raga is sung at a specific time of the day, for instance, Raag *Marwah* is sung during late afternoon and before evening. Another raga, called Raga *Bhairav* is considered to rest within the mind of Lord *Shiva*. It is sung in the morning in a peaceful atmosphere. Raga *Yaman* is an evening raga and is full of grace. It creates the mood of devotion and dedication; Raga *Gaud- Sarang* and Raga *Bhim Palasi* are afternoon ragas.

The earliest Indian music can be traced to Sama Veda, which contained *slokas* that were put to musical notes. Vedic hymns were chanted with prescribed pitch and accent. The present day musical terminology stems from the *Natyashastra* by Bharat Muni, which has been dated variously between 2nd century B.C. and 5th century A.D. it has six chapters on music. Another text *Brihaddesi* was written by Matanga between 8th and 9th century A.D. In this work ragas were first named and discussed at length. In the 12th century, Jayadeva of Orissa had produced the brilliant raga *kavya*. His work, *Gita Govinda* has verses describing love between *Krishna* and *Radha*. The work describes the eight moods of a heroine called *Ashta Nayika*, which has been an inspiration for Indian classical dancers. Abhinavgupta's *Abhinavabharti* is a commentary on *Natyashastra* and provides useful information about music.

During the Medieval ages, music was greatly patronized by *Sufi* and *Bhakti* saints. *Qawwalis* were heard in Sufi *khanqahs* and devotional music like bhajan and kirtan became the favourites of Bhakti saints like Kabir, Mirabai, Surdasa, Chandidasa, Tulsidasa and Vidyapati. Great scholars like Amir Khusrau contributed in the promotion of music. Baz Bahadur and his wife Rupmati introduced new ragas. *Kitab-e-Navras* was written by Adil Shah II during the 17th century is a collection of songs in praise of Hindu deities as well as Muslim saints. Tansen was the famous musician who adorned Akbar's court and was one of the *Navratnas* or Nine jewels of his court. It is believed that he could bring showers with his *Megh Raga*. Biju Bawra was another famous musician of Akbar's court. According to Lanepoole-

Babar himself was fond of music. He is supposed to have developed some very popular musical style forms like Qawalis, Khayal, etc. Humayun was said to have illustrated Indian texts on music. Akbar composed songs and encouraged musicians. Swami Haridas and his disciples composed many songs in different tunes. Pundarika Vittal was a great scholar of music who wrote the famous Ragamala. Hindustani Music was also enriched by devotional songs sung by Mira Bai, Tulsidas and Surdas.

Indian Classical music is broadly classified into- *Hindustani* music and *Carnatic* music. The Hindustani music is not only influenced by the ancient Vedic musical traditions, but is also enriched by the Persian music brought by the Mughals. Hindustani Classical Music may be traced back to the period of the Delhi Sultanate, especially Amir Khusrau. He is believed to have invented the sitar and tabla and new ragas. Most Hindustani musicians trace their descent to Tansen. This music is based on the raga system, consisting of six principle ragas. Carnatic music, on the other hand, is believed to have originated in the South Indian state of Karnataka. It has more fixed compositions as compared to Hindustani music. Vocals are greatly emphasized. Even when compositions are meant to be played on instruments, they are composed in a singing style called *gayaki*. Main ragas in this music style are grouped under *Melakartaragam*, which are seventy two in number and its derivatives are grouped under *Janyakartaragam*. Purandar Das is considered as the father of Carnatic music and Tyagaraja, Shyama Shastry and Muthuswami Dikshitar are considered the trinity of Carnatic music. Different styles of Hindustani music are *Dhrupad*, *Dhamar*, *Thumri*, *Khayal*, *Tappa*, *Dadra* and *Ghazal*.

