Environment prevailing in the Pre-Independence Era.

It is believed that the literature is the mirror of the society, amply stands true in the field of Drama. In the Pre-Independence era, we had an aim of the Independence of the motherland from the foreign domination. We had a belief that all things shall be automatically set right on our attaining the freedom, but the independence brought with it innumerable problems besides existing old problems. The partition of the motherland, separated the flourishing regions of Punjab, Sindhu and Bengal and turned them alien to us. Just after the independence there was an incessant influx of refugees in India. Rehabilitation of these refugees, the communal riots, Pakistan’s aggression on Kashmir and the Chinese aggression on our frontiers were the various complex problems which we had to tackle. Like France, America or the U.S.S.R. our Independence was not the consequence of any revolution but it was the result of a blood-less revolution. Probably, this was the reason as to why we could not properly valuate it. Of these who had the lion share of the independence, all were actually not the patriots but some of them were opportunists also who reaped the fruits thereof.
The joy of attaining independence could not remain static and our expectations were belied at the very initial stage. This found a reflection in the fifties in the satirical literary compositions.

Political environment:

In the Indian politics, Mahatma Gandhi was a 'Milestone' and his entry into the politics is historic. In the past, there used to be armed revolutions against the administrative authorities. The 'Sepoy Mutiny,' the Phulguri, Patharughat, Goyindpur revolutions etc. were the open revolutions against the foreign domination. After Tilak, there was a Vacum in the Indian politics and Gandhiji filled that void by his ahinsa and launching satyagrah movement. It was, thus, for the first time that morality was upheld in politics.

In 1919 Gandhiji requested for the withdrawal of anti-India 'Rowlet Bill' with no success. As a consequence thereof Gandhiji was compelled to launch an active revolution for the first time.¹ The massacre of the Jallianwala

Bagh is a historical document of the British Policy of domination. By now the sense of Nationality had awakened amongst the Indian public at large which turned the entire country into a Prison-House.¹

On the question of 'Khilafat' Gandhiji launched a 'Peaceful Non-Cooperation Movement' which was done away with on account of a mass-massacre at 'Chauri-Chaurah'. Later on, Gandhiji declared it as his Himalyan-blunder. Initially Gandhiji secured an unprecedented success in this endeavour. Disregarding the British Policy of domination people of all religions gave vent to their feeling of popular mass-revolution. The agitated masses, overlooking the Non-Violence doctrine of Gandhiji, wanted to have the Swarajya by adopting violence or force as their weapon. Active co-operation was always extended by the state of Assam on each and every call of the father of nation. Both the Hindus and the muslims fought hand-glove with the British in the vally of Assam and Surma.²

The seeds of communalism sown by the Britishers, flourished well during this period. The political history of India for the period 1923-24 is well known for the upheavals and the riots. The Muslim League was the main instrument

¹A.S.A. Aur A.H.S. - Dr. K. V. Mishra - 157
²Political History of Assam, Vol-2 - 4.
for these developments and thereby desired some consequential political gains. Both the Hindus and the Muslims who had joined hands on the question of Khilafat, had horribly turned hostile to each other. After his release from Jail in 1924, Gandhiji launched an unsuccessful fast for a period of 21 days. The incidents took an extremely adverse turn on account of a declaration regarding partition of India. The unprecedented riots, at the time of partition, were the perpetual blots in humanity. The communal problems of Assam were more based on a linguistic footings rather than being on religious grounds. Like other state, the position in the state of Assam was not so furious. During 1930-36 there were, of course, a few incidents of communal disharmony at Dibrugarh. In most of the places both Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully like brothers.

In 1928, on the arrival of Simon Commission in India for an enquiry was opposed by all parties throughout the Country. The entire country rose up with black-flags shouting 'Simon, Go back' and people resorted to Hartals (strikes), processions, meetings in this regard. The Simon Commission had also visited Assam. On this occasion Assam also stood

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2. Political History of Assam - Vol-2 - 308.
in the line of the rest of the country to oppose the Simon Commission while this commission visited Assam. Strikes were launched at several places like Goalpara, Dhubri, Dibrugarh etc.

In 1930, Gandhiji would have started his 'Salt-law' movement. But Gandhiji was arrested. On his arrest nearly 5 (five) thousand labourers gathered to raise a protest and went on strike. The angry masses also resorted to violence. The entire period from 1930 to 1935 was haunted by political disappointment, failure of the Round Table Conference, oppression of the revolutionaries and this marked as the age of highest morality of the Gandhian era.¹ At the time of Round Table Conference the Indian public at large exhibited its highest sense of patriotism and came out of the four walls of their houses. During this period there was a very strong public agitation in Assam as well. The day, the Round Table Conference was to start, was a memorable day in the political history of Assam. On that day Assam also, the thousand of men and women, with black flags in their hands and shouting the national slogans, faced the atrocities and the oppressions of their foreign rulers and 'Lathi' charge of the Police personnel. In Nowgong, the police launched a lathi-charge for about five minutes on a non-violent religious 'Shobha-Jatra' and this clearly indicates the oppressive attitude and

¹Hindi Sahitya Ka Vivechanatmak Itihas- Rajnath Sharma - 625.
policy of the police personnel. Thus, the revolution spread all over the state of Assam.

In 1932 Gandhiji resorted to a fast unto death to protest against the formation of a separate constituency for the 'Untouchables' which culminated in 'Poona Pact'. According to this fact seats were reserved separately in Elections for the Untouchables but the diplomacy of separate elections was set aside. The Satyagraha movement continued, more or less, up to 1933-34. In 1934 on his release from Jail Gandhiji launched a Harijan upliftment campaign and he secured an outstanding success therein. In Hindi speaking areas, in between September and October 1934, the doors of about 150 temples opened for Harijans and they were allowed to draw water from the public wells. Community Feasts were held at Bombay, Delhi, Patna, Nagpur and Varanasi to welcome the Harijans. 1 Assam was also widely influenced by the Harijan movement. The restrictions on the entry of Harijans to temples like Baneshwar, Ugrabtara, etc. were withdrawn. Besides the Harijans the down trodden people of other neglected communities were also inducted to Hindu religion; and to welcome them, the community feasts 2 were held. The national movements starting from 1920 awakened a national feeling for the eradication of Untouchability and paved the way for inter-caste marriages resulting in greater.

