Chapter - 2

THEATRE THROUGH THE AGES:
A PHILOSOPHICAL PREMISE
Theatre has been used through the ages as an artistic form of articulating human emotions and a thriving medium of communication. Besides being an entertainment, it also contributed for bringing social change. Though the concept of theatre appears to be one and the same throughout the world, it varies in its form and technique across the regions, communities and languages. The artistic expression of a particular social system obviously reveals its cultural standards and socio-economic status. The culture specific art forms invariably carry with them the myths and belief systems that are being associated traditionally with them. But, due to culture contact, some forms may become bloomy by imbibing new elements from its neighborhood societies and a few may lose their own identity or turn out to be gloomy and may finally be marginalised in their own land.
The history of world theatre starting ever since its inception, a quite good number of new concepts that were embedded on line with the dynamics of ideologies and their reflections in the form of movements. It contributed much to the growth of new vistas in the epistemology of ‘theatre’, thereby reflected the aesthetic practices of the society, being acquired through the ages. A brief note on various theatre concepts and movements create a base for the discussion on Theatre of the Marginalised. It also helps one to understand the chronological order through which the theatre got developed through the ages. The antecedents of theatre are still alive and the revival of great plays still thrills the audiences around the world. Robert Cohen, the Chairman of the drama department at the university of California says, “The theatre is a conservative art. It hangs on to its past, perennially scavenging for material, for effects, for dramatic structures, for great conflicts, great characters, and great events”.¹

World Theatre: Philosophical Milieu

The theatre is an extremely complex institution that encompasses playwriting, directing, acting, costume, makeup, scenery, lighting, properties, theatre architecture, machinery, special effects, management, audiences, and criticism and also the relationship of the theatre to the society and culture in which it appears. In the context of theatre’s relationship with society and culture, two broad schools of thought have emerged in the intellectual history especially from the Marxist and Leninist
thinking. One school of thought stemmed from the philosophical milieu of the ancient times, which in later on came to be known as idealism. It still functions in the intellectual spheres. The other school of thought, which influenced theatre, got evolved from materialism.\(^2\)

1. Idealism: Idealism is grounded on the premise that the idea precedes the matter. It is based on the maxim that the spiritual non-material is primary and the material is secondary. Therefore it brings closer to the dogmas of religion on the finiteness of the world, in time and space, and its creation by God. This further regards regards the consciousness belongs to the realm of spirituality and therefore is the gift of the God. It is the consciousness of the human which cognate things, organise them and reproduce them to the well being of the world in general. It is because of the quality of generating ideas that humans are different from inanimate and zoomorphic strata of the world.

The Marxism-Leninism divided all varieties of idealism into two schools; one the objective idealism and the other subjective idealism. The objective idealists view the consciousness as one that emanates from super individual mind. The consciousness is of divine and therefore belongs to the super natural realm. Whether the individual consciousness cognate a phenomena or not, the phenomena remains what it is. In other words, all phenomena in the world are created by God and therefore irrespective of individual's capabilities to cognate with consciousness, remain what it is. The objective idealist doctrine first aroused in the orient.
as the *Vedanta* of Indian philosophy and Confucianism of Chinese philosophy. Dualism is the prima-facie of the objective idealism. It divides any phenomena into two parts, which are mostly seen not as contradictory but complimentary to each other. The concepts like *Atma-Paramatma* and *Prakriti-Purusha* are the classical examples of objective idealism.

The Plato's philosophy is also one of the classic examples for objective idealism. According to Plato, the sensible world, which is the product of "ideas" and "matter", occupies an intermediate position. "Ideas" are eternal: they neither arise nor perish, they are irrelative and do not depend upon time and space. Sensible objects are transient, relative and they depend upon time and space. Authentic knowledge is possible only in truly existent *forms*. The source of such knowledge is the immortal human soul's reminiscence of the World of ideas, contemplated before its incarnation in the mortal body.³

The mystic feature became even more pronounced during the middle ages, when philosophy was completely subordinated to Theology, wherein the non-material form treated as the purposeful element, which fulfills the will of omniscient God who wisely planned the world, finite in space and time.

The subjective idealists construct the world on the basis of individual consciousness. Subjective idealism holds that the sum total of the subject's sensations, experiences, feelings and actions make up the world in which the subject lives and acts as they believe that all these are
an integral and essential part of the world. The absolution of the subject's cognitive and practical activity forms the theoretical and cognitive basis of subjective idealism. In the twentieth century subjective idealism has many varieties, including various schools of positivism, Machism, Operationalism, Logical empiricism, Linguistic philosophy etc., and its outgrowth, Existentialism. Nevertheless, the difference between subjective idealism and objective idealism is not absolute. Many objective idealist systems contain elements of subjective idealism. Nevertheless the entire history of philosophy is based on the conflicting realms of idealism and materialism.\textsuperscript{4}

\textbf{2. Materialism:} Materialism argues that matter precedes idea and hence considers consciousness is a property of matter. In other words it is matter that generate ideas. There are two kinds of materialism, the one, subjective materialism (spontaneous materialism) and the other one is objective materialism (philosophical materialism). Subjective materialism relies on belief of all people live on objective existence of external world. This is also known as pre Marxian, ancient and renaissance materialism. Several of these materialistic philosophical theories appeared as a result of the progress of scientific knowledge in Astronomy, Mathematics and other fields in the oriental world. The general feature of the Orient materialism lies in the recognition of the materiality of the world and its independent existence outside of man’s consciousness. They tried to find the diversity of natural phenomena and common source of origin of all that
exists takes place. It is this, which made the ancient Greeks to formulate a hypothesis on autonomic structure of matter. Most of these materialists are delectations but many of them did not make a distinction between physical and metaphysical and so attributed the properties of later to nature. This further strengthens the mythological ideology, which rests on the idea of eternity of nature. The Renaissance and the post-Renaissance materialism viewed mechanistic conception of motion as 'the property of nature, which means that it is inalienable and universal.\textsuperscript{5}

The second type of Materialism is recognised by Marxists as philosophical or Objective Materialism. It is also known as Marxist-Leninist materialism or Dialectical Historical Materialism. It is evolved by Marx and Engles and later developed by Lenin and other Marxists. Dialectical materialism proceeds from the recognition of matter as the sole basis of the world, the universal interconnections of object and phenomena, the movement and development of the world as inherent contradictions operating in the world itself. Dialectical materialism regards consciousness as a property of a highly organised form of movement of matter, as a reflection of objective reality. Therefore the dialectics become the universal method of cognition in dialectical materialism. By applying the principal propositions of dialectical materialism to an explanation of the phenomena of social life, Marx and Engles established Historical materialism (or a materialist understanding of history) Lenin made an immense contribution to the development of historical materialism, by
generating the experience of the proletariat’s class struggle in the epoch of imperialism, proletarian revolution and the building of Socialism in the USSR.\textsuperscript{6}

According to Historical Materialism, the real basis of human society is the mode of production of material wealth. The replacement of one mode of production by another leads to a transition from one socio-economic formation to another higher one. The history of society is the successive replacement of the primitive communal, slave owning, and feudal, capitalist and communist formations. The law, which determines the essence of the historical process, is the law of the correspondence of production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces. Developing within the framework of the given production relations, at a certain stage the productive forces come into contradiction with them. This results in a social revolution, which is a law-governed form of transition from one socio-economic formation to another.\textsuperscript{7}

Thus these two broad philosophical premises developed through the ages to cognate the material world and social reality and influenced art and life of people. Theatre being an art is no exception to these philosophical milieus. As theatre came under the influence of either idealism or materialism independently or together, it gave rise to several forms of theatre. Some times it is not as a recognisable form but as an element, which influenced theatrical practice. For example, idealism gave birth to different forms of theatre perceptions like Romanticism, Expressionism, Absurdism etc., that introduced many theatrical elements like special effects through lighting, extensive use of stage properties and costumes etc. The following diagram shows the pattern of development of History of world theatre influenced by the broad two philosophical milieus.
PHILOSOPHICAL MILIEU

1 IDEALISM

1. I. RITUALISM
   1.A. CLASSISM
   1.B. RELIGIOUS THEATRE
   1.C. ORIENTAL THEATRE

1. II. NEO CLASSISM
1. III. ROMANTICISM
1. IV. SYMBOLISM
1. V. RUSSIAN IDEALISM

2 MATERIALISM

2. I. REALISM
2. II. NATURALISM
2. III. CONSTRUCTIVISM
2. IV. EPIC THEATRE
2. V. ENVIRONMENTAL THEATRE
2. VI. POOR THEATRE
2. VII. POST MODERNISM

1. VI. NEO ROMANTICISM
1. VII. EXPRESSIONISM
1. VIII. DADA & SURREALISM
1. IX. ABSURDISM
1. X. EXISTENTIALISM
1. XI. FUTURISM
The influence of Idealism on theatre brought a new dimension in art and aesthetics, practiced and projected in the enactment of human psyche, which pondered for Utopian ideal of human goodness. It perceived the world as problematic created in response to human greed and exploitation. Therefore to revert this situation and regain a blissful state the will of the super Natural is essential. This idea gave rise to several concepts in idealism such as Ritualism, Neo-Classism, Romanticism, Symbolism, Aesthetics, Russian Idealism, Neo-Romanticism, Expressionism, Dada and Surrealism, Futurism, Existentialism, Absurdism.

1.i. Ritualism

This is the most widely-accepted theory, championed by anthropologists in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries that envisioned theatre as emerged from myth and ritual. During the early stage of its development, society is aware of the forces that appear to influence or control its food supply and well being. Because of little understanding of the natural causes, the societies attribute both the desirable and the undesirable occurrences to supernatural or magical beings, and search the means and ways to win the favour of them. The people establish an apparent linkage between certain actions and results obtained due to performing those actions. This practice is repeated, refined and formulated into fixed ceremonies of rituals in due course. The
same ideology gets reflected in the theatre practices. Performers may wear costumes and masks and represent the mythical characters or supernatural forces in the rituals or in accompanying celebrations. As people become more sophisticated, their conceptions of supernatural forces and causal relationships may change. As a result, it may abandon or modify some rites. But the myths that have grown up around rites and rituals may continue not only as part of the group's oral tradition but also in contexts deviated from the original ritualistic concerns. In this process the first step has been taken towards the development of theatre as an autonomous activity, and later entertainment and aesthetic values may gradually replace the former mystical element in it.

This viewpoint is the extension of Darwin's theory about the evolution of biological species to cultural phenomena and consequently they assumed that human institutions including theatre evolved through a process in which there was a steady development from simple to complex. Second, they assumed that societies that had evolved such autonomous arts as theatre were superior to those in which the arts had not been separated from ritual. Therefore, their accounts of primitive cultures were written with the unconscious assumption that the European cultural model all lesser societies are evolved, although local conditions might inhibit or stall that evolution. Third, they believed that, since all societies evolve through the same stages, those still-existing primitive or less advanced
societies could serve as valid evidence for how European culture had developed during its prehistorical phase.⁹

After World War II, the superiority of society, based on technology was questioned. Primitive/less "advanced" societies, because of their cohesiveness, came to be seen by many as embodying alternative social models, different but perhaps more effective from that of the European model which had been long served as the 'standard'. Consequently, several of these societies (including their myths and rituals) were studied more to reveal their modes of thought, communication, and social structuring to define their stage of development in the premise of evolutionary model. Myth and ritual are considered as parameters that are comparable to language, through which a group discovers, and reaffirms its values, expectations, and societal relationships. A number of anthropologists argue that patterns comparable to those found in primitive societies were also still evident in advanced societies, especially in secular rituals. Thus all societies came to be seen as developing sets of conventions (or rituals) that enact relationships and serve as unconscious guidelines for behavior. As examples, wedding rituals redefine relationships with in two extended families, and within the society at large; and criminal trial rituals, through which decisions about guilt and innocence are reached, redefined the accused person's place within society. Thus, each society develops numerous conventions, which may be viewed as rituals that define societal relationships, and it seeks
validation of these conventions through religion, morality, law, or social
utility.

