



EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENTS OF GIRISH KARNAD, ASIF CURRIMBHOY AND MAHESH DATTANI IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIAN ENGLISH DRAMA

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ABSTRACT:

The significance of Indian theatre, its roots, and its evolution across time are all topics that will be covered in this article. The primary emphasis is placed on prominent Indian playwrights writing in English. Drama is a hybrid art. That takes place on stage and includes the author, the performers, the audience, etc. As a result, it presents its own challenge, in contrast to other kinds of writing such as prose and poetry, which are free. These issues might be resolved by Indian playwrights writing in English and having their plays performed in other countries.

Keywords: *Indian English Drama, Girish Karnad, Asif Currimbhoy and Mahesh Dattani etc.*

INTRODUCTION:

The origin of the term drama may be traced back to the Greek words drao or dran, which imply "to do" or "to act." A dramatic reading of a narrative is called a play. It depicts individuals going through a momentous era in their life, either in a comical or serious manner. The words and deeds reproduce the natural progression of human existence. Only when performed live can a play completely realise its potential. It brings together many different artistic disciplines, such as those of the author, director, actor, and designer, among others, on the stage. Dialogue holds a significant part in theatre. Playwrights have the ability to either teach or amuse, or both. It's hard to tell what he's going to be like when it comes to his topic; he may be serious, humorous, or some mix of the two.

A dramatist begins with characters, and those characters need to be whole, rich, and engaging. Additionally, they need to be distinct enough from one another to create conflict in some form or another. The drama is based on the conflict that took place. The disagreement may or may not be resolved, but there must always be some level of contention. In the context of the theatre, it refers to any work that has been written specifically for performance and finds its purest form of expression in mime. The mimetic tendency is innate in humans, but it doesn't become dramatic until the man using it uses it to symbolise a spiritual or physical conflict—in other words, when imitation becomes action. Since the instinct itself is essentially a combination of the desires for self-expression and self-exploration, its fulfilment enables the imagination of actors and audience members jointly to explore in terms of imitations that the actors persuade the audience to accept as real, the mysterious sources of human behaviour. Instinct is essentially a combination of the desires for self-expression and self-exploration.

As a result, when referring to the theatre, the term drama connotes a collaborative act of make-believe. This makes it possible for an imitator to show and for a viewer to get an explanatory vision of the physical and spiritual tensions that regulate human behaviour.

Indian literature has a unique character that has made a significant contribution to global literature, which incorporates a wide range of cultural traditions and linguistic varieties. The tradition of Indian theatre is very ancient and may be traced back to the Vedic era, when it first made its appearance. In Indian theatre, elements such as natya, lasya, mudra, and others are used to convey Indian culture, customs, and atmosphere.

Sanskrit literature served as the foundation for both Indian drama and Indian theatre. The Indian theatre has a history that is the most extensive and the longest. It was about the year 1000 B.C. that Sanskrit play was first developed. Popularly referred to as the "fifth veda," Indian play evolved into a medium that was used to both discover and communicate the reality of various situations.

The illustrious actors and directors Habib Tanvir, K. N. Pannikar, Asif Currimbhoy, Girish Karnard, and Vijay Tendulkar, along with many others, were responsible for bringing the English drama scene in India to the next level of maturity, which resulted in a significant shift in the Indian English theatre, the vast history of Indian drama, and the vast body of work known as Indian natya. In the middle of the inventiveness of English theatre, a number of Indian dramatists attempted to bring attention to aspects of Indian culture such as tradition, folklore, custom, rituals, customs, and ceremonies. Other notable dramatists include the poet Nissim Ezekiel, Dina Mehta, and Manjula Padmanabhan, all of whom have produced a significant body of work. The storey of English theatre, which started a very long time ago during the time of British imperialism, went on after that and is still an important component of a variety of types of theatre in India. Continuous study, in-depth comprehension, and most importantly, the skillful blending of Western and Eastern aesthetics and sensibilities, have all contributed to the development of English play in India as a separate art form, allowing it to stand alone with pride and dignity. K.R.S. Iyengar makes the astute observation that

"Indo — Anglian drama': isn't it like talking about 'snakes in Iceland' ? Not quite, — but the problem is there, for while poetry, novels and non-fiction prose can be read in the silence of one's study, Drama can come to life only in the theatre."

Despite the issue described above, great writers of this epoch authored several plays that were classified as dramas. New approaches and strategies have been used to improve the quality of Indian English Drama by Arif Currimbhoy, Pratap Sharma, Gurucharn Das, Mahesh Dattani, Vijay Tendulkar, and Girish Karnad, respectively.

G. V. Desani is an influential playwright, and his play Hali (1950), which became famous in the 1950s, is a difficult and unique work of dramatic art. Its uniqueness, symbolism, vividness of imagery, and overall apocalyptic tone have garnered a great deal of praise from reviewers in both Europe and India. It is notable for the performer's stage abilities. In 1950, it had its first performance at the Watergate Theatre in London, and the same year, it also debuted in India.

