All plays are generally social plays. 'Social' means related with social life. Society is not aloof from the common practices, usage and customs of the people even when they are related to some particular time or to some particular family. The background of the mythological and the historical plays are based on social facts, because the plays, known as mythological or historical, can never be differentiated fully from social plays. The term 'social' has been used in a very wide sense, but we have used it in the narrow sense here; and leaving the mythological and historical problems aside, we make the field for social plays a narrow one. In this context Dr. Rama Sen Gupta says that the plays which deals with supernatural, historical, social and future occasions and human mind in such a way that they reflect the social problems, are social plays. From this point of view, plays, known as mythological or historical, may be called social plays. The society is the collective form of human being. So, the individual life can not be abnegated in the social life. Here the term individual has been used in the

1 Hindi sur Bangla Natakon Ka Tulanatmak Adhyayan - Dr. R. Sen Gupta
general sense. The social life is formed with the hopes and fears, joys and happiness and sorrows and sufferings of common people which are reflected in the social plays. In mythological - historical plays the characters are significantly particular personages like Sage Durvasa, King Harischandra, King Ashok etc. while they are common ordinary people in social plays.

Today the term 'Social' has been used in a new sense. With our increasing relationship with the west, our society widens its scope. Now, it includes political, economic, religious, moral, cultural and psychological aspects of life. All plays written on any aspect of social life or basing on any aspect of social life may be called social plays. The last two world-wars shattered the world in a way from which social life could never escape. As a result the very foundation of social life has been topsyturvyed. The society witnessed an unknown but real and naked picture of life. The inevitable result of this was that we learn the different problems of man and the different problems arising out of the different processes and environment of living. The problem of the individual, of the families and of the society began to be more and more complicated. As a result of the two world-wars, the relationship of our country with other parts of the world began to increase. Along with other relationship we began to learn about the works of the great literatures and
thinkers. The dramas of great dramatists like Ibsen, Shaw, Garibaldi, Chekhov, O'Neil etc. made us think about our traditional subjects and industrialisation anew.

Our problem plays are only the imitation of the intellectual works of the western intellectuals. Although some problems are more or less depicted in these plays, yet there are material and idealistic differences between them and western plays as regards to the dramatization of problems. It is not improper to mention here that the social, religious, economic and ethical problems of our society have been changed to individual and domestic ones under the changed circumstances. In reality, our problems are changed from corpulent to a minute one and from minute to more minute ones. The plot of social plays related to every problem of modern life like establishment in life, domestic complication, showiness, imbalanced conjugal love, sexual urge, degradation, suspicion, dis-satisfaction, social bindings, economic hazards, inferiority and superiority complexes, love-marriage and unsuccessful marriages, etc. It is important to note that all these problems are the problems of middle class families of towns only.

Because our playwrights are not very much interested in the weal and woe or the life style of the rich and the poor. Reasons for these are not far to seek as the playwrights are from such middle class families, and as such they are not so much in touch with the individual, domestic and social problems, needs and necessities, sorrows and
sufferings of both the rich and the poor class than of their own. For these reasons, the plays in which the problems of the higher or the lower class people were going to be depicted, can never become purely problem plays as they could not reflect the life of these people due to lack of knowledge of the life style of these people. Although problems are there, yet these problems are not depicted in an intellectual and logical manner and at the same time in a balanced style. So these plays side-tracked from their own class.

Today our traditional and idealist plays are replaced by the western realistic plays. The false promises of the leaders, exploitation, oppression, corruption, degradation, bribery, hopeless condition of the young generation, false tricks in the name of development of the country, fall in the economic position of the families, domestic and social indiscipline, awaking of woman, sexual insatiability and perversion under changed circumstances, lack of understanding between husband and wife, change in the ethical aspect and values of life, the materialistic conflict of the new generation etc. are the realities of the modern era. The individual, domestic or social life of an individual at present is inter connected with these problems. It may be said that all 'ism's of various western writers are reflected in our plays. Many people are influenced by the psychological sex-theories. Under such changed circumstances, our tradi-
-tional ideals got a great shock and our traditionalists are compelled to accept the new one.