1 Political History of Assam - Vol-2 - 225.
2 Political History of Assam - Vol-2 - 227.
national consciousness. In 1934, Ganchiji visited Assam which gave vital impetus to this movement.

The year 1942 is a memorable period in the History of the Freedom Movement of India. During this year the congress passed the 'Quit India' resolution to fulfill the wishes and the aspirations of the Indian masses which was mainly an open revolution against the British Government. Before its flames could appeared all around, the Government arrested the top leaders, but it was difficult for them to arrest the pace of the movement. Leaving Schools, Colleges, Courts and offices aside, people throughout in the movement. A few thinkers have observed that the revolution of 1942 was more furious than that of 1857. The Government resorted to physical and mental tortures to depress the movement. In a calculation it has been stated that in 1942, as many as 60, 229 persons were awarded sentence of imprisonment, 940 were shot dead and 1630 were injured. From the political point of view the Assam of 1942 was a 'Disturbed Assam'. With the passing of the 'Quit India' resolution by the Congress, the Volcano was ignited Despite oppression by British Govt., the movement gained a greater momentum. Many persons were shot dead and injured on hoisting the Tri-colour on Government buildings and community fines were imposed in many cases.

1 Assamiya Natya Sahitya - Dr. S. N. Sarma - 282.
In 1943 under league regime Bengal had a famine and had to face natural calamity. Approximately 34 lacs of people had to sacrifice their lives. To their goodluck the people of Assam were never destined to face such an eventuality.

Side by side the non-violence movements of the Congress, the current of an armed revolution also flowed up. The Great names like Chandra Shekhar Azad, Ram Prasad 'Bismil', A-shfaq-ul-la-khan, Bhagat Singh, Udham Singh etc. appeared on the horizon of India. During World War II, Netaji S. C. Bose took up the cause of India's freedom with the assistance of the Axis Powers. With 45 thousand of prisoners of war Indian National Army was organised which has physically captured the areas upto Manipur on the eastern part of India. After the Hiroshima tragedy, the I.N.A. also surrendered along with the Germans and the Japanese. This defeat was no less than a victory. The British Government had the glimpses of the arms and ammunition in the hands of those who were hands folded in their non-cooperation. The prisoners of war of the I.N.A. had to face their trial in Red-Fort, but the Axis Powers had no courage to award them punishment like the prisoners of war of Germany and Japani. The revolution of the Naval Forces in Bombay was the last precursor of the Independence of India. Thereafter as a last resort, after partition of the country the British Govt. thought it in their interest to 'Quit India'.

Economic Environment:

The Gandhian Era from 1936 mainly an era of exploitation and expansion of British Capitalism in India and as also of colonisation. They desired their colonies to become the main source of the supply of the raw-material for the running of their industries. They exported raw material from India. By levying excess taxes on the goods exported from other country, they compelled to sell them on high rates and thus wished to established their monopoly over the Indian market. They imposed direct and indirect taxes on goods produced by the Indian manufacturers so as to compel them for higher costs of production and denying them the free market for the sale of goods and thereby keeping the monopoly over the market for their goods. The first casualty of this policy was the Indian Textile Industry as the Indian Textile Productions could hardly stand in the competitive markets as compared to their goods produced on much lower production cost and of being far better on quality basis. This rendered thousands of Indian weavers out of their jobs and brought them to a point of starvation. Firstly, they established big and large scale industries in India by investing big capitals. The main object behind all these efforts was to exploit the country to the hill. The Indian capitalists and the Indian

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1Discovery of India - Nehru. p. 34-8-9.
Industrialist like the Tatas, Birlas, also fell a prey to their policies. Gandhi's nation-wide call to boycott the British Goods came as blue to the bell for the sale of foreign goods in India which totally paralysed their trade and this extended a new zeal in the Indian industries like sugar, paper, and cement etc. The condition of Assam in this respect, was totally different as there were no industries in Assam before Independence and secondly due to lack of communication facilities in the area, it could hardly afford to present a good market for the British Goods. Besides, the local Cottage Industries of Assam reduced the demand of the British goods to some extent.

Besides, the two world wars the Indian agitations for independence compelled the British Govt. to deal these issues with a firm hand so as to maintain the supplies to their fighting forces and as a consequence thereof a number of taxes in the form of land tax, community fines, taxes on personal property had to be imposed with the sole aim of extracting money and to enrich the Govt. treasury. During the period from 1931-37 Gold worth 24 crores of \( \text{Rs} \) was drained out to England from India\(^1\) which was mainly the net result of exploitation. Assam had also suffer the similar tortures of community fines etc. The armed forces personnel used to enter the houses forcibly and looted the cash, ornaments and

\(^1\) Central Banking Committee Report - Quoted in India Today (R.P. Dutta) - 215.
valuable\textsuperscript{1} and on many occasions the property were put to auction as a consequence of the oppression.\textsuperscript{2} The Zamindari system introduced by the British Govt. gave new openings for the exploitation of the general public at large. The Zamindars, Subedars, the Mahajans and the British rulers had exploited the Indian farmers and the labourers to the maximum and they were the victims of this atrocities and high handedness. In the event of non recovery of revenue and community fines all sorts of community fines were imposed and these led to the miserable conditions, and as such they were hardly any chances for the prosperity of the Indian people. Although during war, certain classes had ample opportunities to amass the wealth but the general public had become extremely poor. The Govt. also did not undertake any efforts to ameliorate their conditions. The Zamindars, the Govt. officials and the Police personnel collectively looted the public\textsuperscript{3} and the middle and lower classes were the main target to face all these atrocities. Like their counter part Hindi speaking regions, the conditions of the people of Assam, were a bit different. The 'Rayat' and labourers were being badly exploited by the Mauzadars. Consequent upon the development of the communication and transport facilities in Assam like the other provinces of India, this gave opportunities for the people from other