An allegorical drama written in poetic language is known as Hali. It is a demonstration of the need that exists in everyone to feel whole. The main character, Hali, takes her name from a Muslim holy woman and embodies humanity in its broadest sense. Even the other characters have deeper meanings. It is an outstanding passion drama that portrays the tale of Hali's encounter with the forces of creation and destruction, life and death, as well as his surrender to the phenomenal universe and his understanding of the supremacy of love that transcends both time and space. The play's whole plot is meant to be interpreted symbolically.

One of the most prolific and varied playwrights in Indian English Literature, Asif Currimbhoy has written a number of plays. Not only do his plays represent the expression of thinking, but they also demonstrate how ideas should be acted out on stage. He is the only Indian writer writing in English who has made significant efforts to get his plays performed on stage in India. This demonstrates that Asif Currimbhoy is effective in developing plays that can be performed. His plays include a wide range of topics, including social, political, historical, and religious topics, and he has written all of these types of plays.

In his 17 years as a playwright, Asif Currimbhoy has produced 29 plays (1959-1975). Only 22 of the 29 plays that were submitted to Writers Workshop, Calcutta for publication were selected. The other seven plays are all brief and none of them have been published to this day. The plays written by Asif Currimbhoy may be categorised into two distinct phases: the early phase spans the years 1959 through 1968, and the latter phase spans the years 1969 through 1975. Important plays from the early phase include "The Tourist Mecca" (1959), "The Clock" (1959), "The Doldrummer" (1960), "The Restaurant" (1960), "The Dumb Dancer" (1961), "Om" (1961), "The Thorns on a Canvas" (1962), "The Captives" (1963), "Goa" (1964), "And the Never Twain Shall Meet" (1964), "The Kaleidoscope" (1964), " (1968).

It is well known that Asif Currimbhoy incorporates innovative theatrical techniques into his works, such as documentary aspects in political and historical plays, cinematographic method, scenic setting, and episodic style. His plays explore a broad range of topics, including history and politics, social

and economic issues, psychological issues, art, religion, and east-west encounters, among other topics. The most pressing issues of our day are highlighted here. It is quite fascinating to observe that the bulk of his tragedies finish with a glimmer of optimism, that life provides opportunity to be hopeful. This is something that one should take note of.

Girish Karnad is one of the most prominent living playwrights. His plays established him as an important figure in Indian theatre written in English. He is multitalented, working as an actor, director, art critic, translator, and writer all at the same time. As an ambassador of Indian art and culture, he has been to a number of different countries on behalf of our nation. Because of this, he is recognised both nationally and internationally. Eminent cinema filmmakers like as Sham Benegal, Basu Chatterjee, and Subhas Ghai have cast him in prominent parts in their films at various points in his career. It was his performances in the Hindi films "Mahatma" and "Swamiji" that garnered him fame. He has directed Kannada films - 'Kadu' and 'OndanonduKaladalli'. He was given a number of accolades, including the Padmashri in 1974, the Padmabhushan in 1992, and the Gnanapitha award in 1999, all in recognition of his significant contributions to the fields of art and literature.

Yayati (1961), Tughlaq (1972), Hayavadana (1975), Naga Mandala: Play with a Cobra (1990), Tale — Danda (1993), The Dream of Tipu Sultan (1997), The Fire and the Rain (1998), Broken Images (2004), and Flowers are some of the plays written by Karnad that have secured a permanent place in the English-language canon of Indian drama. Yayati was first performed in 1961. Tughlaq was first (2004). Although he draws his inspiration for his topics from Indian myth, mythology, folklore, and history, his approach and methods are very contemporary. He has used imagination and originality while drawing from history, myth, and legend. He constructed a link of communication between the nobility and the common people.

Queen (2003)

The following are some examples of screenplays: Mango Souffle (2002), Morning Raga (2004), and Ek Alag Mausam (2005) The social and political realities of Dattani's time are the primary subjects of his plays. The Indian joint

family, the plight of women in Indian society, homosexuality in marriage and career, the patriarchal social system, the conflict between tradition and modernity, an identity crisis, the workings of personal and moral choices, and the relationship between family members are some of the themes that are explored in his plays. Dattani is well-known for making full use of the available theatre space in order to get the best possible results. He employs unusual technology like double dialogue.

CONCLUSION:

To summarise, in addition to these writers, a large number of additional dramatists worked toward the goal of expanding the canon of Indian English theatre by penning plays that explored historical, political, social, realistic, and religious topics. The fact that certain Indian English plays have been performed in nations in both Europe and the United States is something to be pleased about. The overall outlook for Indian play performed in English is not entirely gloomy. Playwrights such as Dattani, Karnad, Tendulkar, and Sircar, together with a great number of others, are eager to experiment, and they have a strong feeling of a live theatre. This has opened up a new horizon of dramatic accomplishment.

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