Social plays are classified through several viewpoints. The division of plays into comedy and tragedy from the point of passion is a very old one. It is not proper to classify a play as tragedy only because of death, sorrow, and trouble at the end of the play. In reality, it is necessary that plays are to be classified into tragedy and comedy only considering the total influence over the mind of the reader or the audience after its depiction. But it is not easy to classify all plays under this principle. From the point of the problems, plays may be classified into political, economic, religious, ethical, social, etc. It is new to classify social plays into domestic and social ones considering the environment and limitation. But Hindi and Assamese plays based on purely domestic or social problems are very limited. Therefore, without going to analyse and classify the plays on this basis, we shall humbly try to classify them on the basis of the problems they deal with.

On this basis the social plays in Hindi and Assamese may be classified into four:

I) Plays concerning problems of sex and married life,
II) Plays concerning economic problems,
III) Plays concerning social and domestic problems,
IV) Plays concerning political problems.
I) Plays concerning problems of sex and married life:

These plays may be subdivided into three classes:

a) Problems of incongruous marriage:

Marriage has been regarded as sacred and eventful reformation for keeping civilisation and culture alive in our social life. If the husband and wife are not of the same status or there is disagreement between them a sacred marriage turns into a failure. Here 'same status' means that there should be a balance between the husband and the wife as regards to physical and mental qualities; knowledge and education; ideals and understandings; dealings and behaviour; and their age. Although marriage is a mental and social binding, it is a contract at the same time. Today being an 'Era of Science', marriage is neither regarded as a reformation nor as an act of fate. It is necessary that there should be consent of both the husband and the wife in a marriage. In spite of its sacredness, it is a social contract. So, for the success of a marriage, it should be established on an equal basis of both the parties, otherwise it turns into an illegitimate connection between a man and a woman. To understand marriage as means of the fulfilment of physical or sexual
Desire is to forget its prime aim. As a result a married life becomes unhappy. There are several plays both in Hindi and Assamese depicting the adverse effect of incongruous marriage. Here mention may be made to 'Jiwan Britta' by Ram Goswami and 'Daktor' by Vishnu Prabakar. In 'Jiwan Britta' - Tapan, a member of a middle class family, married a rich girl Pratibha and lived separately from his parent. They were not only unhappy with this marriage but began to poison the whole atmosphere of their families. When Pratibha compared the status of her parent with her own lot and could not follow the ideals of her parent, she became indisciplined, instiated, arrogant and prepared to live the life of a prostitute. She began to think that their only son 'Sonmoni' was the iron-chain that fettered her. In the Hindi drama - 'Daktor' - the difference between the husband the wife began to be magnified. The marriage between Satish Chandra and Madhu Laxmi was celebrated at a very young age. Satish Chandra carried his studies and became an engineer. When Satish Chandra thought of his uneducated bride, he thought that she was not fit for an engineer like him and the present society. Because she was not able to go ahead with the modern society. So, Madhu Laxmi was quite out dated for his society. Centring round this view-point, their life began to fall apart. Of course, Madhu Laxmi under a nick-name, Anita studied medical course and became a doctor with the help of her brother Madhab.
In both the Hindi and the Assamese plays, uneasiness and conflict began to grow between the husband and the wife after marriage. The conflict in the Assamese play was the result of the imbalance in marriage between rich and middle class while it was between educated and uneducated in the Hindi play.