Dhrupad which literally means ‘fixed words’ is believed to have originated during the Vedic period for the recitation of mantras. It blossomed to its fullest between 15th and 18th centuries. Man Singh Tomar of Gwalior is credited for proliferation of Dhrupad. Baiju, Bakshu and Swami Haridas (guru of Tansen) of Brindavan were great exponents of this music style. *Khayal* music is more lyrical than Dhrupad. It’s rooted in the word ‘imagination or thought’. *Khayal* is less word bound than Dhrupad. It is of two types- *bada khayal (vilambit)* and *chhota khayal (drut)*. It has its roots in the Ancient Indian *raapaka alaap* and was given impetus by Amir Khusrau and Muhammad Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur. However, it gained maturity in the hands of Niyamat Khan Sadarang and Niyamat Khan Adarang in the 18th century. *Dhamar* music is related to Lord Krishna. *Thumris*

are composed in Braj Bhasha and have romantic themes. *Tappa* is characterized by quick phrases and short *taan*. These songs are usually composed in Punjabi and were supposed to have been sung by camel drivers. *Ghazals* are rhyming couplets which originated in the 6th century in Arabic language. *Taraana* form was invented by Amir Khusrao and is similar to *Qalbana* form of Sufi poetry. It is sung at medium or fast pace. Devotional music like kirtan, bhajan in the *Adi Grantha* and singing in the *Majlis* during Muharram also deserve a special place in Indian music.

The Hindustani classical musicians are usually associated to a particular *gharana* or style of music. *Gharanas* refer to hereditary linkages of musicians and have distinct peculiar style which distinguishes one from the other. The *gharanas* function in the traditional *gurushishya parampara*, where disciples learn under a particular guru who transmits his musical knowledge and style and thus will belong to the same *gharana*. Some famous *gharanas* are Gwalior *gharana*, founded by Nathan Pir Baksh and represented by Vishnu Pulaskar in contemporary times; Agra *gharana*, founded by Khuda Baksh and represented by C.R. Vyas in today's times; Jaipur *gharana*, founded by Alladia Khan; and Rampur-Saheswan *gharana*, represented by Nassir Khan and Rashid Khan.

With the advent of the Britishers in India, music was westernized. Indians started learning and adopting new instruments like violin and guitar. There was orchestration of music for the first time. Cassettes replaced oral transmissions and music reached the masses instead of being confined to the privileged few. Today the music industry of India has reached new zeniths. It has successfully hybridized the classical and the western besides maintaining its individuality.

Music cannot be talked of in isolation. It has to be read along with its sister art, that is, dance. As mentioned in the Gazetteer of India,

The Rig Veda mentions dance (*nrti*) and danseuse (*nrtu*) and compare the brilliant dawn (*usas*) to a brightly attired danseuse. In the *Brahmanas*, *Jaiminiya* and *Kausitaki* dance and music are mentioned together. The Epics are full of references to dances on earth and heaven.

The art of dancing can be traced back to the Harappan dynasty. The Bronze statue of a girl in dancing pose is indicative that the dancing art existed even in 2500 B.C. Bharat Muni's 'Natyashastra' is the source of technical knowledge of this art form as well. He used dance which has only beautiful movements is called *nrtta*; and that which has a theme to be mimed is known as *nrtya*. It is learned that earlier there were two styles of dance forms- the manly and forceful *tandava*, promulgated by Lord Shiva and the graceful and feminine dance form *lasya*, associated with Goddess *Parvati*, wife of Lord Shiva. Where *tandava* comprises of hundred and eight poses

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called *Karanas*, built into sequences called *Angahaaras*, *lasya* is an interpretive dance having set 10-12 love-motifs. From *lasya* is derived the classical solo South Indian dance- *Bharatnatyam*.