Ultimately, anthropologists of post-world War II tended to see
almost all human transactions as basically performative- as enactment of
relationships with specific purposes- involving a number of elements
(which are also those found in ritual and theatre). Thus, the earlier
concern for the relationship between ritual and theatre was transformed.
Both ritual and theatre came to be seen as merely different ways of
organizing and using elements that are basic to almost all-human
activity\(^{10}\). Therefore, theatre was not seen as necessarily origination of
ritual; rather ritual and theatre were viewed as coexisting modes in which
the same elements might be used for differing functions within the same
society.

Idealism, being the driving force of Greco-Roman, medieval
Christian, South Asian and far East theatrical practices created a space
for enactment of human creativity and worldview. The human
understanding of these cultures referred above project a worldview, which
ascribe a goal for human existence in relation to the life that is going to
exist beyond death\(^{11}\). These physical and metaphysical realms of human
life remained by and large the concern of theatre and these concerns
influenced the themes. Poets being the representatives of literate elite in
all the above-mentioned cultures bore the burden of interpreting the
worldview. In the process they created the texts of the theatre in a manner
of duality. This duality is represented in the form of characters either as Gods or humans on one hand and on the other actors in neutral positions as chorus or as Mediators (Suthradhara). The text is rendered, therefore, adhering to the strict principles of ethno poetics wherein the literary laws governing various forms of rendition is followed. This privileged the poets or playwrights as the kingpins in theatrical productions.

i.a. Classism and Greek theatre:

The Greek theatre can be cited as a classic example to the onset of Idealism in theatrical practice. According to George Kernodle, “The Greeks gave us the word theatre and the idea of a splendid building for the whole public to watch a play of religious, historical, and national importance. They gave us the idea of a play as the high point of a religious festival, performed at a sacred shrine. They gave us the word Drama and the idea of a play as a work of art complete in itself, to be looked at, felt, and thought about. Along with the words poetry and poem, they gave us the idea of performing poet, competing with other poets, presenting his own personal view of the human condition, often in conflict with the orthodox view.”

The three great writers of Greek tragedy had different visions of the destiny of man. Aeschylus, the earliest, caught the heroic mood of an Athens that had just defeated the invading Persians and was reshaping old institutions and loyalties for a new age of responsible public life. Sophocles reflected the ideals of the golden time of Pericles, when men of
intelligence and reason were striving for a well-balanced life in a world where blind chance and old political loyalties were constant sources of danger. And Euripides wrote at the time when the old ideals were fading, as Athens was drawn deeper and deeper into war with Sparta. In a world of torture, madness, and violence, he denounced old superstitions and offered a deep compassion for the suffering of defeated mankind.

The Greek theatre flourished during fifth and sixth centuries BC. The occasion for this new development was the context of Dionysian festival celebrating the resurrection of the living spring out of dead winter. After a wild, ecstatic procession during the festivities the Greeks bring the statue of Dionysus into his theatre. They add a very serious new form, tragedy, which combined the pain and humiliation of sacrificial death with the exaltation of resurrection. As it has found its way to all parts of the world, tragedy has gained the highest prestige of any dramatic form. They produced four of the world's greatest dramatists, new forms of tragedy and comedy that have been models forever, and a theatre to which every age returns for rediscovery of some basic principle.

The overall visual style of a Greek theatrical production was greatly influenced by costumes and masks. Several historians have argued that the standard costume for all tragic actors was a sleeved, highly decorated tunic, usually full-length, although sometimes shorter. The theatre at Athens was dedicated to one god in particular, Dionysus, the god of fertility, god of wine, agriculture, and sexuality. It was at the
annual festival of Dionysus that new dramas were first publicly performed. Another greatest contribution of Greek theatre was *Chorus*. It is easy to see that during the episodes played by the actors the chorus could provide a background of group response, enlarging and reverberating the emotions of the characters, sometimes protesting and opposing, but in general serving the ideal spectators to stir and lead the reactions from them. In performances, the feelings- and emotions that are to be communicated by the expressive behaviour of the main character on stage were conveyed to the audiences by specific modulations of the chorus.\(^{13}\)

**i.b. Religious Theatre:**

Rome had conquered Greece in B.C 146 and thereafter it gradually absorbed the entire Hellenic world. In turn, Rome was highly influenced by Greek culture. Under the republican rule, Roman Theatre prospered by replacing regular drama of Greeks. In its place new types of entertainment were enacted. Lavishness in stage settings, elaborated visuals, using all sorts of nudity, sex, violence, and bloodshed broadened the horizons of theatre.

In other words, classic tragedy disappeared with the fall of Rome. In fact, in the hey days of the Roman empire, both comedy and tragedy had been overwhelmed by spectacular shows with -gladiators-animal combats, sea fights, vulgar performances of comic mimes, semi-nude dance performances etc. All these dramas were produced in the
enormous half circle theatres. Nevertheless, the theatre in Rome, most often associated with festivals, that are obviously religious. Thus, theatrical offerings were thought to be intended for pleasing the Gods. It is difficult to estimate how many days the Romans devoted to performance annually, since the number of official festival days differed from year to year and special celebrations were frequently permitted. Further more, festivals were sometimes repeated, since whenever any irregularities in the rituals occur the entire festival including the plays had to be repeated.

The Christian drama of the Middle Ages initiated a new beginning for theatre, much later after the ancient theatres were closed due to many historical reasons. In ninth century, dialogue and action were added to the most sacred service of the Christian liturgy. The Easter mass combined with drama was born to boost the faith of the congregation. In the enactment of joyful anthem in praise of the Resurrection, some priests added a short dramatic dialogue of the three Mary's coming to embalm the body of Christ. The angels show them the empty tomb and tell them to announce to the world that Christ is raised. The short drama, chanted in Latin by monks or priests, was evidently effective. The adoration of the Shepherds and the three kings was also dramatised as part of the Christmas services, and the new drama spread all over Europe. A few churches even produced long plays for special occasions. For five hundred years the joyful news of the Resurrection, and the triumphs of prophets and saints were enacted as Christian performances.
Much more spectacular scenes were the medieval religious cycles, financed by the merchant guilds for the midsummer trade fairs in the fast growing cities of the High Gothic period (AD 1350 to AD1550). About twenty five to fifty separate episodes were needed to cover the whole story of the fall and redemption of man, from the creation and the fall of Adam, through the passion of Christ to the Last judgment. Each episode needed a separate scenic unit, or mansion. Sometimes all the mansions were spread down a long platform as simultaneous staging. Sometimes the mansions were placed in a large circle surrounding the audience in a medieval variant of theatre-in-the-round.\textsuperscript{15}

While the church drama remained as formal, liturgical drama, sung in Latin in the church by priests highly trained in music, but the cycles of mystery plays were popular because of the usage of spectacular effects such as Devils appearing from the smoking hell-mouth amidst the beating of pot and pans.

The late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance developed two forms of entertainment that provided a transition to the Elizabethan theatre. The first was the 'Morality Play' from which playwrights developed the art of creating long plots with sustained conflict and great variety of detail. The second was the 'street show' honoring a royal visitor to a city or town. The English plays of the Middle Ages hold particular interest for the English-speaking reader and theatre-goers, not only because they are among the first literary works written in the English language, but also
because they utilised one of the most astonishing staging practices of all time, the rolling procession. At least 125 English towns produced these passion plays, which were generally called as "Cycle plays".

i.c. The Theatre of the Orient:

On the other side of the globe, the theatres of India, China, Japan and Southeast Asia developed the forms that have remained characteristic of their theatres and generally identified as the theatre of the Orient. The theatres of India, Japan, China and Southeast Asia stand as the examples for the idealistic view of theatre. As it happened in Greek and Roman theatre practices, even in the oriental societies believed that the God gifted the theatre.

The early Hindu philosophy encouraged the representation of living beings in Literature, drama, and art as manifestation of spirit. The language of Indian drama was primarily Sanskrit. Its origin may perhaps be the beginning of the stage when the theatre got developed into a community art. The seminal work in Sanskrit on dramaturgy called the *Natyashastra* was supposed to be written around 1,000 or 1,500 years ago. It was considered as the sixth *Veda*. Bharatha, the author *Natyasatra*, in his introduction to the work mentions the cause for writing the treatise. He says that the *Natyashastra* composed by Brahma was very theoretical, unwieldy, obscure and not of any practical use. Then Brahma himself requested Bharatha to compose his work in a simple, practical and useful form to the society. The main object of the treatise is
to prescribe what should be depicted and what not be represented in a drama, which is recognised as an essentially audio-visual production. It suggests that the dramas must be good, decent, decorous, pleasing, elevating and instructive. The performances depict the worldviews (Loka-Charita) and the deeds of people so that the audiences get education and guidance.

Bharatha defines drama as an imitation of men (people) and their deeds (Loka-vritta anukarana) represented on the stage and hence in Sanskrit it is known as rupaka. Bharatha prescribes governing rules for a good play production that encapsulates the playwriting, choosing the characters, designing the characterisations. It also instructs the audience to show that how a performance of a play must be perceived and enjoyed. He also writes about the housing of theatre (Auditoriums). He describes three kinds of theatre-houses based on their size: (i) Vikrishta (Big), (ii) Trasya (small) and (iii) Chaturasra (Medium sized). The importance of the Natyashastra lies in having given to Indian drama not only a form and an objective but also a definite place in the social and cultural life of the people. Bhavabhuti, wrote three plays, namely Malati-Madhava, Mahaviracharita and Uttara-Ramacharitam. One of the criticisms about classical Sanskrit drama is that it is written in a language, which does not belong to that of common people.¹⁷

Sanskrit plays continued up to the 17th century and they were mostly of either imitations of Kalidasa or Bhavabhuthi or other famous
literary works. As a rule, plays were performed either in temple mandapas or within palace precincts. Even then it is more likely that the audience sat directly under the sky. In almost all the Sanskrit plays, the outdoor scene is laid only in gardens. Even the palace shows were arranged in open theatre. In this context, the purpose of curtains is being served by the characters themselves, i.e. by their entry and exists from the stage. The use of curtains to symbolise the endings/ beginnings of scenes or to distinguish one act from that of the other is totally absent in Sanskrit dramas.

There is no evidence to say that the plays of Bhasa, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuthi were performed in public places amidst common folk. Even if they are performed they might have taken place in the courts of Kings and places for elite audiences. By 16th century, there were no written dramas. Absence of written plays should not mean absence of the theatre itself. It is hard to believe that the theatre, which has been an influential form of entertainment for over a thousand years, would suddenly and entirely cease to exist.