\textsuperscript{1}Political History of Assam - Vol. 2 - 74.
\textsuperscript{2}Political History of Assam - Vol. 2 - 74.
\textsuperscript{3}Hindi Sahitya Ka Vivechanatmak Itihas- R.N.Sarma - 601-2.
provinces to come to Assam in search of employment and in furtherance of their trade and settling over this area. This had a very adverse effect on the economy of this province, because the outsiders had their upper hand in controlling it. Gradually the Assamese people were driven to face poverty. They were engulfed in atrocities let lose by the outsiders and specially the Bengali Govt. servants from all sides who treated the local people as downtrodden and thus the Assamese people had been exploited badly. Despite all these the economic condition of the Assamese people were not so bad as was the case with the people of the Hindi speaking region. With their limited needs, free from the fears of the future and self contented, as they are the Assamese people live only in their present - what is before them. They had no repentance for the past and similarly no worries for the future. Nature has gifted so much to the Assamese people that they hardly have to worry themselves for the livelihood and as such they transact their business peacefully and slowly.

Social environment:

The political and economic policies of a country greatly influence the social conditions thereof as the well being of the society largely depends thereon.

The vast majority in the Gandhian Era was illiterate. The people of large were conservative, dogmatic, traditionalist
and believed in super-natural elements. India remained denied off the various scientific developments which were taking place in the West. It was difficult to assess for us the extent to which these scientific development should be taken advantage of. The conservatism kept the people aloof from the light of the various kinds of scientific developments which were taking place in different fields in the world.

The problems relating to the untouchability had weakened the very roots of the social structure. The addiction to the intoxicants like wine and opium had spoiled the very social and family structure of the society. Efforts were therefore undertaken to have a break through these barriers. In the wake of the movements launched by Gandhiji in this regard, like Hindi speaking regions untouchability was gradually disappearing in the State of Assam as well. It is encouraging to say that there was no dowry or 'parda' system in Assam. Although people were at liberty to have more than one wife and the child marriage was also prevalent but like other provinces, it was no problem as such. People in Assam were accustomed to take wine and opium and they treated it as the gift of their gods and goddess. In fact, they were traditionalists.

The society was greatly influenced by western culture and education. Few people had education in schools

\[\text{Congressar Kachniali Radat - B. D. Sarma - 99.}\]
English was the medium of instructions. The western standards of living had vastly influenced the general living conditions of the people and they were embracing Western culture. Similar conditions were prevailing in Assam as well. Calcutta was the centre of Higher education for the people of Assam and the young men after getting their education in Calcutta were dreaming to convert Assam in European Culture.

The two world wars had a devastating results. The ancient culture, religion and high ideals had badly shattered. The scientific advancements had also broken the chairs of caste-system. The economic imbalance had broken the family patterns and as such the joint family system was also shattering. The expansion of education brought with it the progressive trend amongst the people. Due to mal-practices, black-marketing etc., the social life in Assam was not affected as the joint family system was functioning on a sound footing during those days in Assam although the conditions were different in Hindi speaking states. The second world war opened altogether new horizons for the people of Assam which were, hitherto, unknown to them.

For the first the question of women liberation cropped up in this era. During 'Salt-Satyagraha' the arrest of Sarojini Naidu was a great inspiration to the women of India. For the awakening of the women the political consciousness inaugurated by Gandhiji had an important role to
play. During the year 1929-32, more than 3000 women court arrested and underwent various types of imprisonments. They offered 'Dharna' and did not hesitate to 'Ghero' the wine and foreign cloth shops. This reflects the challenge which our women gladly shared. Prior to Gandhian Era the condition of women was highly deplorable as they were victims of the false social customs and traditions. In Gandhian Era for the first time women attained the status of a goddess, mother and an equal partner of life. For the first time they marched shoulder to shoulder with men. Similar conditions also prevailed in Assam and the Assamese women were never lagging behind in their contribution to a greater noble cause of the Nation. Due to non-existence of 'parda' and dowry system the Assamese women were greatly free to resort to any activities as compared to the women folks in other parts of India and this reflects the awareness and awakening of the women for their education and their rights in the social life.

Gandhiji had vehemently criticised the educational policies of the Govt. and during his non-cooperation movement he had also planned for boycotting the schools and Colleges. To his mind, the western education was costly and was against the cultural heritage of this country and it did not offer any opportunities for the students to built up their independent career and at the same time it encouraged the tendency of following the foreign culture.
blindly. New national institutions were, therefore, set up during this period, of which Tilak School of Politics, Lahore, National College, Lahore, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Kasni, Hihar Vidyapeeth, Patna, Mahila Vidyapeeth, Prayag, etc. may well be mentioned for achieving these aims and objectives. In this very context Kamrup Academy, Gauhati, Tezpur Academy, Tezpur, George Institute, Dibrugarh etc., were established in Assam.

The period from 1930-35, was a period of political disappointment. This brought forward two sets of young generations. The first set of youth discarded and opposed the prevailing social sanctions and aimed at the individual well-being and happiness. The other set of people opposed all sortsof atrocities, oppressions etc., rampant in the society and were ready to sacrifice themselves for the independence of the country and the well-being of the society.

'Exasperated youths stirred by feeling of patriotism, reported to violent revolutionary methods with a conviction that they would emancipate their motherland from the foreign yoke'.

After the failure of Gandhi-Erwin Pact, this very revolutionary group comprising of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguri etc., become extremely active.

