



Comparison between Amateur and Mobile Theatre

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Abstract:

Drama is an audio-visual medium. From time immemorial the trend of Assamese drama has emerged from folk drama. Mahapurush Shankardev has written Ankiya nat (a kind of dance of Assam) by following the religious reformation based on the folk drama. The written form of Assamese drama is found from the plays of saint Srimanta shankardev. The modern Assamese drama emanated by the influence of western drama. At the end of nineteen century the mobile theatre has started as a separate trend in Assam. Since then two types of dramas have been observed i.e. Amateur and Mobile theatre. The comparison between Amateur theatre and Mobile theatre in terms of dramatic style and performance will be enlightened in this paper.

Keywords: Amateur Theatre, Mobile Theatre, Comparison, Absurd, Proscenium.

The word *drama* indicates two types of dramas viz., Amateur and Mobile theatre. The Amateur theatres are performed to reach the flow of modern dramatic trend to the public as their interest. No commercial basis is associated with Amateur theatre. The artists, technicians that are associated with amateur theatre do not take any honorarium for their contribution. On the Contrary the Mobile theatre provides entertainment to the audience in terms of commercial interests. These types of dramas are staged at different pockets by any institution or drama group where all the artists and technicians take payment for their contribution. The difference between amateur and mobile theatre are found not only in commercialisation but also in the uses of techniques, acting context and also in writing techniques.

If we look back to the history of Assamese drama- the drama *Ram-Nabami* (1857) by Gunabhiram Baruah can be considered as first modern social drama. Since then different dramas with different subjects as well as social, historical, political have been published and later all have been staged. But in nineteenth century a tremendous changes have seen in the Assamese drama as the modern dramas were staged by following the techniques of Proscenium stage. Later with the effort of Achyut Lahkar a new trend of drama has started as mobile theatre in Assam. Since then two types of dramatic trend i.e. Amateur and Mobile theatre have been continued.

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Basically amateur dramas are played for entertainment by drama teams in different occasions such as- Durga Puja, Bihu and in the name of other celebration days at any villages or towns. Moreover, two stage decorations are strictly prohibited in Amateur theatre. In decoration also differences have been observed. No expensive decoration is mandatory for amateur drama. Symbolic decorations play a significant role in amateur drama. In mobile theatre a play writer adds various elements for public interests to the story like- dialogue, song, dance etc. The play writer of a mobile theatre does not take any strict rule as amateur play writer takes. They are not also strict than amateur writer for taking a thoughtful topic. As mobile theatre teams are travelled different places or pockets, so they have to make a story for the interests of all audience. But now-a-days absurd and experimental dramas can place in mobile theatre also which are written for a few audience. In acting and presentation a character of an amateur theatre sometime takes the character of a tree, a hill etc. But these elements are created in mobile drama. An audience of an amateur drama would not feel annoyed if an actor of an amateur drama acts for 1 to 2 hours. But mobile theatres or plays are based on character. Therefore it is important to make different characters for the interests of audience. The story of a solo performer may not be intelligible for the Common people. Basically amateur plays are written for educated audience. But the writer of a mobile theatre tries to focus the interests of common people. Therefore common people are the root of the story of mobile theatre.

Amateur dramas are performed without expensive light and music arrangements. But music and light plays an important role in mobile theatre. Now-a-days many amateur dramas are performed under open sky and in sun light. The amateur teams- *Holong Theatre Festival*, *Badung Duppa*, *Rodghai* uses the mentioned techniques.

From the above discussion the modern Assamese drama can be divided into two kinds i.e. *Amateur and Mobile Theatre* on the basis of writing techniques and performance. The amateur and mobile theatre play significant role in the development of the modern Assamese drama.

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