

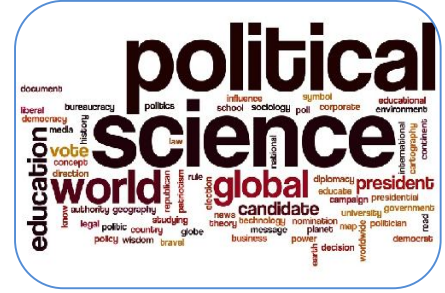


NORTH KARNATAKA'S ORGANISATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND ROLE PLAY WRITERS IN FREEDOM FIGHTING

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ABSTRACT

Though due to the British rule there were manifold impacts on political, economical and social life of India, at the same time due to their rule, Vernacular languages and literature got the impetus and turning point. This impact of British was visible on all Indian languages. Basappa Shastri (Abhinav or Modern Kalidas) (1843-1893), who translated the Sanskrit Dramas of Abhignan Shakuntala, Uttar Rama Charit and Ratnavalli etc. But, at the same time he translated Shekshpbeer's English drama Othello to Kannada and has named it as Shoorasen Charite.

KEYWORDS: *political, economical and social life.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

Thus R.S. Mugali rightly pointed that, there was great inspiration from the English literature on Navodaya or Hosgannada literature of Kannada.¹ This can also be seen on Kannada Plays. The famous novelist M.S. Puttanna translated the Shekshpbeer's drama *King- Lear*. The Navodaya poetry was of mainly emotional kind. During this (Navodaya) period, prose form of writings, got importance viz, novels, short stories, dramas, criticism etc. Even, S Anantnarayan writes that, "the Navodaya period was called as age of creative literature, than the age of criticism."

"Ancient Kannada literature did not have drama. Some of the great poets like Pampa, Ranna, Raghavanka are powerfully dramatic but none of them attempted writing drama."³ "This fact is all the more puzzling when we examine it in light of many references to dramatic performances in poetry." Despite the above fact Kannada theatre has a long history. In the modern period it emerged out of the influence of Bengali, Marathi and Parsi drama theatres. Infact it was the British dramas and theater that had great influence on the vernacular theatre and dramas. Especially, Bengali theatre movement had great impact on the Indian literature. Kannada theatre emerged out of the influence of the Marathi theatre during British rule got strengthened. In there the Kannada theatre movement influenced the theatre movement and dramas of Telagu and Tamil. As pointed above the British impact on India was felt on every sphere of life, viz. on literature, culture, religion, fine arts etc. So, also the modern dramas and the theatre.

No drama of ancient Kannada is available for us. But there are plenty of references regarding actor, drama, theatre, etc. in Kannada literature. For instance "Natasevya" a famous dramatist's name is mentioned in the Pattadakal inscription of the 8th century.¹⁵ A Drama school is referred in Mugand inscription (1045) under Keladi Venkattappa Nayaka (1582-1639) in the palace of Ikkeri, in the palace of Kantirav Narasaraj (1638-59) and even under the Vijayanagara rulers (1530) modern style Kannada theatre.

a) Halasagi Mandali (1857)

Halasagi Mandali (1857) of North Karnataka, preserved and promoted Kannada art and culture by enacting Kannada dramas. It played the dramas of Shrinivas Kavi (Venkannadharya Agalgatti) namely "Virata Parva", "Shrimati Parinaya", "Madalasa Parinaya", *Drnupadi Vastrapaharam* etc. In Dharwad there was one drama company called as "Tantupurastha Mandali". This company toured Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Especially, it influenced the emergence of Andhra Theaters. But by 1890 "Kaitpurastha Mandalli", "Halasagi Mandalli", and "Tantupurastha Mandalli" companies became broke. As a result of it, again there was influence of Marathi drama companies, for instance in 1893 "Kirloskar Nataka Mandalli" staged dramas for about three months in Hubli-Dharwad and it had its own influence.

b) Sadashivaraya:

Sadashivaraya was influenced by a book on Karnataka history written by Narsimha Chintamani (in Marathi) called "Vijayanagar Cha Dalavalit Raj Mukut". The "Nibandhamala", of Vishnu Krishna Shastri Chipalunkar and even the papers like "Kesari" and "Kal" weeklies and "Kera kokil" and "Masik Manoranjan" monthlies, had great impact on him. The lectures delivered by Poona leaders during Shivaji Birthday celebrations and Ganesh festivals also influenced him.⁴² In 1900, along with Sharanappa and Tengali Panduranga he wrote a drama called 'Keechakavadh'. Draupadi's position due to Keechaka's torture symbolically represented as Indian's position under the British.⁴³ He also started a Monthly paper called "Rangabhoomi" in 1920 at Gadag.⁴⁴ Due to involvement in the Swadeshi Movement of Gandhi, his (Sadashivaraya's) life style became simple. He used to wear Khadi always. Thus he was a trust worthy follower of Congress. He helped the freedom fighters financially. Dattatray Parushuram Karmakar writes that, "When Sadashivaraya camped his theater at Ankola, he came to meet one in a secret place and gave his finger ring. So, Sadashivaraya had help me twice". Even, Shankar Bhatt Managoli also writes that, "Sadashivaraya liberally contributed to the National activities, education institutions, Hundustan Seva Dal, Government Hospital and etc".⁴⁶ The XIth session of the "All India Kannada Literary Conference" was held at Belgaum in which Sadashivaraya was felicitated by Benagal Ramaraya and was honoured the title of "Karnataka Natakalanakar".⁴⁷ His independent career as a dramatist began with the establishment of an independent drama company on 16th November, 1919 called "Dattatreya Sangeet Natak Mandali" of Gadag.