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1Hindi Sahitya Ka Vivechanatmak Itihas - R.N.Sarma - 625.
2Political History of Assam - Vol.-2 - 271.
3Political History of Assam - Vol.-2 - 271.
In Hindi speaking states, this political disappointment had its reflections on the social life as well. Its affect on social life of Assam was not so conspicuous as the number of revolutionaries in the State of Assam was ^meagre . In 1942, the second world was on the first and the Quit India Movements on the another, brought a socio-political disappointment.

It may, thus, be well concluded that the British Government oppressed the Indian public at large and gradually drew the nation towards poverty on the one hand and enriched the British treasury with the wealth exploited from India and aimed to cripple the national growth of India. This, however, prevailed for about 200 years and they managed to well-set-up themselves on the soil of this country. But with the dawn of Gandhiji on the political horizon of India, a new hope inspired the masses and the entire nation unitedly stood to oppose their foreign rulers.

Like Hindi speaking regions, the Britishers did not get facilities for political, financial and social exploitation of Assam as the movements launched by Gandhiji had brought greater awakening amongst the people of this region and the masses had freed themselves from the fears of all types of terrorism and oppression by their self reliance. Although, Geographically speaking, Assam by at a far distant corner of the country, but according to Sri Hari Prasad Neog,
the congress movements paved the path for the Assamese people to co-operate with the main stream of the Country.¹

(Environment prevailing in the post independence era).

Political Environment:

As a result of attaining independence on 15th of August, 1947, the dark era of the people of India was over and as a consequence thereof new horizons opened for the people. The co-opted position of the rulers which they had attained by implementing the policy of 'Divide and Rule' were no more a yoke to us. Instead, our own representatives were the masters of our destiny.

Politically speaking, with the independence, the country had to face many great hurdles. The communal riots and the problems of the refugees - as a result of two nations theory were the main amongst the problems to be faced and tackled by the newly born nation. The partition of the Country brought with it the communal riots and its continued rendered thousands of innocent people homeless and destitutes taking a huge death toll. A large number of such refugees from East Pakistan came over to Assam as well, like the Hindi

¹Vinash Shatabdir Assamiya Sahitya, edited by H. Bargohain - 128.
belt, which had to bear the refugees problem coming from the West Pakistan, and they had to be rehabilited in the refugee camps which in itself was a great problem unlike the Hindi speaking. Assam had to face the problem of refugees from East Pakistan for many years. Later on, with the increasing atrocities by the military dictatorship regime of the West Pakistani domination over the East Pakistan and with the emergence of awakening for their freedom from the West Pakistani rulers, a new wave of tortures, brutalities fell over the heads of the East Pakistani people and Assam had again to face the problems of the refugee infiltration and in the name shelter they settled themselves here for ever. The problem of refugees infiltrating in Assam is thus quite different as faced by the other parts of the country. While at the time of partition the Pakistani Hindus had to take refuge in India after leaving their properties there, in Assam besides Hindu refugees, the muslim refugees also infiltrated in huge numbers. Before independence, as there was the Muslim League Government in Assam, and the Congress party was in opposition, hence the Muslim League had hatched a plan to annex Assam with Pakistan. As a result of all this, the year 1979 had to witness an agitation for the repatriation of these foreign nationals. The Hindi speaking regions had never had the occasions to face such problems and therefore, had no such occasions for such agitations from the masses.
In 1980, while still young as a free nation, India had to face several attacks by other countries as a result of which there were innumerable problems in our progress. The Pakistani invasion in 1947 and 1965, the Chinese attack of 1962 and the Bangladesh Liberation Movement in 1971 had thrashed an undeclared war on India and these are such incidents which deserve a due mention in the political history of India. These incidents of invasion present a commendable position of the Jawans of Indian Army as also their sense of patriotism. These conflicts led to many reactions in the Indian society. The people of Assam witnessed the similar conditions during the Chinese aggression and the conflicts of Bangladesh. The people of these two provinces had amply witnessed the disastrous situations prevailing in was-times.

The Indian National Congress adopted its new constitution in 1949 and new aims and objectives were declared in the post-independence era wherein it was stated that now the congress would undertake to establish political, economic and social equality to the citizens of the country. In 1950 during the Congress Session held at Nasik under the Presidentship of Sri Tandon, there Congress party stood at the verge of bifurcation. Acharya Kriplani, who had lost the elections against Rajarshi Tandon, established a 'Democratic Front' (Janaetantric Morcha) which was against the constitution of the Congress party. They were pressurised to dissolve
their group whereupon all of them resigned from the Congress and with their followers set up a new independent party - Kishan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) in 1951 and these people had intended to make this new party as a major opposition group. Due to purposeful intervention of Nehru and Maulana Azad, the aforesaid opposition group was dissolved without any pre-condition but the internal conflict which had except in the Congress Party could not come to an end. In Assam also, with the collective efforts of Yogen Saikia and Pritambar Deo Goswami, a separate Assam Pradesh Congress Workers 'Sangha' began to sprout but due to patching up of the fractional elements in Congress party on an all India basis the, these efforts had also failed.†

In 1948, on the murder of Gandhiji, there were similar reactions in Assam as were rampant in the Hindi speaking provinces.

After the framing of the constitution of India by the constituent Assembly, India was declared a Sovereign Socialist Republic on 26th of January, 1950. In 1951, on the basis of this new constitution, a decision was taken to hold countrywide General Elections and in the General Elections held in 1952 the Congress party came to power. The Leftists, socialist and the communists had, secured a few seats in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies. In 1962 the popularity of Congress began to decline and as a

†Merai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 364
result thereof in 1963 in several States the Congress had to face defeat. In 1964 after the sad demise of Pandit Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India and thereafter Shrimati Indira Gandhi came to power and these are the facts of the political history and memorable incidents. During this period, several times, the Congress party came to a verge of bifurcation and several parties sprouted during this period. In 1977, under the guidance of the Socialist Leader Sri Jay Prakash Narain Janata Party was formed which is also a memorable incidence of the political history of India. Every political incidence in the post-independence era was also influencing the political position of Assam.