The tradition of the performing arts in India goes back to the Vedic times. The oldest treatise on the theory of the Indian performing arts is the 'Natyashastra' compiled by Bharat according to which, the Gods approached Lord Brahma and urged him to create a fifth Veda, which, unlike the other four, would not be the privilege of the three higher castes, but would be accessible to the fourth and the lower caste of the *Shudras* as well. Lord Brahma then gave *Natya Veda* which could be read (*paathya*), the intellectual content of which Brahma took from the Rig Veda; that which could be sung, the music (*gaana*) for which he took from the *Sama Veda*; the *abhinaya*, the mimetic art from *Yajur Veda* and the *rasas*, the emotional content he took from the *Atharva Veda*. Lord Brahma then asked *Vishwakarma*, the divine architect to construct a playhouse in which sage Bharat was asked to put in practice the new Veda. According to Bharat's 'Natyashastra', the fifth Veda was:

to serve as a resting place for those who are grieved, weary, unhappy or engaged in an arduous discipline; towards bestowing righteousness, renown, long life, fortune, increase of reason, and affording counsel to the world.

A performance is considered accomplished if it manages to invoke rasa (emotion) among the audience by invoking *bhava* (gestures). The *Abhinaya* or expressions are successfully achieved in a performance through the following ways: *Angika*- movement of major and minor body parts; *Vachika*-song and speech; *Aharya*-costume and adornment; *Satvika*-moods and emotions.

The *Sangeet Natak* Academy recognizes eight Indian Classical dance forms. *Bharatnatyam* from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, *Kathakali*, a classical dance-drama from Kerala, *Manipuri* from

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Manipur, *Kathak* from Uttar Pradesh, *Odissi* from Orissa, and *Kuchipudi* from Andhra Pradesh and *Sattriya* from Assam (recently included in the fold of Classical Dances).

The *gopurams* of the Chidambaram temple depict Bharatnatyam poses. The *Abhinaya Darpana* by Nandikesvara is the major textual source for the study of technique and grammar of body movement in Bharatnatyam. This is *ekaharya* dance, where a single dancer performs many roles in the performance. The dance was earlier known as *Daasiyattam* performed by the *devadasis* of the Tamil Nadu temples. Devadasis are another important symbol of traditional India. They were young girls 'gifted' by their parents to the temples and married to Gods. They performed dance and music for the deities. Bala Saraswati is a well-known devadasi. Bharatnatyam begins with *alarippu* (to adorn with flowers) and is followed by *jatiswaram*, a pure dance piece performed to the accompaniment of raga of Carnatic music and has no words. This is followed by *shabdam* and then *varnam* (combination of nrtya and nrita), then the dancer performs *abhinaya* expressing a variety of moods and the performance ends with a *tillana* (originating from *tarana* of Hindustani music) and *mangalam*, invoking the blessings of the Gods.

Kathakali is a popular dance form of Kerala. The ritual performing arts of *Chakiarkoothu*, *Koodiyattam*, *Krishnattam* and *Ramanattam* have had a direct influence on Kathakali in its form and technique. According to the legend, the refusal of the Zamorin of Calicut to send Krishnattam troupe to Travancore enraged the Raja of Kottarakkara so much that he was inspired to compose the Ramanattam. The dance depicts the square and rectangular basic positions. Kathakali is a combination of all the possible elements of art. It is a blend of dance,

music and dramatizes stories mostly from the epics. It includes the four aspects of abhinaya - *angika*, *aharya*, *vachika*, *satvika*; alongwith the *nritta*, *nriya* and *natya* aspects that are perfectly combined. The dancer expresses himself through *hastamudras* and facial expressions. The weight of the body is on the outer edges of the feet which are slightly bent and curved. Kathakali costumes and make-up are elaborate and designed to give a super human effect. Kathakali derives its textual sanction from *Balarama Bharatam* and *Hastalakshana Deepika*. The characters are grouped under certain clearly defined types like the *pacha*-colour applied on face, green portrayed by males having pious character; *kathi*- where anti- heroes are painted with green and red; *thadi*- is the white coloured beard and *kari* or *minukku*- black makeup for showing hunters or forest dwellers.