Folk theatre, which has been there from times immemorial, serves the purpose of entertainment. Though Natyasastro acknowledges the existence of folk theatre ever since a long time, it holds that it represents only local tradition (Gramya Dharma), which is of not so informative and educative to the people. However the folk theatre also took its content from the same two great epics. The folk forms like Jatra, Chauv,
Yakshagana, Harikatha, Charana and many other theatrical expressions of the downtrodden groups were region-specific. Even within the same region, one finds a variety of forms. Song and dance are the primary features of all the forms. Most of the performances are ritual based and directly related to the general life of the people. In the performances, no backdrop or any other curtains are used. There is no fixed stage setting for the performance. It does not have a rigid written script. Even then the folk performances are being survived since a long time due to two main reasons i.e., (i) most of the performances are caste based and caste myth oriented and (ii) they are continued in oral traditions.

The theatre of the Orient in India thus can be seen at two levels. One for the elite and the other for the folk. In elitist theatre predominantly uses Sanskrit as its language. Therefore the theatre of the elitist in India during the pre-modern times is identified as Sanskrit drama. It is difficult to say that the Sanskrit dramas were ever played as performances. The treatise *Natyasastra* that is an exhaustive dramatology is a compiled work on theatre. It is more of a grammar of theatre rather than usage for theatre. It is more a langue (Mental abstraction of language) than parole (Everyday speech acts of language). Langue is code, which unconsciously people of a language derive at mental abstraction level. This mental faculty regulates the language usage based on laws and codes as grammar. In other words grammar is an ideal type, which governs the actual ways of speech act. But speech acts when performed reflect skills
of their own and gradually develop new laws and codes thus adding to grammar.

*Natyasastra* seems to be one such ideal type, which sets rules and codes for an ideal performance where in actors and audiences interact, to seek and experience *ideal rasas* (Moods and emotions) as described in the treatise. The Sanskrit dramatists expose their literary skills in writing plays which more or less "close to the norms and codes of the *Natyasastra.*"

Though one may not concretely say that the ancient playwrights followed *Natyasastra*, but one can say that they developed the Sanskrit dramas as literary genre. In fact the imagery that one gets by reading these plays is much stronger, wider and nostalgic than one performs them as plays on stage. The imagery of these plays cuts across time and space bounds, that otherwise imposed at performance level on stage. Therefore they are written for the readers more as literary genres but not as plays to be performed. If Sanskrit dramas are literary genre then the question arises whether any theatre exists in India in its performance context. To answer such question, one may safely say that among the folk performances exist with theatrical features. They are performed through the centuries in different forms and kinds. All most all-folk performances have the elements of theatre such as text, context, performers and audiences. However the setting of these elements are not one and the same for every folk form of performances. Most of the texts of these performances are drawn from oral epics, myths or legends. Therefore they
traverse between the realms of natural and metaphysical. At the context level most of them appear in ritual contexts such as purificatory rituals, territorial rites and rites of passage (life cycle ceremonies). At performers level they have hereditary rights and customary obligations. Therefore they violate the norms of Natyasastra prescribed for the actors to be designated for characters. In many cases in the folk performances the lead narrator takes different roles (characters) in the performance. In some of the performances the facial make-up is used as masks. This is also another characteristic feature of theatre of Idealism. A community people or people of a particular locality form the internal audiences to the folk performances and therefore the audience by violating the norms of Natyasastra enjoys the aesthetics of performances. Thus the Orient theatre in India exists in elite and folk versions yet form the theatre of idealism.

It was said that during 1500 B.C, when Shang Dynasty assumed power, dance, music, and ritual (relating to fertility, success in war, and the prevention of diseases or disaster) played an important role in Chinese life, and some early rulers considered them crucial to a harmonious state. By the eighth century B.C some temples may have had performers associated with them. Historians have sought to draw parallels between such practices and the Dithyrambic choruses of Greece. After 1000 B.C, there are references to secular entertainments at court
banquets, where dwarfs, buffoons, and court jesters performed mimes, dances, and songs.\textsuperscript{18}

The first great period of Chinese art and literature came under the Han Dynasty (206 B.C-221 A.D.), during which China came to equal the Roman Empire in size. All sorts of entertainments seem to have flourished, so many in fact that they came to be called the \textit{hundred plays}. Many of these entertainments were presented at fairs and markets as well as at court. The Chinese also trace the origin of shadow play to about 121B.C when wizards to materialise departed souls or gods first used it. Not until later did it become a form of entertainment.

The Han dynasty was followed by some 400 years of conflict and unrest. But entertainments seem to have continued. After China was reunified under the Hui dynasty (589-614 A.D), the forms of entertainment were conglomerations of native traditions with elements imported from India and central Asia. The emperor Yang-ti was interested in this new version of the \textit{hundred plays} that he set up a training school to encourage its development. Before his reign ended in 614 he is said to have staged a festival involving 18,000 to 30,000 performers in an area extending over four miles.

Ironically, it was not until the Mongols conquered China in the thirteenth century that drama began to flourish there. The Mongols, whose empire stretched across Asia into Europe, established the yuan Dynasty in China from 1279 until 1368. During this period, intellectuals began to
practice and perfect the native folk arts, including drama. Especially attracted to earlier forms of music drama, these writers created works usually considered the foundation of the classical Chinese theatre. With in less than a century, Chinese drama reached its peak. Thus, despite political and social repression, China enjoyed something of a golden age in drama.¹⁹

Yuan dramatists based their performances from narratives of history, legend, novels, epics, and contemporary events. The characters ranged through the entire spectrum of humanity, although the most important roles usually were those of emperors, scholars or students, government officials, generals, and rebels. The plays advocated the virtues of loyalty at family and friends, honesty and devotion at work and duty.

Interestingly many of the current traditional staging practices in Chinese theatre were in vogue by the fourteenth century. The stage was essentially bare, with one door on either side at the rear for entrances and exits. Between the two doors hung an embroidered, purely decorative wall piece. Properties such as fans, swords, and belts are also used. Both male and female performers were included in the companies, many of which became leading performances of the time. In Yuan period, about 700 titles of the plays are recorded in which around 170 plays have survived. About 550 dramatists are known to have written at this time.

According to Howard Roger, who wrote extensively on Chinese theatre, "Whatever native ingredients and alien elements entered into the
melting pot of Chinese civilization, its main component has been essentially Confucianism... A practicable moral philosophy that teaches the rules of personal cultivation and virtues of human relationship. This Confucianism has molded the Chinese society, the family, literature and the arts. But when the country was in disorder, Taoism and Buddhism took over, the majority of Chinese writers, however, have been conformists to the grand Confucian tradition. To them, literature has been a vehicle for the communication of the aim of Confucian doctrine: to teach and influence people to be good. The Chinese never followed the Western concept of tragedy. From the Chinese point of view triumph of the good and victorious over the bad and evil prevail ultimately”. 20

The early history of Japan and its theatrical forms are shrouded in mystery because records of ancient arts were not compiled until 712 A.D. Before that time, however, there were numerous rituals, many of them related to Shintoism, which began in nature and ancestor worship. All these rituals are now usually grouped together under the general label ‘Kagura’, and some of them are being observed till the present day.

During the sixth century A.D., after the advent of Buddhism, Japan began to undergo profound changes during the reign of Prince Shotoku (573-621). In the following 200 years continental culture, especially from Korea, China, and India, were enthusiastically incorporated.

Around the beginning of the twelfth century, Sarugaku-no (a traditional art form of Japan) was adapted by Buddhists as a way to
demonstrate their teachings. Thus, it was given a role similar to that of the medieval mystery and morality plays of Europe. At first priests enacted the plays, but as performances attracted large numbers of people to the temples, professional players began to imitate the temple performances at times other festivals. As the skill of the professionals grew, some temples began to employ them to replace the actor-priests.21

After a time, performers had so proliferated that controls were needed. As a result, guilds were formed. Most of the guilds were attached to some powerful shrine or temple, which granted them a monopoly on performances in its area. In return, the players gave at least some free performances during ceremonies and festivals. During the fourteenth century Japanese theatre underwent a crucial change, that can best be understood within the sociopolitical context of the time. In A.D 192 the emperor ceded his secular powers to a military dictator, a post that became hereditary, although new families won possession of the title from time to time in civil wars. In A.D1338 the Ashikaga family assumed the Shogunate and held it until the late sixteenth century. It was during the Ashikaga Shogunate that Japan, after centuries of domination by imported culture, rediscovered its own heritage. The result was an era of great creative energy during which foreign and native elements were mingled in new and distinctive ways.

It was within this context that the first great Japanese theatrical form, Noh, emerged in the late fourteenth century. Zeami, who is
considered to be the greatest of all Noh dramatists, wrote more than one hundred plays. He summed up Noh's aesthetic goals and described its practices in three theoretical treatises. Consequently, as a product of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Noh had a great influence of Zen Buddhism, which believes that ultimate peace is achieved only with well-being of the society, conquest of one's own desires and belief in non-permanency of world and life. Most of the typical Noh plays have protagonists of ghosts, demons, or obsessed human beings whose souls never rest in peace because they were much indulged in worldly affairs during their lifetime. Although Noh plays are extremely varied and all of the reflect Buddhist ideology.

While Noh were assuming its role as a major aristocratic art form, other entertainments were being addressed to more plebeian audiences. But major popular forms did not emerge until the era of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1867). As with Noh, the new forms can best be understood within the sociopolitical context of the time. The emphasis on native social and artistic forms encouraged the elaboration of ceremonies and entertainments of all kinds just when the increased wealth of the lesser classes permitted them to patronize the arts. During seventeenth century, two most distinctive theatrical forms the puppet theatre and kabuki were evolved.

Kabuki is said to be least 'pure' for it has always borrowed freely from Noh, the puppet theatre and other sources. Between 1675 and 1750
and most of its characteristic techniques were developed rapidly. New methods of acting were introduced and fully developed plays replaced the former improvised entertainments. Artistry replaced the personal appeal. Many purists believed that the true Kabuki ended by 1868. Kabuki drama has undergone many changes. Originally, improvised sketches were inserted into dance performances, and it was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that works of a more ambitious nature began to appear. The two-act play was given in 1664 for the first time but no important writer emerged until the 1670s, when Chikamastu Monzaemon began to write for Kabuki troupes. Many of his puppet plays were later taken into the kabuki repertory.

Kabuki drama is not considered to be literature, however, for, like most Eastern dramatic forms, it serves merely as a basis for performance. The performances have traditionally been lengthy. From around 1650 until after 1850 they usually lasted about twelve hours. Kabuki actors do not wear masks, but some roles required boldly patterned makeup to exaggerate the muscular conformation of the face. Red and black patterns are normally painted upon a white base, although for demons and evil characters blue or brown are used. Every role has got its traditional costume. 22

Thus the ritual theatre though started as an enactment of belief manifested in the form of a ritual, it evolved in to a specialised theatrical form over a period of time. Infact, it evolved to manifest the worldview of a
community/ people. The Occident and the Orient theatres relied on the dichotomy of human nature, which absorbed and negated the world orders based on power relations. In order to bring out these dimensions the ritual theatre used masks all over the world. Mask, therefore is primarily representing ambivalent situation wherein the human emotions blend and clash. Therefore ritual theatre acquired prominence in the epistemology of theatre studies.

1.ii. The Neoclassism

In drama the new concern for authority was first felt through the formulation of the neoclassical ideal. This had been given full expression in Italy by 1570, and thereafter it spread to rest of the Europe, where it was to determinate from the mid-seventeenth until the late eighteenth century.