On December 29, 1959 there was the demand for the re-structuring and re-organisation of the States on the linguistic basis and therefore, a Commission as such was constituted for this purpose. On the recommendation of the commission set up for the re-structuring of the States, new States were formed and there were adjustments and alterations in the boundaries of the old and eastwhile states. On this basis Punjab was restructured in three new states viz. Panjab, Hariyana and Himachal Pradesh. Similarly Assam was bifurcated and Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram etc. came to existence. With the formation of these States, more or less the linguistic problems had also come into existence. Due to lack of experience on the part
of our leaders and also due to the neglecting attitude of the Central Government towards Assam, the main reasons responsible for the division of Assam were the rivalries growing up in the North Eastern States.\footnote{Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 540.} Virtually speaking, in the post-independence era nothing was done towards national integration.

During the regime of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, there were several ups and downs in the Indian political arena. For making India a socialist nation, several important measures were taken in the National interest as well as in the interest of the Congress party. Of these, the Nationalisation of Banks and abolition of special privileges and Privy Purse of the erstwhile state rulers, nationalisation of the Oil Companies, declaration of emergency, introduction of 20 point programme for the eradication of poverty, the measures undertaken to stop communalism and to uphold the national integration were a few to be mentioned as such. The ambition to keep the Congress in power, despite powerful opposition, was also one of such factors. Apart from these, the encouragement to the Non-Alignment, constant opposition of the Imperialist powers, Disarmament of the atomic weapons for world peace were the main aims for which she adopted a firm policy and offered guiding directives to the world at large. These developments in the national and international
politics had their influences in the political activities of Assam as well mainly because the political activities of Assam were being run on the pattern set forth by the Centre.

In the Post-Independence era, the religions and communal problems became a challenge to the Indian politics. Constant attention was paid by the Government to the need of maintaining religions and communal harmony as also the national integration. It has been observed that during the period between 1947 to 1980, there were roughly twenty thousand communal riots and during the period from 1969 to 1978 nearly 1,600 people were killed and 16,000 people were injured. It has been mentioned earlier that the fury of communal agitation in Hindi speaking provinces was greater as compared to Assam. But in the later part of this century i.e. the seventies strong and aggressive communal agitations erupted in the State of Assam, as well.

Economic Environment:

There was no change in the economical condition of our country till 1950-51, but after that it began to change in economic policy of India. The work of the national planning was expanded. There was famine on account of warfare and natural calamity. Government ration-shop began...

\[^1\] Sunday - 3-9 April '83 Page - 7 and 20.
to run in the cities and towns of the country. The Government made an arrangement for purchasing and distributing, but in this arrangement there were corruption among administrative class of Government and it led to excess exploitation of the people. The Five year planning plays an important role in the all round development of the country. There was an effort to increase agricultural and industrial production along with this paths of employment which was made to employ thousands of unemployed youths.

Thousands of youths are unemployed here because of the lack of establishment of heavy industry in Assam. The Assamese people have been deprived of employment in the Central offices in spite of being well educated.

In this period national income and the income of the people has enhanced continuously. National income has increased by nationalization of Banks, Coal, Mineral, Oil etc. Personal income and production have enhanced because of industrialization. After independence for many years India was not self dependent in the field of agriculture and food. But now in this connection we are self reliant. This way, in Assam the production of tea, mineral oil, timber etc. has increased day by day and so the country got foreign

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2 Harai Joa Dinbor - U. Sarma - 412.
exchange. But there was no progress in Assam with the progress of our country. Taking the things from here the central Government exploited Assam as the English Government did before independence.\^1 The view of the central Government can not be said good in respect with the arrangement of railways of Assam, construction of the Brahmaputra Bridge and transport. That is why the wealthy Assamese people have become beggars now-a-days.\^2 Economic exploitation on the people is taking place excessively. This exploitation has occurred in our society from two angles - one is from Government officials and second is from capitalist and money landers. That is why the number of the poor has increased. In 1972-75 there was so much exploitation that the poor became more poor and the rich became more richer.\^3 The food problem was serious in the country till 1950. But now, after 33 years, half of the people in our Indian society are thinking for their livelihood, clothing and homes (houses). The economic condition of the people of Assam and the Hindi speaking States cannot be said good along with the economical condition of the country. The country is indebted to international capitals of millions of rupees. Natural calamity, political stunt (movement) and foreign capital weakens the economical condition of

\^1Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 542.
\^2Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 542.
\^3Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 542.
the country. Nationalized Banks have helped a great deal in the progress of national economy, but in this connection the role of nationalized banks of Assam is full of despair.

**Social Environment :**

After the achievement of freedom the remnant inspiration also disappeared and economic problem became the main problem of social life.¹ There arose a new hope in the mind of the common people of our country before independence that would not worry for livelihood, clothing and houses, but instantly these hope were nipped in the bud. Slow economic progress of the country, exploitation of the capitalists, tyranny, outrage and injustice of the wealthy persons, brokers, usurer and treachery of the so called politicians, corruption and black marketing of the traders have made the mind of Indian people doubtful for future.

Important steps have been taken for the development of women in this period. On the recommendation of Rao Committee the government have tried best for all around development of women by inheriting the paternal property and empowering to take child in lap.