Backed by Hindustani music, Kathak is the traditional dance of *Awadh*. Kathak is derived from the word *katha* which means a story. It probably started as an oral tradition. Later on mime and gestures were added to make the story telling more effective. The kathak dance form is mainly centered on Radha-Krishna theme. The emergence of *Raslila* in the *Braj* region was an important development in Kathak. It combines music, dance and the narrative. Dance in *Raslila*, however, was an extension of the basic mime and gestures of the *Kathakars* or story-tellers which blended easily with the existing traditional dance. Mughal rulers gave a great impetus to the dance form and kathak shifted from temple courtyards to *darbars*. It became expressive, graceful and sensuous. The golden age of kathak was under Wajid Ali Shah, who established the Lucknow *gharana*. The technique is built by the use of an intricate system of foot-work. Ankle bells or *ghunghru* are worn by the dancer and its sound is controlled with great expertise.

Manipuri, another Indian classical dance, originated in the north-eastern state of Manipur. Owing to its isolated location, it is still preserved in its original form and is not influenced by other modernisations. It is associated with rituals and traditional festivals. It has legendary references to the dances of Shiva and Parvati. *Lai Haroba* is the earliest form of dance which forms the basis of all stylized dances of Manipur, including Manipuri. It is performed as a ceremonial offering of song and dance. The principal performers are the *maibas* (priests) and *maibis* (priestesses). The dance is also influenced by *Rasleela* dances which originated during the reign of King Bhagyachandra. Manipuri dance is accompanied with congregational singing known as *Sankeertan*.

Odissi is the sensuous and lyrical dance of Odisha. It is a dance of love and passion touching the divine and the human, the sublime and the mundane. It has its regional variations that are mentioned in the Natya Shastra. One such variation is the *Odhra Magadha*, the south-eastern style and is identified as the earliest precursor of present day Odissi. The faith of *Jagannath* also influences this dance form. It is a very stylized dance and is based on the classical Natya Shastra and the Abhinaya Darpana. There are two techniques of posture- *Chowk*, which is a masculine stance imitating square position and *Tribhanga*, the feminine stance with deflections in neck, torso and knees. Same dancer plays both the parts. This dance involves lot of hand gestures and movements. Odiya silver jewellery, a special hair-do and typical sari are the characteristic features of this dance form. Even a modern Odissi dancer still reaffirms the faith of the *devadasis ormaharis* where they seek liberation or moksha through the medium of dance.

Kuchipudi, the dance of Andhra Pradesh, emerged out of a long rich tradition of dance-drama of the same name. The Hindu epics, legends and mythological tales are exhibited through a combination of dance, drama and music. Its distinguishing feature is the use of speech in the presentation of Kuchipudi. It is not a solo affair and is performed by a group of performers. The director or the *Sutradhar* plays an important role. It is accompanied with the typical Carnatic music. The performance begins with each character introducing him with a *dharavu*, a small composition of song and dance and then the *sutradhar* announces the theme of the performance.

Sattriya dance form originated in the 15th century under the great *Vaishnava* saint Mahapurusha Sankaradeva. It served as a powerful medium for propagation of the Vaishnav faith. This dance form has been preserved with great commitment by the *Sattras*, that is, Vaishnav *mathas* or monasteries. Because of its religious character and association with Sattras, the style came to be called as Sattriya.

Mohiniattam is the feminine dance form of Kerala. It has its slow and seductive quality and is performed on sensual themes. It is generally a slow art form. Mohini refers to 'a lady' and *attam* means 'dance'. Backed by Carnatic music, it is performed as love and devotion to Lord Krishna and his consort, Radha. The white or off-white sari wore by the dancer is typical of this dance form.