In neoclassical doctrine, the fundamental demand was for verisimilitude, or the appearance of truth. A complex concept, verisimilitude may be divided into three subsidiary goals; reality, morality and universality. In relation to reality, critics urged dramatists to confine their subjects to events that could happen in real life. Consequently, in neoclassical plays, fantasy and supernatural events were usually avoided unless they form integral parts of the themes of story taken from myth, history, or the Bible. Furthermore, such devices as the soliloquy and the chorus were discouraged on the grounds that it is unnatural for characters
to speak aloud while alone or to discuss private matters in the presence of a group so large as the chorus.

Drama’s of this era teaches moral lessons and considerably modified faithfulness to reality. The dramatist was asked not merely to copy life but to reveal its ideal moral patterns. Since God was said to be both omnipotent, it seemed only logical that the world over which God reigns should be represented in drama to reveal His power and justice. Both reality and morality were further modified by universality a key to truth. Rather than seeking truth with surface details, the neoclassicist located it in attributes that are common to all phenomena in a particular category. Those characteristics that vary from one example to another were considered accidental and therefore not essential parts of truth. Thus, truth was defined as that which is typical and normative traits that are discoverable through the rational and systematic examination of phenomena, whether natural or man-made. Since these norms embody truth in its most essential form - one that remains unchanged regardless of historical period or geographical location- they were declared as the foundation upon which all literary creation and criticism should rest.

The concept of verisimilitude, defines the reality that playwrights should seek to emulate in their works. Basing on this, a number of lesser principles, for the idea that truth is to be found in universal norms were extended to almost every aspect of dramatic composition. All drama got reduced to two basic forms, comedy and tragedy, and other types were
considered inferior because they were "mixed". Comedy and tragedy were thought to have their own normative patterns. Comedy was said to draw its characters from the middle or lower classes, to base its stories on domestic and private affairs, to have happy endings, and to imitate the style of everyday speech. Tragedy was said to draw its characters from the ruling classes, to base stories on history or mythology, to have unhappy endings, and to employ a lofty and poetic style. These norms mark several departures from Greek practice, but perhaps the most significant is the substitution of social rank for moral qualities in the description of character.24

It is evident that almost all plays functioned to teach and please the audience. Although the didactic ideal had often been stated in classical times, it was not given primary emphasis until the humanists of the Renaissance found it necessary to justify the study and writing of literature at a time when learning was moving away from purely theological concerns. Because they wished to depict drama as a useful tool, they tended to emphasise the instructional over the pleasurable potentiality of literature. These ideas about the functions of drama to dominated critical thought until the end of the eighteenth century.

Although many of the neo-classical principles now seem arbitrary and restrictive, they were accepted as reasonable and desirable in the years from about AD1570 until after AD1750. As the neoclassical ideal
took shape in Italy, drama became increasingly regular. Some plays were denounced as inferior and as unworthy of serious consideration.

1.iii. Romanticism

Writers began to idealise the distant past when people allegedly had lived in a natural state, free from the shackles of despotic rulers. These changes contributed for the emergence of two forms, political theory and the literary forms. Most of these trends were formed around AD1800 under the label Romanticism. Romanticism, as a movement spread throughout Europe in the very late eighteenth century. It gained widespread acceptance in almost all arts in the first half of the nineteenth century. As a conscious movement, Romanticism began in Germany, although many of its concepts had been developing there and elsewhere for some time.

The philosophical foundations of Romanticism are complex, but the chief tenets can be summarised briefly. First, the Romantics (especially in Germany) argued that beyond earthly existence there is a higher truth than that of everyday social forms and natural phenomena, for all that exists has been created by an absolute being (variously called God, spirit, Idea, Ego). Consequently, all things are part of the whole and of each other. Truth, then, is viewed in relation to infinite variety, rather than to observable norms, as the neoclassicist had held. Second, since all creation has a common origin, a thorough and careful observation of any part may give insights into the whole (essentially a democratic idea). The
less spoiled a thing is *i.e.* the less it deviates from its natural state- the more likely it is to embody some fundamental truth. Hence, the romantic writer preferred as subjects untamed nature and unspoiled natural restraints of a highly structured and bureaucratic society. Third, human existence is compounded of dualities; the body and the soul, the physical and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal, the finite and the infinite. Because of its dual nature, humanity is divided against itself, for it must live in the physical world although its spirit strives to transcend this limitation. Art which has enormous significance, is one of the few means of making human beings *whole again,* since during an aesthetic experience people are freed momentarily from the divisive forces of everyday existence. Fourth, to perceive the final unity behind the apparently endless diversity of existence one requires an exceptional imagination, found fully in the artist-genius and the philosopher. Thus, art like philosophy is a superior form of knowledge and the artist a truly superior being, capable of providing guidance for other and is willing to listen.  

Romanticism that has been extant ever since the writings of Shakespeare was reactivated and rejuvenated by the theatre of the Romanticists through its writings. Works inspired by the Romantic Movement include *Faust* of Johanna Wolfgang von Goethe, Victor Hugo's *Hernani* and Alexander Dumas's dramatisation of his novel *The Three Musketeers.* With its emphasis on free form, picturesque stories, exotic locales, grotesque heroes, and sprawling dramatic structure, Romanticism
gave rise to a liberated and awesome theatricality, which survives till date primarily in the form of grand opera and Grand Guignol. It is indeed a proper appellation for Romantic theatre, for it strove hard to free dramaturgy from the strictures of neo-classic formulas like flamboyant verse, boisterous action, epic adventure, passionate feeling, and majestic style. Romantic authors explored deeply into the theatres practices for moving, dazzling, and enthralling of audiences that find subtle expression even in the drama of present times.26

With respect to dramatic achievement, the aims of Romanticism proved more influential than lasting. The Romanticists succeeded in laying bare the possibilities of theatre in an age of rapid change. They also succeeded in wooing a democratic audience into the theatres. They removed academic pretension from the dram, which in the neo-classic era had threatened to destroy the theatrical experience by inhibiting its liveliness. By appealing to the emotions as well as to the mind, the works of Romanticism also stimulated a popular taste for rapture, adventure, and discovery in the theatre that had rebelliousness in both politics and art.

1.iv. Symbolism

The intellectual climate between AD1850 and AD 1900 was largely anti-idealistic, but the sweeping claims made for science at this time brought several protests. The most significant of these came from symbolists, who launched their counterattack in AD1885 on a *manifesto*. Taking its inspiration from the works of Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire’s
poems and criticism, Dostoyevsky's novels, and Wagner's music and theory, symbolism attracted representatives from all the arts. To the symbolists, subjectivity, spirituality, and mysterious internal and external forces were the sources of truth, which is more profound than, that derived from the mere observance of outward appearance. This truth, they argued, cannot be represented directly but can only be evoked through symbols, legends, myths and moods. The essential of Symbolism was the abandonment of the appearances of life in favour of its spirit, symbolically represented, and the search for a poetic rather than a prosaic drama. The principal dramatist of the movement was Maeterlinck.

By AD1899, Adolphe Appia (AD1862-1928) and Gordon Craig (A.D. 1872-1966) laid down the theoretical foundations for modern nonrealistic theatrical practice by introducing three dimensional stage designs. Appia and Craig championed ideals and goals that practical men of the period could not provide. Together they forced their contemporaries to reconsider the nature of the theatre as an art and its function in society and its elements.

In England Aesthetics, a movement, which paralleled French symbolism, rejected the idea that drama should be utilitarian and the popular audience is a suitable judge of merit. Oscar Wilde (1856-1900) a member of the Art for Art's sake, suggested that we should seek to turn life into a work of art rather than to make art imitate life. Nevertheless, of Wilde's plays only Salome resembles French symbolist drama, although
his phenomenally popular comedy. The importance of Being earnest (1892) , A Women of no Importance (1893) and An Ideal Husband (1895) appear to be much like Pinero’s social dramas, but seemingly Wilde lets the machinery of his plots show until the plays become near-parodies.28

Symbolism made no marked impression in the theatre until an independent group, modeled on the Theatre Libre appeared. In 1890, Paul fort (1872-1962), a seventeen-year-old poet, founded the Theatre d’ Art, where by 1892 he had presented works by forty six authors, ranging from readings of poems and adaptations of portions of the bible to new plays. When Fort left theatre in 1892, his work was carried out by the Theatre del’ Oeuvre, headed by Poe (1869-1940). An actor and stage manager at the Theatre Libre for a time, Poe was converted to the idealist outlook after seeing and appearing in some of the productions at the Theatre d’arf while sharing an apartment with the symbolist painters. His repertory was made up primarily of French plays but with these he mingled some works by Ibsen and a Sanskrit drama Mritcha katika staged as Clay Cart.

Adolphe Appia started his theatrical discourse beginning with the assumption that artistic unity is the fundamental goal of theatrical production, Appia sought to analyse failures to achieve it. He concluded that stage presentation involves three conflicting visual elements: the moving three-dimensional actor; the perpendicular scenery; and the horizontal floor. He considered painted two-dimensional settings to be one of the major causes of disunity and recommended that they should be
replaced with three-dimensional units (steps, ramps, and platforms) that enhance the actor's movement and provide a transition from the horizontal floor to the upright scenery. He also emphasised the role of light in fusing all of the visual elements into a unified whole. To him, light was the visual counterpart of music that changes from moment to moment in response to shifting moods, emotions and actions.

Gordon Craig was considered to be the most controversial theatre practitioner. He began his career as an actor. His writing *The Art of Theatre* (A.D. 1905) made him well known throughout Europe. Craig thought of the theatre an Independent art and argued that the true theatre artist binds action, words, line, color, and rhythm into a product as pure as that of the painter, sculptor, or composer. He influenced immensely the stage designing, perhaps because he conceived of the theatre primarily in visual terms. He argued that the public goes to see rather than to hear a play. Craig's favorite project was the mobile setting. Throughout his life he experimented with screens, out of which he hoped to create a setting that by invisible means one could move in ways analogous to the actor and to light.29

1.v. Russian Idealism

In Russia, the antirealist impulse centered at first around *The World of Art*, a periodical begun in AD 1898 by Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929). In addition to keeping Russians abreast of events in the artistic centers of Europe, the magazine sought to encourage Russian artists and
composers. The ecstatic response led Diaghilev to form his Ballets Russes, which then toured throughout Europe. Every where it was praised both for its dancing and for its scenic design. The scenic style of the ballets Russes did not depend upon any new technical devices, for it relied on painted wings and drops. Nevertheless, it departed markedly from illusionism, since line, color, and decorative motifs were considerably stylised to reflect moods and themes rather than specific periods or places. Costumes also emphasised exaggerated line, color, and mass. Thus, although the artists drew on familiar forms and decorative motifs, they created a sense of exoticism and fantasy through stylisation.

During the AD1890s the symbolist ideal began to be championed in Russia and after 1900 became a major literary movement. Stanislavsky, after presenting a bill of Maeterlinck's short plays in AD1904-1905, decided that his company needed to supplement its realistic approach, and in 1905 he established a studio to experiment with nonrealistic styles. A number of productions were planned for the new studio, but Meyerhold's subordination of the actors to his directorial concepts displeased Stanislavsky so much that he discontinued the experiment.