Paying allowance to the widows, arrangement of

¹Hindi tatha Bangla Natakon Ka Tulanatmak Adhyayan-K.Sengupta-162.
co-education, construction of separate Schools-Colleges, arrangement for women to give service in the offices, to give them equal remuneration as the man gets are the introductory steps in this connection. The condition of women has improved.¹ Women have got convenience to go out due to the rapid progress of women education. Women can work with man.² In Assam certainly girls do not become the partner of paternal property.³ There is no 'parda-pratha' (curtain custom) in Assam. Here women have complete liberty as the men possess. So they have got seat in service-occupation, field of education. That is why they have become self dependent. Growth of population has helped in deforming the social environment. The number of Bengali refugees is included in it. With the increase of educational institutions, the number of educated youths has also increased. But defective educational policy of the country has misled the unemployed educated youths.⁴ After independence the youth hoped for future brightness, but now there is no hope of fulfilling the same. So the youth class of the society are full of the emotion of revolt. They have started indisciplined, rude and aimless agitation against tradition and social status. This has made the youth

²Assamia Sahityar Sambhatmak Itibritta-Dr. S.N. Sharma - 427.
³Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 448.
⁴Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 544.
rude, in-disciplined, immoral, selfish, lover of gherao. According to the employment office the number of unemployed youth was 17,60,000 in 1970, in which there were 1,000,000 matriculates and 25000 graduates. For the lack of selection of students according to merit, ability and brilliance, the important means is being wasted. Favour and corruption in the Government - non Government service have enhanced the worth in the youths. The premises of the University has become the shelter of unsocial elements. This is seen in Assam also.

Impolitic conduct, blood-relation and corruption has gone so high in the society in post independent India, that the middle class and low class of people have become helpless. Its overbearing influence is in Government office as well as in private offices. It has deep rooted in the every layer of society and in the every department of the Government. Money allotted for the re-organisation goes into the pockets of corrupted politicians, Government officials and so called helpers of the leaders. The full benefits of community development and other planning are not enjoyed by common people due to corrupted officials. The national leadership has failed to improve the standard of living of public in changing the condition of society.

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1 Hindi Sahitya Ka Vivechanatmak Itihas - R.N.Sharma - 672.
4 Assamia Sahitya Ka Samikshatmak Itibritta (Contd. to P/30)
5 -Dr. S.N. Sharma - 426.
In the last seventh decade, the Government officials and the traders have exploited the common people by their impolitic conduct and corruption. During the emergency period the tyranny and exploitation of the Government officials are well-known to everybody. A state of impolicy, love for kith and kin, exploitation and corruption prevails in Assom also at present. The bad effects of Western literature, culture, and magazines belonging to Hindi cheap films and sex are seen in social life in the form of deformed appearance. There is no traditional relation between man and woman due to the liberty of women and their self-dependence. Corruption and prostitution began to spread in the name of love-marriage, wife and husband. Re-marriage, free-movement of youths and maids and abortion began to take place in the modern society. Unsuccessful marriage life, dissatisfaction, doubt and non-co-operation in family life have made our social life hollow and artificial. After post-independence, problems and crimes related to prostitution have gone much higher than pre-independence.

Law has been passed to stop the dowry system in Hindi speaking States but in vain. Even in educated society bad customs like dowry is prevailing. Curtain practice (parda-pratha) has been abolished. There is no such curtain

1 Herai Joa Dinbor - D. Sarma - 605-6.
3 A.S.A. Aur A.H. Sahitya - Dr. K.V. Mishra - 322.
(Contd from P/29)
custom in Assam. Even after thirty three years of independence the social problems of our country have not been solved, on the contrary, price-rise, deficiency, lack of morality, and old value, community-conflict, corruption and exploitation have increased by the capitalists and usurers, purchasing of votes of public at the time of election, treachery of the Governments, increase of opposition party have all given birth of despair among the optimists. When there was no rapid change in economic and social condition, then it was possible to be departed.\(^1\) In this changing circumstances the feeling of unity and good will of the rural people has vanished. Now-a-days the village has become a common place of robbers, thief and different selfish politicians. The so called politicians buy the votes of the villagers by dividing them on the basis of religion, community and caste. The different class of people especially the capitalists, beaurocrat and leaders break the back-bones of the villagers by tringular exploitation.\(^2\) This wheal of exploitation has been running since the pre-independence in Assam. That is why in the villages of Assam and the complete Hindi States there are malice, conflict, deceit conspiracy among the people. Really seeing the present condition one can see the indication of anarchy.\(^3\) The modern age of science has economically

\(^1\) Assamiya Sahityar Samikshatmak Itivritta - Dr. S.N. Sarma - 426.

\(^2\) A.S.A. Aur A.H. Sahitya - Dr. K.V. Mishra - 318.

centralised the human-relation. Men have scattered in different places for earning their lively hood. The existence of joint family is diminishing day by day. At present every earning member of the family is making a separate dwelling place of his own.¹ This sort of work begins in pre-independence days in Hindi speaking States. The remaining joint families are being divided in this changing environment. In Assam this type of work has begun in post independence period. Disappearing the old tradition the joint family system has been abolished and it has been divided into small family based on wife and the materiality has been given more importance.² It may be concluded that in the social and economical condition of Hindi speaking States and Assam is similar. The scientific age has played an important role to unite the age long tendency of both places. More change and conflict have taken place in post independence period than pre-independence period. Misunderstanding and quarrel for power among the political leaders, excess number of opposition parties, tendency of changing the membership of party, lack of faith in opposition party of the people and corruption of ruling party—all these are seen distinctly. Triangular exploitation in the law and middle class of people can be seen everywhere. Work done on the name of low and middle class of people has become a show, a fun. So economic disparity has increased. Our economic trouble has increased

¹Hindi Natakompar Pashchatya Prabhav- Dr. S. Tripathi - 240.
²Assamia Sahityar Samikshatmak Ititritta -Dr.S.N.Sharma-427.
for not utilising the natural wealth. This economic problem has broken the waist of our social life. Corruption, impolicy, love of kith and kin, price-rise and injustice are visible around social life. Women got liberty in Assam and Hindi speaking States, as well as joint family was divided into small family, but dowry practice is increased day by day. As the contact with the western literature and culture is increased, so the bad elements of society disorder and prostitution is also increased. Technical and vocational institutions were not established according to the increased number of population, so the most of the students fall a prey to unemployment, dissatisfaction, agitation, meeting, demand, strike, lock-up etc. Due to the spread of education, generation struggle began to take place. Although there are minor disparities in economical, social and political fields, there is no remarkable inequality in post independence period in both Hindi speaking States and Assam.