Chavatiya Chandra (1925): It was written in 1925 and was published in 1926. It was based on Bhagavata story. In this story Krishna went to Jambavant along with Vijay and demanded the "Shyamantak Mani" (precious pearl) from Jambavant. He (Krishna) said that this had belonged to Aryans and even Vijaya also supported the claim of Krishna. Then Jambavant rejected to return it and had replied that, which was your country? We are the indigenous people of this country (India). You had killed our indigenous people and had earned this (Shamantak Mani). He (Jambavanta) further says that, you people are quarreling with each other and have grabbed one another's states. Even, your king Krishna earlier was Golla (cow boy), now he made Dwarka as capital, which flourished with gold and wealth. From where did he bring the wealth? Your history is full of injustices and was full of unlawful activities. Even, it is full of smells of killings.⁶⁰ So, these above replies of Jambavanta indicates that, Britisher came as a trader and established their hold over India. Asking questions like which is your home land? India belongs us i.e. original inhabitants. Even, Jambavanta's question "we have killed our people and have earned the wealth", so, it was direct question posed to the British. Thus, in this drama Jambavanta represent India and indigenous culture and tradition. Where as, Krishna and Vijay represent civilized way of living i.e. British culture and civilization. Even, jambavanta's question - You people. quarrel among yourself and grabbed one another's state, indicates not only the British imperialist and colonial interests but also other European power's imperialist and aggressive attitude. Further, Jambavanta's question i.e. your Krishna was golla (cow boy), who now became king and had so prospered that, his capital Dwaraka became golden city.⁶¹ This also indicates the economic exploitation of British i.e. drain of Indian wealth. So, symbolically dramatist through Jambavant asks the British from where did they earn the wealth. Thus, this drama reflects British who ruled and exploited the Indians.

c) Mahasadhu Kabirdas (1921):

This was an historical drama based on Kabirdas, who was a great saint - poet, who stood for the Hindu-Muslim, unity which was the need of the hour to fight against common enemy British. Even, his propagation of khadi and weaving by spinning wheel were Gandhian constructive programmes, which were reflected in the drama.

d) Yachcham (H.M)Nayak (1929) :

This was the most important nationalist drama of Sadashivaraya. Which directly inspired and encouraged the freedom fighter to participate in the struggle and also psychologically prepared them to sacrifice every thing to the cause of motherland. As that Dwijendralal Rai' of Bengal, P.Puttswamy wrote historical dramas in kannada namely 'Shajahan', 'Prachanda Chanakya' and 'Bichchu Gatti'. The Bichchugatti was on Madakari Nayak of Chitradurga. So, also this drama of Sadashivaraya, became household name in North Karnataka. This drama was one of the authentic historical work. Even, after preparing the draft of it, Sadashivaraya asked Galaganath (T.V. Kulkarni), the famous historical novelists of the period, to review and make it authentic and objective from historical point of view. So, after completion when it was brought on the stage it became revolutionary thing in the history of theatre movement. This was first historical drama on Yachchama Nayak i.e. Laxman. Who was depicted as brave patriot, who fought for the mother land.

e) Visham Vivah (Pashchattap) :

This was written in 1916 but was published in 1922. The problem of this dramas was like kulinism, in the Bengal. Though, its story related to rich class society, i.e. the contemporary capitalist class. But, it had crossed the social barrier and became political problem. By which innocent were victimized. It was not only the sad story of woman but was pitiable and disastrous condition of the nation. *Satya Sankalpa* (1930) : Though this was related to widow remarriage problem, it also depicted Gandhian ideas and constructive programmes. In this drama Sharade was a widow and had remarried Madhavaraya. But traditionalist of the village boycotted them, as result Madhavaraya left the pregnant Sharade alone. Then, she joined the Gandhi Ashrama. After seventeen years her father Hiranyagarbhacharya and Nagabhatta visited Gandhi Ashrama and asked Gandhiji to send a activist to spinning (role) wheel centre at their native. Then Gandhi sent Sharade. Even, Gandhi also visited their village. So, everybody involved in the national activity and fought against the social evils. Even another role of this drama Padmanabha was also patriot, who started wheeling centre and propagated the use of swadeshi clothes. Finally, this drama ended with message of Gandhi (role) that, those who were banned or boycotted by traditionalist or religious minded, were to be called satya sankalpa i.e. determined ambition of truth seeking.

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