Nevertheless, the Moscow art theatre went on to produce other nonrealistic works, including Maeterlinck's The Blue Bird in 1908 and Hamlet in 1912, the latter with scenery by Gordon Craig. It also encouraged Leonid Andreyev (AD1871-1919), Russia's foremost symbolist dramatist. After beginning in the realistic mode, Andreyev was
converted to symbolism in 1907, *The Life of Man*, an allegory that seeks to summarize the human experience. Stanislavsky staged it against black curtains, on which windows, doors, and walls were outlined in white rope. Although the production was popular, Stanislavsky withdrew it because he felt the acting was too abstract. In 1911 the Moscow Art Theatre established the First Studio under the direction of Leopold Sullerzhitsky (A.D.1872-1916), primarily to give training in the Stanislavsky system but also to encourage nonrealistic approaches. But if Stanislavsky experimented with nonrealistic approaches, any marked departure from realism was ultimately unacceptable to him since all tended to dematerialise the actor.³⁰

Between AD1910 and AD1914 Meyerhold who was with Stanislavsky also established studios where he experimented with circus* and *Commedia Dell’arte* techniques. In one studio the entire auditorium was treated as a performance space, which intermingled actors and spectators. Actors evolved their own scripts and experimented with geometrically patterned movement, improvisation, and rhythm. Meyerhold also began to turn the scenic background into a mere apparatus for acting- a collection of steps and levels. Meyerhold clearly believed that the director is the major creative force in the theatre and that a script is simply material to be molded and reworked as the director wishes. He was the most persistent exploration of the possibilities and limitations of the theatre as a medium of expression to be found anywhere at that time.³¹
After Meyerhold, Nikolai Evreinov (A.D.1879-A.D.1953) continued to experiment with non-realistic styles in Russia. Evreinov sought to enlarge the actor's place in the theatre by emphasizing theatricality. He is probably most famous for his 'mono dramas', the basic principle of which was first set forth in his *Apology for Theatricality* in 1908. He suggested that an inborn theatrical instinct leads humans into *Role-playing* and makes them seek to transform reality into something better. Consequently, he argued, the theatre should not imitate life, but life should seek to become like theatre at its best. In his 'monodramas' he aimed to help the audience achieve its desires by making it the alter ego of the protagonist. Through identification, the audience was led to participate in the theatrical experience through which it came to perceive an existence more satisfying than that of ordinary life.

By AD1917, Russian experimenters had introduced techniques, removed from those employed by Stanislavsky during A.D.1898. Some methods were nonrealistic. At the end of the nineteenth century, Russia witnessed some of the most significant theatrical experiments by the end of revolution.\textsuperscript{32}

1.vi. Neo-Romanticism

In Germany, a number of dramatists, most notably Hauptmann and Sudermann, eventually were to write alternately in realistic and nonrealistic styles. But others, among them Hofmannsthal stand Wedekind, fall more clearly into the antirealist camp. Hugo Von
Hofmannsthal (AD1874-1929) is usually considered an exponent of neo-romanticism, a movement that in Germany roughly parallels Symbolism in France. His early plays are mostly short, as in *The Fool and Death* (AD1893) and *The Adventure and the Singing Girl* (AD1899), and written in a verse that led many critics to praise him as the finest poet since Goethe. Around 1900 he underwent a crisis during which he came to believe that words are meaningless. After A.D.1900 German producers also came to be increasingly interested in nonrealistic staging. Some of the most important innovations were made at the Munich Art theatre, founded in AD1907 and headed by George Fuchs (A.D.1868-1949), a critic and theorist, with Fritz Erler (A.D.1868-1940) as designer. In two books, *The Theatre of the Future* (A.D.1905) and *Revolution in the Theatre* (A.D.1909) Fuchs expressed the need to have a theatre that fulfills aspiration of modern humanity. Under the slogan *retheatricalise the theatre*: he sought to unite all the arts in a new kind of expression.

Like Appia and Craig, Fuchs believed that rhythm fuses all the elements of production. Unlike them he placed the actor in front of the setting rather than within it and so tended to mute the three-dimensionality they so avidly sought. Fuchs’s theories reinforced those of Appia and Craig and helped to establish the trend toward stylization in all theatrical elements. Ultimately, virtually all of the ideas and innovations introduced between A.D. 1875 and A.D.1900 whether realistic or nonrealistic reflected in the work of Max Reinhardt (A.D.1873-1943). He advocated that no
single approach is appropriate to the staging of all plays. Until the twentieth century, directors in each era staged all plays in similar style. Despite widespread experimentation in the late nineteenth century, each director had adopted a distinctive approach and applied it to all plays. With Reinhardt, each new production became a problem to be solved, not through the employment of proved formulae but through clues found within the work itself. Unlike his predecessors, he welcomed antirealism without undermining realism.

1.vii. Expressionism:

Around AD1910 expressionism as a term was introduced into Germany, later as the critics popularised it as a label for the discussion that are already found in literature and arts. Since almost any departure from realism soon came to be labeled as Expressionism, a movement difficult to define. Nevertheless, its basic premises may be outlined. An anthropomorphic view of existence led expressionists to project human emotions and attitudes into inanimate objects, and to seek truth in humanity’s spiritual qualities rather than in external appearances. Expressionists opposed realism and naturalism on the grounds that those movements focused on superficial details and implied that the observable phenomena of contemporary materialistic and mechanistic society represent fundamental truth. Rather, the expressionists argued that external reality is alterable and should be changed until it is brought into
harmony with humanity's spiritual nature, the only significant source of value.

Since the expressionists' truth existed primarily within the subjective realm, it had to be expressed through new artistic means. Distorted line, exaggerate shape, abnormal coloring, mechanical movement, and telegraphic speech were devices commonly used to lead audiences beyond surface appearances. Most expressionist plays were structurally episodic, deriving their unity from a central idea or argument, often holding out the promise of a future utopia.

With the onset of first World War, expressionism began to change for its emphasis moved from personal concerns to warnings of impending universal catastrophe or pleas for the reformation of humanity and society. Between 1919 and 1924 expressionism also became a major style of production, especially as applied by Jessner and Fehling. Leopold Jessner (A.D1878-1945) had worked in Hamburg and Konigsberg before becoming director of the Berlin State Theatre from AD1919 until AD1933. Here he won international fame for his imaginative use of flights of steps and platforms as the major compositional elements in his productions. The result of these various influences was a sort of theatre in which extreme and often-morbid psychological states were obsessively explored via a bold use of symbolic settings and costumes Expressionism was in many ways primarily a designer's theatre.
After AD1920s the ‘subjectivist’ phase of Expressionism, was dominated by the symbolic embodiment of states of mind and soul on the stage. It gave way to a more formalist, social phase to view the society in general in which human being is represented as a counter in a larger pattern.

1.viii.Dada and Surrealism:

As a consequence of the revolt against tradition, many theories and practices were emerged to break the influence of realistic theatre and to drive its attention to new forms. Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism, Dada and Surrealism were emerged in this phase. During the first World War many artists and political dissents sought refuge in Switzerland, where Hugo Ball, Emmy Hemmings, Richard Hulsenceck, and others launched Dada, the most extreme of the revolts, in AD1916. The principal spokesman for dada was Tritsan Tzara (A.D1896-1963), who published seven manifestoes between AD1916 and 1920. Dada was grounded in skepticism about a world that could produce a global war. For them insanity seemed the world’s true state, the Dadaists sought in their actions to replace logic and reason with calculated madness, and in their art to substitute discord and chaos for unity, structure, and harmony. They presented a number of programs composed of recitations, chance or sound poems, dances, visual art, and short plays. Their activities came to an end with the First World War.
In France, Dada was absorbed into Surrealism, which drew much of its inspiration from the works of Alfred Jarry and Apollinaire (A.D1880-1918), friend to almost all avant-garde writers and painters after A.D1900 and the principal spokesman for Cubism. It was he who influenced surrealism largely through his play the Breasts of Tiresias (AD1903, revised and published in AD1917). Surrealism was defined by Andre Breton, as pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express verbally, in writing or by other means, the real process of thought, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupation.

Of all the avant-garde figures between the two World Wars, Antonin Artaud (A.D1896-1948), a surrealist was the most important. According to Artaud, the theatre in the Western world has been devoted to a very narrow range of human experience, primarily the psychological problems of individuals or the social problems of groups. Artaud holds that the more important aspects of existence are those submerge in the unconscious, those things that cause divisions within people which lead to hatred between people, violence and disaster. He believed that if proper theatrical experiences are given, people can be freed from ferocity and express the joy and emotions that civilisation has forced them to repress. It is because the theatre can evacuate those feelings that are usually expressed in more destructive ways.
Artuad differed drastically from Appia and Craig in his conception; they tended to value art for its own sake, whereas Artuad saw in it the salvation of mankind. For Appia and Craig world is an idealised beauty, but for Artuad it is a region of cruel torment. Consequently, as the post-world War II view of humanity darkened, the influence of Appia and Craig declined as that of Artaud increased.

1.ix.Futurism:

Futurism was a movement launched in Italy in A.D1909 by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (A.D1876-1944) during interwar times. Like the Expressionists, the Futurists rejected the past and wished to transform humanity. But, whereas the Expressionists associated the past with soul-destroying materialism and industrialism, the Futurists deplored the veneration of the past as a barrier to progress. Consequently, they glorified energy and speed of the machine age and sought to embody them in artistic forms. From AD1910 onward they gave performances during which they read their manifestoes, gave concerts, read poems, performed plays, and exhibited works of visual art- at times several of these simultaneously occurred. Sometimes they moved about among the spectators, using various parts of a room as stage. They sequentially and concurrently demand that libraries and museums to be destroyed as the first step toward creating a more dynamic future.

Futurists championed art forms like picture poems kinetic sculptures, collages, and dynamic music. As for theatre, they denounced
the past practices to be the better models for future forms. They considered the earlier drama as too lengthy, analytical and static and hence proposed synthetic drama in its place, which would compress the essence of a dramatic situation into a moment or two. In A.D1915-1916 they published seventy-six short plays of this type.

During First World War, Futurism lost many followers because it glorified war as the supreme example of energy. After the War it received new vitality, perhaps because many of its tenets were compatible with Mussolini’s program of aggressive action. The principal exponent of Futurism in the AD1920s Enrico Prampolini (AD1894-1960) wished that the painted scene be replaced by *Stage architecture that will move*. He substituted luminous forms for human actors. He conceived stage as a multidimensional space in which spiritual forces (represented by light and abstract forms) would play out a drama of semi-religious significance.\(^{41}\)

After AD1930, the interest in Futurism declined. Though it never became a major theatrical movement, it pioneered innovations that would be revived and extended in the succeeding years. Futurism (1) attempted to rescue theatrical art from a museum-like atmosphere, (2) directed confrontation and intermingling of performers and audiences; (3) it aimed at appropriation of modern technology to create multimedia performances; (4) it aimed at using simultaneity and multiple focus, (5) proposed for anti literary and illogical bias; and (6) wished to break down the barriers among arts.
1.x. Existentialism:

Existentialism is the philosophy that dominated the thinking of the playwrights much in AD1940s and 1950s. Thoughtful men and women, despairing of the traditional values formerly found in nature, science, politics, and history, turned inward in the hope or rediscovering a genuine identity and an authentic life of the self. The sense of disruption was more than that it was felt after the First World War. There was a drastic break with the past and the new era, the Age of Atom Bob was launched. The holocaust at Hiroshima in A.D1945 put an end to all that had gone before. Existentialists hold that if the result of three centuries of science was to be the annihilation of every living being on the earth, there is no use in studying science. Even if destruction could be avoided, the new age of political and economic power that would follow the release of nuclear energy would be so radically different that all traditional values would seem irrelevant.

In everyday life man is not always aware of himself in a borderline situation. When he realises himself as an existence, he gains freedom for the first time. According to Existentialists, freedom means that human being should not be the one that is being shaped under the influence of natural or social necessity but one should get molded himself by one’s own act and deed. Thus, a free man takes responsibility for what he has done and does not try to justify himself by ‘circumstances’. That is why
Existentialism constantly holds that man is responsible for everything that happened in history.