Environmental impact upon the Dramas:

Literature is the mirror of society and age. As society is changeable, social change takes place in both forms good and evil. Changing environment of changing time acts upon literature.

During the British rule, the English adopted a policy of political, economical and social tyranny, exploi-
tion, impolicy, corruption and injustice to people. Thousands in numbep martyrized for the freedom of the country and to stop their tyranny, exploitation etc. in India. The English wanted to root out patriotism from the mind of Indians. The dramatists have adopted the stories of immortal martyrs to express nationalism. Innumerable dramas have been written on martyrs. In Assam dramas on Maniram Dewan, Labhita, Tikendrajit, Kushal Konwar etc. are worth mentioning. In Hindi, dramas have been written on the martyrdom of Chandrashekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh etc. Some dramas have been named as 'Amar-Balidan', 'Raktadan' etc. Besides the dramas based on the English period some dramas have been written on the immortal themes of national consciousness of other periods of Assam and Indian history. 'Vitasta Ki Laharen', 'An Ka Man', 'Vis-pan', 'Chhatra-Sal', 'Shapath' belong to Hindi. Assamese dramas are as follows: 'Arimatta', 'Purnanand Muragohain', 'Chhatrapati Shivaji' etc. In the post independence period during the outer invasion on India, some dramas arouse the national feeling among the common people and jawans of India. They are 'Deshar Sainik', in Assamese and in Hindi they are 'Morcha' 'Desh Ke Liye', 'Hajipur Ka Darra', etc. National feeling is available in Hindi mythological drama also. Such as - 'Devyani' (Bandhu) etc. There is influence (impact) of divine personality of Mahatma Gandhi on Assamese and Hindi dramas. Impression of Gandhism can be seen on 'An Ka Man' in Hindi, and on 'Upahar', 'Samadhan' etc. dramas in Assamese.
There is an impact of exploitation, corruption and bribery on the innumerable dramas of Assamese and Hindi e.g. 'Kuhasa Aur Kiran', 'Ved Ka Suraj', 'Vijnan Ka Chand', 'Andhi Gali', 'Apni Kamai' etc. in Hindi and 'Mantrir Hukum', 'Natun Purush', 'Natun Samaj', etc. in Assamese. With the impact of Western (culture) 'Jiwan Britta' reveals the picture of disintegration of joint family in Assamese and the Hindi drama is 'Tutte Parivesh'. The youths of our country have been depicted in two ways (forms). A number of youths who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of country and are optimists and the other class of youths are indisciplined, frustrated, entangled with sex and unemployed. 'Kuhasa Aur Kiran', 'Rakta Kamal', 'Vah Desh Jaha Bhukh Nahin', 'Sahi Rasta' in Hindi and 'Herowa Sur', 'Janma', 'Deshar Mati', 'Natun Purush' etc. in Assamese belong to the first and 'Chindiyon Ki Ak Jhalor', 'Abdulla Diwana', 'Andhi Aur Ghar', 'Tutte Parivesh' etc. in Hindi and 'Abelar Nat', 'Ghat Pratighet', 'Kunja Kutir' etc. belong to the second group. There is description of the helplessness of the economic condition of the middle class of people in our dramas. One can well surmise (estimate) the economic condition of our country by it. Hindi dramas—'Adhe Adhure', 'Andhi Gali' and Assamese dramas 'Abelar Nat' 'Pahila Tarika', 'Nimila Anka' are worth mentioning.

Our country had to face with peculiar environment in society after the second great war. Its impact can be
seen in 'Adhe Adhure', 'Tutte Parivesh', 'Rat Rani' (Hindi). 'Janma', 'Nimila Ank' (Assamese). Indiscipline of family-life can be seen in 'Adhe Adhure', 'Tutte Parivesh', 'Alag Alag Raste' (Hindi) and 'Abelar Nat', 'Nimila Ank', 'Jiwan Britta' etc. (Assamese). So the generation struggle came forward because of the adoption of new values in place of old one. Many dramas were written, keeping in view of its influence e.g. 'Yuge Yuge Kranti', 'Na Dharm Na Iman', 'Andhi Aur Ghar' (in Hindi), 'Jama', 'Navyug Abhijan', 'Bagh', 'Nayika Natyakar' etc. Ideal and morality have lapsed which have influence our dramas, such as - 'Mistar Abhimanyu', 'Dharti Aur Akash' (Hindi), 'Chirantan' (Assamese) etc.

Once there were mainly political, religious, economical and social problems but now besides these, personal and family problems have become full of complication. Eventually the impact of Western literature can not be ignored. Much importance has been given upon internal conflict rather than outer conflict in it. Different problems pertaining to marriage and love, corruption, wenching and sexual appetite are included in our Hindi and Assamese dramas. There is no shortage (want) of evolutionists in our society who are conservative, but they show themselves modernists. They make their life dolorous in this kind of 'Tag of War'. They make their married life miserable by breaking tradition some times. They are
neither able to imitate Western ideal nor Indian ideal. In such a condition, it give birth to a new kind of problem. We have innumerable dramas underlining such type of problems. Such as 'Rat Rani', 'Tutte Paribesh', 'Adhe-Adhure', 'Karphu', 'Kaid Aur Dhan' (Hindi). 'Mrinal Mahi', 'Nayika Natyakar', 'Kankan', 'Nimila Anka', 'Abelar Nat' etc (Assamese) 'Anjo Didi' is the only family drama of Hindi in which there is tragic condition due to the emotional shock on the family dignity. The revolt of 1857 is the clear expression of sorrow of Indians against the foreign Government. Tyranny, exploitation, impolicy done by the English on Indians replied by agitation, fasting, strike and turbulence. In their regime the farmer agitation began against the English for the imposition of excess tax on land in the historical place of Patharughat in the undivided district of Darrang in Assam. The drama entitled 'Patharughatar Ran' describes the farmers' agitation. Exploitation, tyranny impolicy of the usurers, land lords and brokers have been narrated in our dramas. The youths are seen in helping the poor and public from the clutches of exploiters, tyrannical persons. 'Bhagirath Ke Bete', 'Kuhasa Aur Kiran', (Hindi), 'Janma', 'Natun Samaj', 'Son Rup Neochi', 'Natun Purush' (Assamese) are worth mentioning in this connection.