Some culturists opine that with the incoming of Western culture, these dance forms are feared to extinct. Classical dancers and singers believe it's a dying art. Youngsters today are more comfortable learning jazz, salsa, break dance, disco, etc. because they are more flexible forms as compared to the rigidity of Indian Classical forms. They can be learned with lesser efforts and in lesser time instead of a long time span needed to learn the classical forms. However, with the setting up of cultural institutions like- *Sangeet Natak Akademi*, *Lalit Kala Akademi*, etc. dance, music, drama and various other Art forms like painting, martial arts, etc. have received a great impetus. Dance and music have moved out from the temple courtyards to the mainstream.

I would now discuss about Indian drama, which too is believed to have originated from the Vedas. In the Vedic sacrifices, it is seen that there were specifications regarding dress, directions and actions accompanying the recital of texts. In Ramayana, we know of the troupes of women who performed drama. According to a legend, it is believed that under Bharat Muni's able tutelage, the play *Amritamanthana* was performed by his hundred sons, *gandharvas* and *apsaras*. Lord Brahma, devas and *daanavas* were the audience. During the course of the *naatya*, Lord Brahma said,

This *naatya* is not created for the specific purpose of representing either you (*daanavas*) or the devas; rather *naatya* is the representation of the states of the whole world. Through the depiction of the deeds and states of the world it will show the good and bad behavior and thus give instruction to the people.

Therefore, the birth and purpose of the fifth Veda, *Naatyaveda* was seen. *Natya Shastra* is the earliest treatise on dramaturgy. It includes the origin and nature of drama, construction of the playhouse (rectangular, square and triangular), dance, sentiments, physical actions, *nat* (male artists), and *nati* (female artist), languages, rhetoric, speech, regional manners, styles of action, types of drama, plot construction, make up, stage techniques, production and music.

At the time of Panini, two sage-writers Silalin and Krsasva, wrote about the art of acting in *Nata Sutras*. Kautilya in his '*Arthashastra*', there is mention of musicians, dancers and dramatists and it also mentions *Subandhu* writing act within an act. *Bhasa* wrote plays based on the stories of *Udayana*, *Ramayana* and

Mahabharata. *Vasabdatta* was his written masterpiece. Patanjali's *Mahabhasya* written in the second century refers to several aspects of drama- acts, music, stage, *rasa* and the performances known as *Kamsavadha* and *Balibandha*. Asvaghosa, the Mahayana Buddhist, wrote a philosophical play on Gautam Buddha, which depicts the secular character of the drama art form. Like the English drama, Indian drama was also popular in the religious places, and was performed in the temple courtyards (like church courtyards). It concentrated on depicting war between good and the evil, and various moral and religious teachings were given to the spectators. Drama was and is still a reflection of the true picture of the society.

The drama aimed at invoking the sentiments of the audience watching it. Indian drama was not under the Greek influence. It aroused the tragic elements of pathos (*karuna*) but the tragedy in Greek manner was absent.

In the earlier days, there were two types of production: *lokadharmi* or realistic, involving the representation of human behavior on stage and *natyadharmi* or conventional, representing stylized gestures and symbolism which was more artistic than realistic. Bharat described ten varieties of plays and a derivative play (*natika*). The heroic play (*nataka*) and social play (*prakarana*) are the most perfect of them. The best example of heroic *nataka* is Kalidasa's '*Abhijanana Shakuntalam*' and his '*Vikramorvasiya*'. Kalidasa's '*Malavikagnimitra*' is a good example of *natika*. '*Mrcchakatika*' of King Shudraka is the best example of social *Prakarana* drama.

If we look at the development of the British drama, we see that the nobles were made to speak in verse form, whereas, the common class was given the prose style of dialogues. Similarly, in Indian drama, till the tenth century, Sanskrit was considered the language of the educated. So dramas were performed mostly in this language. However, characters belonging to lower classes and women were made to speak *Prakrit*, the language of the commoners.