In this depressing spiritual climate, Existentialism became the support of many intellectuals. Its great appeal was its rediscovery of the self as an entity with an authentic inner life, a complete being free to choose, free to create values, whether or not the universe supports them. After a century of scientific objectivity, of exact measurement, of facts and statistics, the existentialists were ready for the opposite extreme of subjectivity.

The existentialist mood appeared first in France, where it was especially pertinent during the long, traumatic experience of the German occupation. Sartre derived a strong sense of commitment from his existentialism and worked with the Communists and other groups. The existentialist movement gained momentum after the Second World War and got reflected in the plays, novels, and essays of two Frenchmen, Albert Camus and Jean-Paul-Sartre. Camus’ novels made a much stronger impression than his plays, though Caligula (A.D.1945) interested many people because of its startling hero, who follows the logic of his idea of absolute freedom to the point of killing his friends. Perhaps the more than his plays the two essays published at the end of the war ‘Existentialism is a Humanism’ is probably the most widely read definition of existentialism. Jean Paul Sartre (A.D1905-1980), individual differences of human beings, the qualities due to heredity and environment, were unimportant. A person
or a character in a play achieved identity only as he made a decision. His first play *Les Mouches* (A.D1942), is almost an Existentialist thesis in dramatic form. The other play by him was *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu* (A.D1951), that set out, rather too schematically for theatrical success, to demonstrate the uselessness of the concept of god.42

1.xi. Absurdism:

During A.D 1950-1960s, those that had leanings towards Existentialism developed theatre of the Absurd in Europe. It is an Avant-garde theatre that can be shown to share certain common structures and styles and to be tied together by a common philosophical thread. The plays that constitute this theatre are obsessed with the futility of all action and the pointlessness of all direction. These themes are developed theatrically through a deliberate and self-conscious flaunting of the absurd in the sense of the ridiculous.

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is the masterpiece of the theatre of the absurd; of all the plays it Absurdism is the most perfect in its form, the most complete in its desolation, the most comic Absurdism in its anguish. It is a parable without message. On a small mound at the base of a tree, beside a country road, two elderly men in bowler hats wait for an *Mr. Godot* with Absurdism whom they have presumably made an appointment. These two lonely tramps are waiting for Godot, who sends every day that he will not meet them today but surely tomorrow. The place where they wait is a desolate road, empty save for a stick of a tree not
sturdy enough to hang oneself on. Discontinuity is the theme and the form, deflation the theme and comic method.

*Waiting for Godot* does not point to any of the known sources of values, yet it is a passionate cry for some new faith, and in that sense it is a very religious play. The problem is certainly metaphysical. No economic improvement, no psychological adjustment, no doctor's pill, but only a new definition of mankind, a new relation to the universe, will serve these forlorn creatures. In its exploration of the last possibility of emptiness, the play may be considered a turning point. Anyone with such passionate need for the spiritual plane will either renew old definitions of God or find new ones.

The Absurdists consciously breakdown the language and communication in performance and deliberately perplexed the audience. They hold that if confusion and chaos are the human conditions, the form of the play itself must make use of interruption, discontinuity, incongruity, and senseless logic and repetition.

The most important Absurdist playwrights are Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Arthur Adamov and Jean Genet. All of them are in exiles. They feel that they are set apart from humanity as criminals and perverts for not being normative and hence question the society that is lawful and normal. They emphasised the sense of alienation.
Absurdism concentrated upon the irrationality of human experience without suggesting any path beyond. By employing a succession of episodes unified merely by theme or mood instead of a cause-to-effect arrangement, they arrived at a structure paralleling the chaos, which was their usual dramatic subject. The juxtaposition of incongruous events producing serious, comedy and ironic effects heightened the sense of absurdity. Because they viewed language as the major rationalistic tool, the Absurdists often demonstrated its inadequacy and subordinated it to nonverbal devices.\textsuperscript{44} It is not much concerned with people as social and political creatures but with human condition in a metaphysical sense.

**Contribution of Idealism to Theatre:**

Idealism as a philosophical drive contributed to theatre in two major areas of human development. Firstly it sought the happiness of individual as the basis for the well being of humanity. Secondly it imparted morality as primary for spiritual growth of human kind. These two driving forces when applied to theatre, it becomes a vitalised instrument in shaping the human thinking. The first principle of idealism being the subject (Self) happiness led to the dogma of 'art for art sake'. Once this principle started operating the enactments became much artistic and bound to be displayed or exhibited to people at large. For this reason the theatre adapted the notion of proscenium. The concept of proscenium innately advocates Osternin principle, which means making an event strange. In other words enactment need to be different from the routine walks of life,
this major contribution of Idealism segregated the performer from his viewer. Hence a physical distance is created between the two; the performance and the audience during the performance. This is done so in two ways; one by raising the performance space as a platform to appear as a stage, and by distinguishing the performance space by lighting during performance. The viewers are made to sit in 90 degrees angle in front of the stage. With this the space of the performers on the raised platform is divided in two spaces. One the visible space the other is non-visible space. The visible space is actual enactment place where viewers are allowed to watch the performance. The non-visible space is converted as greenroom and for other technical purposes like lighting, musicians.

The second driving force of idealism being morality, the theatre is made to get influenced by the religious realm of human Rind. The metaphysical presence as pervaded in the religious preaching of the human cultures started invading in theatre as enactments. The themes from the religious texts became the popular subjects for plays. To transcend the metaphysical realm in to physical realm, theatre made use of popular images of Gods and Goddesses. For this, the use of masks is introduced in theatre. Two kinds of masks prevailed in theatre. The first kind is, facial make-up itself as mask, the second is external mask. Converting face into mask resulted in exuberant and elaborate make-up practice in theatre. Different kinds of colors and materials were used to transform normal faces into the faces of metaphysical beings. In the
practice of external masking wood, plastic, fiber and other such material was fabricated into the faces of Gods, Goddesses and satanic forces. Hence a separate skill of mask making became a specialised field in theatre.

Added to this, costumes also underwent change. Extensive costumes in different sizes and lengths are tailored to suit the characters in the play. Costumes made up of simple clothes to fine fabrics were used to make the actors appear as the characters. Stitching concurrently became a specified craft in dress making for theatre.

Concurrent to this development, the theatre also added innumerable properties in staging the plays. The divine and evil forces are represented by certain properties in every religious belief system. The properties like winks for angles, skirts for Gods, swords for evil forces etc were introduced. These hand properties also clubbed by the stage properties to make the play situational. The backdrops of the stage are painted into different settings like Abodes of Gods and evil forces. With this, artists as stage designers emerged as a specialised in this field.

The stage did undergo a change due to Idealism. The linier stages are transformed into nonlinear and vertical stages, by dividing the stage itself through raised platform, dividers, levels etc. this further contributed for the specilisation in lighting by way of spotlights, floodlights and special effects. All these are done only to make the theatre to be experienced by the audience as that of the metaphysical realm. Further song and dance
sequences are introduced in theatre as part of stylisation. With this, the performance has also undergone a change. The body language as expressed through kinesics and proximics became a part of narration in theatre. At the outset, the contribution of Idealism to theatre is more artistic and metaphysical.

2. Theatre concepts developed in ‘Materialism’

Materialism as a form of thinking sought for human intervention to correct errors in the development of civilisations. The core idea of Materialism rests on human endeavor to achieve common goodness to all humankind. Theatre did come under the influence of materialism and expressed the hope of regaining happiness of all human kind and especially those of the marginalised and exploited. This led to the realistic theatre and critiqued the negative side of development of civilisation. Egalitarianism formed the basis for most of the concepts developed in theatre under the influence of Materialism. The major concepts developed under materialism are Realism, Naturalism, Constructivism, Epic-Theatre, and Environmental theatre, poor theatre and post modern Theatre.

2.i. Realism

Realism owed much to the Positivism of Auguste Comte (AD1798-AD1857), author of Positive philosophy. Comte classified sciences according to their relative simplicity placing sociology at the apex. Comte argued that all the sciences must contribute to sociology by lending their scientific methodology, so that the causes for social problems and their
remedies are brought out to get desirable change. Comte’s arguments appealed scientists, philosophers, and also many artists, who attempted to think scientific. Out of these attempts, realism emerged.

The realist mode in art had been attempted sporadically from the time of the Greeks. In the early phases of Renaissance, pictorial illusion dominated the theatre. Melodrama and romanticism were also incorporated. All approaches before A.D1850 emphasised Beautiful nature, norms, picturesque locale, colour, or pleasing contrasts in theatrical practice. Even Huge, who demanded the inclusion of the grotesque in art, avoided the sordid in his own practice. Around A.D1850, some critics began to advocate a close and objective observation of life, no matter how squalid or elevated.

As a conscious movement, Realism is first discernible around A.D1853 in France. Realism aimed to create a drama without conventions or abstractions, in simple consonance with life itself. Likeness to life is realism's goal and in pursuit of that goal it has renounced, among other things, idealized or prettified settings, versifications, contrived endings, and stylized costumes and performances.

Realism is an aesthetic philosophy, since the theatre has always taken real life as its fundamental subject and realism seems at first glance to be an appropriate style with which to approach the reality of existence. Instead of having actors represent characters, the realists would say, let us have the actors be those characters. Instead of having dialogue stand
for conversation, let us have dialogue which is conversation, instead of scenery and atmosphere, let us have scenery that is genuinely inhabitable, and costumes that are real clothes.\textsuperscript{46}

In essence, the realistic theatre is conceived to be a laboratory in which the nature of relationships, or the ills of society, or the symptoms of a dysfunctional family are 'objectively' set down for the final judgment of an audience as impartial observers.

The realistic theatre saw its zenith in the premiers of a \textit{Doll's House} (A.D1879), Ghosts (A.D1881), and \textit{An Enemy of the People} (A.D.1882), the three plays by the Norwegian author Henrik Ibsen. Earlier in his career, Ibsen had been a stage director and dramatic poet, and his previous works for the theatre included the magnificent Romantic/epic poem -Play, which dealt, respectively, with the issues of Women's roles in society, hereditary, disease and mercy killing and political hypocrisy, he turned to the realistic mode.

The realistic theatre spread rapidly throughout Europe as the controversy surrounding Ibsen's plays and themes stimulated other writers to follow suit. The result was a proliferation of 'problem plays' as they were sometimes called, which focused genuine social concern through realistic dramatic portrayal. In Germany, Gerhart Hauptmann explored the plight of the middle and proletarian classes in several works, most notably in his masterpiece \textit{The Weavers} (A.D1892). On England, Irish-born George Bernard Shaw created a comic realism through which he addressed such
issues as slum landlords (in *Widower's Houses*, A.D1892), prostitution (in *Warren's Profession*, A.D1902) and urban poverty (in *Major Barbara*, A.D1905). In France, under the encouragement of innovative director Andre Antoine, Eugene Brieux wrote a series of realistic problem plays that included "*Damaged Goods"*(A.D1902) which deals with syphilis, and *Maternity* (A.D1903), which deals with birth control. By the turn of the century realism was virtually the standard dramatic form in Europe.\(^{47}\)

If the realistic theatre came to prominence with the plays of Henrik Ibsen, it attained its stylistic apogee in the major works of Anton Chekhov. Chekhov was an actor by training and a writer of fiction by vocation. Towards the end of his career, in association with realist director Konstantin Stanislaviki and the Moscow Art Theatre, he also achieved success as a playwright through a set of plays that portray the end of the Czarist era in Russia with astonishing force and subtlety. *The Sea Gull* (A.D1896), *Uncle Vanya* (A.D1899), *The Three Sisters* (A.D1901) and *The Cherry Orchard* (A.D1904). Chekhov's *Three Sisters* epitomizes the realistic theatre, in addition to being one of the finest plays of the genre, it is perhaps the most widely known of all Russian plays.