The impact of community and religious problems jealousy, intotarence etc. can be seen directly or indirectly in our Hindi dramas. In most of the Hindi dramas, slogan has been raised against communalism. In the historical
dramas of 'Premi', Govind Vallabh Pant, Jagdish Chandra Mathur, Uday Shankar Bhatt, Vishnu Prabhakar there is the description of communal problems. In the historical drama 'Labhita' and social dramas - 'Magribar Azan' and 'Sakon' represent the above fact vividly.

There is an impression of ideal form of women in the Hindi and Assamese mythological dramas, but other aspects of woman have been depicted in the historical dramas. Different problems pertaining to woman have been described in the modern social dramas.

Social awakening, nationalism, right-loving and feeling of self dependence have been described in the present modern social dramas. In these dramas injustice done towards women has been opposed and at the call of time divorce or separation and re-marriage with the person whom she or he loved are recognised in our dramas. Some problems regarding widow-marriage have been considered. It is not irrelevant to say that impact of reprehensible character Munch of 'Doll's house' can be seen on the most of woman characters of Hindi and Assamese dramas. The direct and indirect impact of occasional following Hindi and Assamese dramas:

'Kaid Aur Udan', 'Alag-Alag Raste', in Hindi, 'Pratibad', 'Nayika Natyakar' and 'Biswarupa' in Assamese. But most of the dramas contain scene of tyranny and exploitation
done on women, e.g. 'Jabala', 'Mrinal Mahi' (Assamese) 'Suhag Bindhi', 'Andha Kuyan' (Hindi). In reality there is impact of women agitation of modern age on our dramas. On the eve of independence there was a tumult all over India due to the sadness and fatal policy of the English and the leaders & followers of league and out of famine and infectious disease. Man began to eat the flesh of man or began to eat the flesh of inedible animals. Man was compelled to sell his children for money. The impact of this terrible and sorrowful circumstances can be seen in the Hindi dramas 'Kasai' and 'Azadi Ke Bad'.

The impact of dowry practice, prevalent in Hindi speaking areas, can be seen in 'Alag-Alag Raste'. With the rapid current of time our people have been attracted towards Western culture. A class of youths want to make India as a colony of Western culture. This is also a cause of generation struggle. There starts the conflict of idealism and realism. 'Saput', 'Dharti Aur Akash' and 'Mandanda', 'Mantrir Hukum', 'Anadhikar', 'Chirantan' etc dramas depict this conflict. Man has began to surrender himself before money. 'Dharti Aur Akash', 'Rupaya Tumhen Kha Gaya' and 'Biswarupa' etc dramas describe (demonstrate) the modern relation of man with money.

Under the flag of absoluteness, India is effortful for disarmament and to set up peace in the world, which are
very essential for the development of the countries of the third world. 'Shanti-dut' a Hindi drama indicates the same attempts.

There is lack of sentiment of service in the modern politicians. Availing facility the politician wants to be victorious by hook or crook on the basis of caste-religion and selfishness. 'Bakri', 'Sahi Rasta', 'Mistar Abhimanyu' etc. (Hindi) and 'Mantrir Hukum', 'Janma', 'Moja Shot Diyak' etc (Assamese) reveal the hollowness of so called politicians.

It can be said in conclusion that the shadow of the change which has taken place in the environment of country with the change of time can be seen in literature.

As in the every branch of history of literature the chirping (voice) of time bound tendency (mentality) is heard, in the same way, the chirping of the tendency of time and dormant place is heard in the womb of our Assamese and Hindi dramas. Without viewing (seeing) this, the study of dramas will remain incomplete.

Classification:

The division of Assamese and Hindi of post independent age may easily be done on the basis of subject, matter, tendency of drama, 'Ras' and purpose or objective
etc. During this period, many dramas have been composed and published in both the languages. From the view point of the theme, many dramas based on new plots with modern techniques have been written and published on experimental basis during the said period. Judged from the tendency of dramas, it may well be said that it undergoes changes in accordance with the aptitude of people. It is quite natural that the dramatists always keep the prevailing motion of the society before their eyes when they compose dramas. Division of dramas, made of an the basis of sentiment (Ras), generate tragic and comic elements giving birth to tragedy and comedy in the field of dramas. But the conception of tragedy has changed agulf today. This makes the definition of tragedy widely moderated and invents a new definition for it. Over and above these two varieties tragedy and comedy, some dramas are there which can not be ascertained. Some critics criticise few dramas of such type under the head of 'Melo-drama'. It can be classified from the point of view of the objective also. One or more than one objectives may be lying underneath the theme of the dramas. Viewing from this angle, it is assumed that this classification is proper and just. But the objectives of the dramas written in post independent age in Assamese and Hindi are so extensive that it makes such classification and the study of the dramas very complicated. It is, therefore, easy and wise to classify the dramas from the view point of subject-matter. The classification and the study
of the Assamese and Hindi dramas, based on the subject matter will be carried out as follows:—

(1) Mythological Plays,
(2) Historical Plays,
(3) Social Plays, and
(4) Various other kinds of Plays.

Let us try to comparative study of post independence Hindi and Assamese plays under these heads.