200 years of the British rule brought Indian theatre into direct contact with the Modern Theatre of the west. They introduced their London models in the cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The themes began to change and drama became concerned about the common man. Initially drama was written in Bengali, Tamil and Marathi, but later plays began to be written in other regional languages as well. Gradually nationalistic themes began to be dramatized and drama reached new heights. Indian English Drama dates back to 1831,

when Krishna Mohan Banerji wrote 'The Persecuted or Dramatic Scenes illustrative of the present state of Hindoo Society in Calcutta'.

After Independence, there were efforts to create an Indian theatre that was different from the Westernized, colonial theatre. Indian theatre practitioners, therefore, began returning to their roots in classical dance, religious ritual, martial arts, popular entertainment and aesthetic theory. The Theatre of Roots - as this movement was known - was the first conscious effort at creating a body of work for urban audiences combining modern European theatre with traditional Indian performance while maintaining its distinction from both. The movement offered a strategy for reassessing colonial ideology and culture and for articulating and defining a newly emerging 'India'. Suresh Awasthi, the general secretary of the Sangeet Natak Akademy, coined the term 'Theatre of Roots' and advocated against the west inspired modern Theatre of India.

The year 1972 was a landmark year for the Indian theatrics when Vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play, '*Ghashiram Kotwal*' created a storm by the use of traditional folk forms in modern contemporary theatre. There arose a new breed of directors- B.V. Karanth, Habib Tanvir, Bansi Kaul and Rattan Thiyam. Feroz Khan was another director who has to his credit plays like- '*Tumhari Amrita*', '*Mahatma vs Gandhi*', '*Ramlal Salesman*' (Hindi adaptation of 'Death of a Salesman' by Arthur Miller). Manjula Padmanabhan was the first Indian to earn international acclaim with her play 'Bitter Harvest'.

If we look at some of the famous dramatists and their works, we will find how the Indian theatre has created a mark. Dharambeer Bharati's '*Andha Yug*' depicts the aftermath of the war of Mahabharata and its effects on both the vanquished and the victors. It is a reflection of the agony and devastation that war causes and the human suffering associated with it. Girish Karnad is another revered dramatist, known for his sensible use of myths and legends with contemporary relevance. His works '*Yayati*', '*Tughlaq*', '*Fire and the Rain*' deserve a special mention. Habib Tanvir is known for his great use of folk traditions and tribal theatrical forms of Madhya Pradesh, in plays like '*Mitti ki Gadi*'. Mohan Rakesh explored the human emotions caught up in the hard realities of life. On the other hand, Vijay Tendulkar dealt with bold themes like violence, sex and agonies of mankind.

Besides theatre, India also boasts of the world's oldest and largest Film industry. The first commercial film, *Raja Harishchandra* by Dadasaheb Phalke was a big success. In 1931, the first Indian cinema with a sound track, *Alam Ara* was produced by Ardeshir Irani. Satyajit Ray, with his film, *Pather Pachali*, became the pioneer of the Indian Parallel Cinema. The seventies came up with the big budgeted multi star films which were instant eye catchers and promised great entertainment value. The content, narrative style, story structure all changed in these masala movies. The late eighties and nineties was the period of the revival of the musical love stories in Hindi cinema, with Dolby digital sound effects that brought a revolution in the music industry. Now Indian cinema has reached new zeniths of glamour, entertainment, commercial values and budgeting.

Although the emergence of cinema has given a knee-jerk to the Drama but even today it continues to remain a popular art, reflecting the society in its true sense. Theatre continues to attract new actors, directors and artists. Theatre groups like Indian National Theatre, the Prithvi Theatre, Chingari, etc. have greatly popularized theatre and theatre personalities are looked up with great respect. Even the top stars of the film industry endeavor to remain associated with the theatres in some or the other manner. Presently, various types of dramas are flourishing like: a) Stage theatre b) Radio theatre c) *Nukkar* or street plays d) Mono drama (one man show) e) Musical theatre f) Short skits g) One act plays. Theatres have become a medium to express the popular cry of the masses.

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