Stanislavisky and Chekhov were two towering figures of Russian realism, the first as actor-director and the second as playwright. Their collaboration in the Moscow Art Theatre productions still rank among the most magnificent achievements of the realist stage.\(^{48}\)
The success of realism is well established; indeed realism remains one of the dominant modes of drama to this day. At its most profound, when crafted and performed by consummately skilled artists, the realistic theatre can generate extremely powerful audience empathy by virtue of the insight and clarity it brings to real-world moments.

2.ii. Naturalism:

Naturalism, developed as a movement independently parallel to realism, is an attempt to dramatise human reality without having much dramaturgical effect. The naturalists flourished in France during the late nineteenth century grounded their aesthetics on nature particularly on man’s space in the natural (Darwinian) environment. For them, human being is merely a biological phenomenon and human behavior is being determined entirely by genetic and social circumstances.

The primary spokesman for Naturalism was Emile Zola (AD1840-1902), who advocated the scientific method as a key to all truth and progress. He wants the literature to be scientific, which otherwise would die. Zola argued that drama should illustrate the inevitable laws of heredity and environment or record case studies. To portray a character as a hero, or even as a credible force for change in society was anathema to the naturalist, who similarly eschewed dramatic conclusions or climaxes. The Naturalist plays offered nothing more than a slice of life in which the characters in the play were the play’s entire subject, and any topical issues that were brought in served merely to facilitate the interplay
of personalities and highlight their situations, frustrations, and hopes. Whereas, realist plays dealt with well-defined social issues—women's rights, inheritance laws, and worker's pensions etc.

Naturalism is not merely a matter of style; but a philosophical concept concerned with the nature of the human being. Naturalist theatre represents a purposeful attempt to explore that concept, using extreme realism as its basic dramaturgy. The naturalists tried to eliminate every vestige of dramatic convention. Zola believes that all the great successes of the stage are triumphs over convention. By A.D1887, naturalistic staging and writing were united for the first time with the great contribution of Antoine at the Theatre Libre. Although Antoine had used a realistic approach from the beginning, he intensified his search for authenticity after witnessing the Meiningen players and Irving's company in A.D1888. He then sought to reproduce environment in every detail. In The Butchers (A.D1888), for example, he hung real carcasses of beef on the stage. The ‘fourth wall' was observed consistently; in designing settings, he arranged rooms as in real life and only later decided which wall has to be removed. Often furniture was placed along the curtain line, and actors were directed to act, as though there were no audience. He discouraged conventionalised movement and declamatory speeches, instead sought natural behavior.
2. iii. Constructivism and Biomechanics:

Constructivism was a term adopted over from the visual arts, it was first applied about A.D1912 to the sculptures, composed by intersecting planes and masses without representational content. Between A.D1921 and 1930, Meyerhold, the popular Russian director perfected techniques with which he had experimented before the Revolution. He developed more conscious* and systematic methods designated as Biomechanics and Constructivism. Biomechanics referred primarily to Meyerhold’s approach to acting, intended to create a style appropriate to the machine age. His performers were trained in gymnastics, circus movement, and ballet in order to make them as efficient as machines in carrying out ‘an assignment received from the outside’. Basically what Meyerhold had in mind is a variation on the James-Lange theory:* particular patrons of muscular activity reflect particular emotions. Consequently, to arouse a desired emotional response within himself or herself or the audience need to enact an appropriate kinetic pattern.51 Thus, Meyerhold sought to replace Stanislavsky’s emphasis on internal motivation with one on physical and emotional reflexes. To create a feeling of exuberant joy in both performer and audience, Meyerhold thought that it is more desirable for actors to plummet down a slide to swing on a trapeze, or to turn a somersault than to restrict themselves to a pattern of behavior, which is considered appropriate for traditional social standards.
2.iv. Theatre of Alienation / Epic Theatre:

Bertolt Brecht, a theorist, a dramatist and a director, brought significant changes in the post war theatre. He introduced those theatre practices, which differ from already existing ever since the times of Aristotle. He reawakened the sense of social responsibility of theatre in dealing with the public issues and events on one hand and on the other displayed the capacity /power of theatre in"approaching people's causes.

Brecht was born in Germany in A.D1898 and emerged from World War I as a dedicated Marxist and pacifist. Using poems, songs, and eventually the theatre to promote his ideals following the German defeat, Brecht vividly portrayed his country during the Weimar Republic as caught in the grips of four giant vices; the military, capitalism, industrialization and imperialism. His *Rise and fall of the city of Mahagonny* an 'epic opera' of A.D1930, proved to be an immensely popular blending of satire and propaganda, music and expressionist theatricality and social idealism and lyric poetry. It was produced all over Germany and throughout most of Europe in the early A.D1930s as a representation of a rapacious international capitalism evolving toward fascism.52

He explained the use of sentiments and the notion of audience empathy for characters in performances and attempted to create a performance style, which was openly *didactic*. The actor was asked to alienate or distanciate himself from the character he plays-to *demonstrate* his character in performance rather than to embody that character in a
realistic manner. In Brecht’s view the ideal actor is one who could establish a critical objectivity toward his character, which would make clear the character’s social function and political commitment. To repudiate the magic of the theatre, he considered it as a place for workers to present a meaningful parable of life. Further he hold that the stage personnel—actors and stagehands—were merely workers who were engaged in doing a job of work.53

In every way possible, Brecht attempted to prevent the audience from becoming swept up in an emotional, sentimental bath of feelings. His goal was to keep the audience alienated or distanced from the literal events depicted by the play so they would be free to concentrate on the larger social and political issues, which generated the play. Brecht created such a new perspective on human reality to indicate the direction which political dialogue should take to foster the social betterment.

This theatre has proven more popular in A.D.1960 onwards. Because of the emergence of many cultural struggles around the globe through discussion and practice of Brecht’s philosophy had taken place. This period also witnessed the raising of some important theatre experiments, which were mainly focused on the relationship of the actors and audience.

Brecht’s theory of alienation had a staggering impact on the modern theatre. He denied in his theatre the Aristotelian catharsis that depends on audience empathy with a noble character. Further, he ignored Stanislavsky’s basic principles concerning the aims of acting, Brecht
provided a new dramaturgy that encouraged playwrights, directors, and designers to tackle social issues directly rather than simply by implication through contrive dramatic situations. Combining the technologies and aesthetics of other media, the cinema, the cabaret, the rehearsal—Brecht fashioned a vastly expanded arena for his ideas on theatre practice. His theatre reflects a bold theatricality, an open-handed dealing with the audience, a proletarian vigor, and a stridently entertaining, intelligently satirical and charmingly bawdy theatre.

2.v. Environmental theatre:

Many of the ideas and concepts of postmodernism were carried over to environment theatre, a term popularized by Richard Schechner, editor of The Drama Review (TDR). In A.D1968 Schechner published six axioms designed to clarify environmental Theatre.

(1) He declared that events might be placed on a continuum with Pure/Art at one end and Impure/Life at the other, extending from traditional theatre at one pole through environmental theatre to ‘happenings’ and ending with public events and demonstrations at the other pole. Thus, he located environmental theatre somewhere between traditional theatre and happenings; (2) in environmental theatre all the space is used for performance; Spectators are both scene-makers and scene-watchers, it is because in a street scene from daily life, those who watch are part of the total picture, even when they consider themselves to be mere spectators, (3) The event can take place either in a totally
transformed space or in a found space. In other words, space may be converted into an environment, or a place may be accepted as it is and the production may be adapted to it. (4) Focus is flexible and variable. (5) All production elements speak their own language rather than being mere supports for words and (6) a text need be neither the starting point nor the goal of a production. There may be no text at all. Thus the site of a performance is made an integral part of the whole, encompassing both actors and spectators so that they may interact as an entity. Such an attempt demands the abandonment of traditional theatre architecture and use of natural environment and scenario from routine life as background for performance.  

In A.D 1968 Schechner formed his own performance group. It converted a car garage into a theatre, the towers, platforms and other properties that are located in that garage were appropriated both by the performers and audiences. There was no spatial demarcation made in the performance arena for actors and audiences. The company's first production was Dionysus in 1969, a working text of Euripides'. Most of them related to sexuality, freedom, or repression. Overall, the production became a plea for greater freedom and a warning against blindly throwing off restraints. Subsequently, the group presented Commune (A.D 1970), a company created work about American ideals and failures to realise them, Sam Shepard's The Tooth of Crime (A.D 1973), a play about rivalries in
the pop music world treated in terms of gangsterism, and in A.D1975, Brecht’s *Mother Courage*.\(^{55}\) In A.D1980 Schechner left the company.

The performance space was taken over by The Wooster Group, which since A.D1975 had existed as a unit within Schechner’s company. Its artistic director, Elizabeth LeCompte, developed plays mostly based on the autobiographical reminiscences of Spalding Gray, one of its principal members. It won high critical praise and international recognition through their performances at festivals abroad. Its also appropriated deconstructionist techniques more effectively than any other American company.

**2.vi: Poor theatre:**

Internationally, Poland is known for its innovative directors rather than for it dramatists. Jerzy Grotowsky (A.D1933-2000) was one who began his work in Opel in A.D1959 before his moving to Wroclaw (Breslau) in A.D1965. Grotowski established his company, the *Polish laboratory theatre* and gave performances in various countries. Grotowski worked with many foreign troupes and lectured widely about his methods. His work got also publicised in the form of a book *Towards a Poor Theatre* (A.D1968).\(^{56}\)

Grotowski began with the premise that the theatre has borrowed too heavily from other media, especially film and television, and thus has violated its own essence, which he wanted to recover by eliminating
everything except its two essential elements: the actor and the audience. He called his approach poor theatre, in contrast with technologically rich theatre, since it avoided all machinery and minimized all spectacles not created by the actor.\(^{57}\) His performances were not allowed to use makeup or change costume to indicate a change in role or within a character; all music had be produced by the actors themselves; he used no scenery in the traditional sense, although a few functional properties may rearranged or used in various ways as the action demanded; he abandoned the proscenium-arch stage in favor of a large room which could be rearranged for each production. Overall the actors were thrown back on their own resources.\(^{58}\)

During this period, actor training was the focus of Grotowski’s concerns. For ideas about training he drew heavily from many sources—Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Vakhtangov, Delsarte, Dullin and others. His system required that actors gain absolute control over themselves physically, vocally and psychically, so that during performances they should be able to transform themselves as per the demand of the production. Grotowski’s actors had to be willing to give of themselves fully and expose themselves psychically when necessary. According to Grotowski, actors should arouse a sense of wonder because of their ability to exceed what the spectators can envision ever being able to do.

In this early phase, Grotowski looked upon the theatre as a secular ritual to which spectator-witnesses were admitted. He believed that the
audience is the other essential ingredient of a performance and that it must be put in a position to play its role unselfconsciously. He argued that the attempts to involve the audience directly in the action only make it self-conscious. Therefore, for each production he decided that how the audience should respond psychologically and then arranged the space to create the appropriate psychic distance.

In preparing a production, Grotowski searched for a script that forms archetypal patterns, which convey universal meaning for audiences even today. Much of the script might be abandoned and the remainder rearranged. The ultimate aim was to make the actors and the audience confront themselves in something analogous to a religious experience.\textsuperscript{59}

By A.D.1970 Grotowski believed that his group had reached the end of its search for technical mastery, and decided not to create new productions. He realised that, while his actors had been able to eliminate the barriers that stood in their way as performers, they had not broken down the blocks that stood between performer and audience. He then set out to eliminate "the ideal of theatre" in the sense of an actor playing for an audience, and to find a way of incorporating spectators into "a meaning, not a confrontation; a communication, where we can be totally ourselves." Consequently, he sought to develop means for leading participants back into the elemental connections between people and their bodies, the natural world, and each other.
The first major revelation of the new work came during the summer of A.D.1975 when approximately five hundred people from all over the world attended a 'research university' organised by Grotowski at Wroclaw under the sponsorship of the Theatres des Nations, which that year was held in Warsaw. The group included students, teachers, and journalists, as well as several famous directors- among them Peter Brook, Jean-Louis Barrault, luca Ronconi and Joseph Chaikin. Some of the activities involved groups going into the woods for 24 hours during which they were led through ritualized myths and archetypal experiences involving fire, air, earth, water, eating, dancing, playing, planting and bathing. Through this process, participants were expected to rediscover the roots of the theatre in pure ritualized experience, as well as to discover their own true being.\textsuperscript{60}

After A.D.1975, Grotowski began to study the diverse ritual performances in Japan, India, Haiti, Mexico, Africa and elsewhere, and used these experiences to enhance the work he had done. He labeled this new phase on the Theatre of Sources.

2.vii. Post modernism in theatre:

Much that happened in the theatre after A.D.1968 reflected cluster of ideas and practices that have come to be called 'Postmodernism'- an imprecise label, but one that suggests a significant break with 'Modernism'. Under modernism a variety of styles had flourished, but within any one, the artist usually sought unity by adhering consistently to the set of conventions associated with that mode. If there were disparate
elements, they were ultimately harmonized into a unified whole. Postmodernists, on the other hand, were undisturbed by the lack of consistency or continuity. They allowed disparities to exist without seeking to mask them, and they juxtaposed style and moods that previously would have been considered incompatible or inconsistent. They collapsed categories treated as distinct under modernism; boundaries were breached between the sexes, the arts, cultures, dramatic forms and performance styles.

Postmodern art was often reflexive, calling attention to the fact it was being made and how it was being made. It might include overt references to other works. It tended to value popular and high culture equally and to intermingle them. Postmodernism was reinforced by Poststructuralism (or deconstruction). Poststructuralists argued that it is impossible to think about any subject without a language. Thus, language makes consciousness and thought possible. But a language predisposes its users to see the world in particular ways and thus seriously compromises claims of objectivity. Additionally, meaning can never be fully present because, during the process of communication, it is always being modified by what has gone before and deferred by what is yet to come. Statements and categories are also haunted by what they suppress or ignore. Therefore a supplement of meaning is always left over, and if one examines the supplement, it begins to call into question the adequacy of the original statement or the boundaries of the category and to suggest
modifications which lead to still other modifications in an endless chain of deferred and differing meanings. This analytical process came to be known as deconstruction. It demonstrates that there can be no closure of meaning because additional possible meanings are always being uncovered often ones of which the playwright may have been unaware. This led to distinction between a "work" (the physical document written by the author) and a "text" (what individual readers find when they read the work), and to the idea that the author has no more right than anyone else in the text, since no one can dictate how a work can be read. In effect, audiences became partial authors of the text they perceive. These ideas, along with the principle of no closure of meaning, provided justification, if any were needed, for directors to depart drastically from dramatists' instructions. Sometimes, it was argued, works (especially classics) have become so enshrined within accepted interpretations that we can see them afresh only upon being subjected to a radically different reading. Much theatre of the A.D1970s and 1980s intermingled elements of postmodernism and poststructuralism in highly innovative productions.

Such intermingling was foreshadowed in the ‘happenings’, which themselves harked back to concepts and conventions introduced by the Futurists, Dadaists, and Surrealists. One key figure was Allan Kaprow, a painter and art historian, who in the A.D1950s became interested in environments (that is, the extension of the concept of art to include the entire setting in which it is exhibited or in which it occurs) and, believing
that all those who attended an exhibit become a part of the total experience, he began to give the spectators things to do. In A.D1959 he published an outline for an artistic event that he labeled a *happening* because he considered the term to be neutral. Later that year he gave the first public showing of such an event-"18 happenings in 6 Parts". For it, the gallery was divided into three compartments; different activities went on in each but simultaneously, and images were projected onto a variety of surfaces while music and sound effects provided a background. All those carried out instructions given them when they entered.

The term ‘happenings’ eventually came to be used to designate any event in which improvisation and chance played a large role. Though happenings were not strictly theatrical, many of their characteristics were carried over into theatre in several ways. (1) as ‘institutionalised’ art came under attack, there were many attempts to move it outside the confines of theatres, museums, or concert halls and to put it into more accessible and familiar surroundings. (2) emphasis was shifted from passive observation to participation- from the product to the process. Sometimes the spectators and the performers were the same and (3) emphasis shifted from the artist's intention to the participant's awareness. Each participant-spectator thus became partial creator of the piece and could derive whatever meaning he or she could from the experience. (4) simultaneity and multiple focus tended to replace orderly there was no pretense that everyone could see and hear the same things at the same time or in the
same order and (5) happenings were multi-media events, breaking down the barriers between the arts and intermingling them.\textsuperscript{63}

Richard Foreman, another dramatist and director in the postmodernist-poststructuralist mode, founded his own company, the Ontological-hysteric Theatre in 1968, for which he directed and designed his own pieces, including Dr. Selavy's 'Magic Theatre' and \textit{Pandering to the Masses} and several others. Instead of telling linearly arranged stories or developing complex characters, Foreman's plays were essentially meditations on art and the efforts, effects, strategies, and inventions of whatever it is in us, and through us, that does 'thinking'. He usually sat in the front row of the theatre where he was both audience member and operator of a sound system from which his own tape-recorded or amplified voice called attention to the play's ideas and the characters' actions and thoughts- to the 'art that is made' and to the fact that 'art is being made'. Foreman used a proscenium arch stage on which he arranged very precisely organised pictures. He also used cords, painted with alternating black and white dashes and stretched diagonally or horizontally, to divide the pictures into segments as points of reference for his analytical comments. Foreman used theatre extensively to deconstruct the processes of thought and theatrical art. Foreman also did considerable work internationally, where he was highly admired. In America he directed plays for the Guthrie Theatre, \textit{Papp's} Public Theatre, the American Repertory Theatre, and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{64}
The contribution of Materialism to theatre:

Materialism as a philosophical milieu pondered on the well being of human kind on the basis of sharing the resources equally. This principle brought the theatre a purpose, which aims at social well being of human kind. Idealism in theatre transpornded the physical realm to the metaphysical realm where as materialism brought the physical realm to social realm. For this theatre grossly depended on objectivity rather than subjectivity (as in the case of Idealism) as its methodological tool in theatre practice. Man's relationship with nature and man's relationship with other men is objectively treated as themes in the theatre. This brought forth the dialectics between the forces of production and the relations of production to the forefront in the themes dealt in materialistic theatre. With the result inequality in Sharing of resources and exploitation of men and environment by the ‘haves’ is critically portrayed in theatre.

In order to enact the above said dialects, the context of theatre also underwent a change. The real life events and social settings of exploited class/group became the major concern of the enactment. Instead of gods and goddesses and metaphysical beings the rich the poor and the common man became the characters of the plays. In order to take up the roles of everyday life of different categories of people the materialistic theatre came up with the idea of realistic presentations. In order to achieve this, it introduced theatre labs as a major contribution to the field of theatre. The process of training became more vigorous and the actors
were made to be fit for different roles as and when required. In idealistic theatre the actors are considered as 'born actors'. Where as in materialistic theatre it is only through proper training and practice that the ‘actors are made’. Theatre is not 'art for art sake' but 'art for man's sake'. Therefore it is the well being of mankind alone is concealed as pleasure in making theatre. Social relevance and political commitment became the driving force for the makers of theatre such as director, actors, and technical personal of theatre.

This setting drastically changed the theatre from not only presenting a proscenium stages but also presenting it in the streets amidst of masses. Street plays became more and more common to those believed in materialistic theatre. With this the entire theatre fabric underwent a change. Instead of raised platforms, streets and open grounds were preferred. The distance between audiences and performers reduced. The audiences were made to sit either in a circle or semi circle and the actors in the course of performance used the space both in the demarked circular performance space and the space among the audiences. The entry and exit rules of the proscenium kind are no more treated as standard. The environmental theatre went a further step ahead and even incorporated the audience into the performance. The fourth wall of theatre started getting shattered because of the materialistic theatre.

This further changed the costumes, makeup and technical aspects too. The social roles of those humans play in everyday life being themes;
the costumes and makeup became indexical to them. Therefore the old age, youth, and childhood - all are imitated as it is through costumes and makeup. A poor man is represented in rags and a rich man in costly suits and so on and so forth. The stage properties and hand properties also found represent the real life events. The indexical sign is much used in the theatre and forms the basis for making hand and stage properties, where symbolic signs were much used in theatre of the idealism.

The street play did not give much attention to light and other technical aspects. With the result the cost of the play production got increasingly decreased. This aspect encouraged large audiences on one-hand and amateur theatre groups to take up theatre as their part time occupation. This broadens the scope of theatre as well the frequency of play productions. Since materialistic theatre viewed any thing, which presents every day sorrows of life, born out of exploitation and inequalities. Numerous playwrights emerged in theatre and different themes on exploitation, social issues, gender issues and others were staged. This led to different stylistics in theatre. Each director interpreted the theme through visuals and scenic divisions. The actors also imitated different groups of people of different regions while enacting the roles. This brought forth the community theatre as a specialised craft in theatre. People belonging to the themes of the play are recruited as actors through training process and presented in the plays, sticking on to the maxim of 'actors are made'.

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Thus the materialistic theatre put forth utilitarianism as its principle and social relevance as its immediate concern. Social change through theatre is demonstrated as a Utopian ideal. The revolutionary themes, the labor movements, topics the world war as subjects were universally taken up by the theatre practitioners and craved for the emergence of theatre as people’s movement.

To conclude, the philosophical premise of the theatre through the ages, if viewed from the Marxist-Leninist approach, the theatre through the ages can broadly be divided into Idealism and Materialism. The theatre practices developed under Idealism put forth ‘morality’ as the basis for the development of art whereas; materialism demonstrated ‘utility’ as the foundation for the theatre practice. Both systems of thought contributed in their own way to the development of theatre as aesthetic system. Therefore theatre imbibed in itself not merely the place of enactment, but also the enactment itself as the tool to represent the thinking process of different schools of thought of theatre both under idealism and materialism. Nevertheless both the systems of thought did not concentrate directly on the theatre of the marginalized. The theatre of the marginalized in fact is discourse, which arouse out of critical appreciation of theatre itself. It is more relegated to the idea of politics of representation from a discourse analysis point of view. The discourse analysis is primarily of what people do, how people think and why they represent themselves. Theatre if analysed from these angles brings out the very concept of
theatre of the marginalized to the forefront of the discourse. The foregoing chapter therefore seeks an explanation of the theatre of the marginalized and its conceptual frame.

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