b) **Problems of sexual perversion and licentiousness:**

In both the Assamese and the Hindi plays, sexual perversion and licentiousness began to be regarded as one of the prime problems in this changed social circumstances. It is spread up among the educated society in such a large way that it becomes almost an epidemic. Nowadays, all men and women have given a new shape to the society after following the western style blindly. Wherever and whenever they are influenced by the western idealism, there is degradation and suffocation. It also helps in multiplying the problems women as regards to their happiness and freedom. They undoubtedly attain self-sufficiency separated them from the men and increased degradation and suffocation. One of the root causes of suicide, illicit love, foeticide, divorce, illicit connection between brothers and sisters, dissatisfaction etc. is sex-perversion. Among the educated section of the middle class society this tendency is much more in the girls than in the boys.
The sex perversion or licentiousness has been exaggerated to mile post of progress in the name of sex psychology. The plays like 'Adhe Adhure' (Mohan Rakesh), 'Karpum' (Dr. Lal), 'Udan' (Upendra Nath Ashok), 'Kisidanak' (P.N. Sharma), 'Na dharam Na Iman' (Rebatia Sharma Sharma), 'Patit Suman' (Gobinda Das) in Hindi and 'Jiwan Britta' (Ram Goswami), 'Pratibhad' (Anil Choudhury), 'Nayika Natyakar' & 'Mrinal Mahi' (Satya Prasad Barua), 'Samadhi' (Ananda Kumar), 'Chirantan' (Anil Choudhury) in Assamese try to depict a general picture of sex perversion. Most of the female characters due either to suppressed sex desires or to unsatiated and dissatisfied marriages indulge in illicit love with persons other than their husbands secretly in fear of their society or their families. We find such sex perversion in Mohan Rakesh's 'Adhe Adhure'. Sabitri was from a middle class family and was the only earning member of her family and her husband was a 'defeated person in the struggle of life'. Sabitri's boss Mr. Juneja was a middle aged man who wanted to enjoy the subordinate female workers as a bribe. Taking the advantage of Sabitri's family life he induced her to go astray. Had Sabitri refused, some other woman would have been appointed in her place, who would not say 'no' to his proposal. Under such circumstances what would happen to the family of Sabitri with these four members? If one is to fall down a bit for livelihood, why not then one fall a bit more to accommodate one's son for a profession?
She therefore, invited Juneja to her residence which her husband and son did not like. In Dr. Lal's 'Karphu', Gautam and Kavita who were husband and wife were wealthy. But they got nothing in their conjugal life and therefore, to get something both of them went out from the limit of conjugal life secretly. Gautam found that "Something" in Monisha in his own house while Kavita found it in actor Sanjay outside her house. Both Gautam and Kavita knew each other about their deficiency, yet they indulged secretly in illicit love. In Ashk's 'Bhanvar', Pratibha a representative of highly educated and aristocratic family was highly diffident. She could break away her 'ego' and could have been happy by marrying either Pradip, Narayan, Haradatt, Nagendra or somebody else. But she remained unhappy when she came to know about Prof. Nilabh whose marriage was unsuccessful and who decided not to marry again. In 'Kisanak' Rajesh married Tanuja and after a short while he divorced her. He then wanted to marry his former lover. Dinesh also married one distantly related sister without caring for religions or ethical principles.

Assamese play-writ Satya Prasad Baruah in his 'Nayika Natyakar' and 'Mrinal Maa' depicted such problems. In the first play, Shaswati was at the beginning the prisoner of social customs, but with the change of time she became rebellious and began to make love with Himanshu.
In the later play, there were everything, motor car, building etc in the happy family life of Bhabesh and Mrinal. But in spite of all these for material happiness they were unhappy like, Gautam and Kavita in the 'Karphu'. After several years of married life they felt the need of children. But both of them knew that it was useless to expect a child as Bhabesh was an impotent. As such Mrinal was dissatisfied and depressed highly and wanted to fulfil her desire with the help of Mr. Hazarika. On the other hand Bhabesh made love with other women in the club without the knowledge of his wife. Bhabesh came to know that his wife was in illicit love with Mr. Hazarika. In 'Karphu', Gautam did not know about the illicit love of his wife. Had even he knew it, probably he would not have killed his wife like Bhabesh.

This sex-feeling in the men and women of the present age is the natural result of diseased mentality, the psychological influence of which spreads over dramatic literatures. Although the nature of the problems is somewhat different yet in the final stage of the problem, we can find similarities in the Assamese and the Hindi dramas.

o) Problems of unsuccessful marriage :-

Now-a-days the terms like unsuccessful marriage, unsuccessful love, divorce, re-marriage are new not new ones. There was a time when the conservative society hated
to know about them. But today, to walk hand in hand with progress, conservative society also began to take up these progressive measures. Now they began to explain the terms 'love', 'marriage' etc in a new way. In Barua’s play 'Nayika Natyakan', Shaswati’s lawyer father who was once deadly afraid of divorce, re-marriage etc. now agreed to his daughter’s re-marriage afterwards.1 Practically, in both Assamese and Hindi dramas the problems of divorce and re-marriage have been dealt with. This problem has been depicted in Hindi plays like 'Na dharm , Na iman', 'Alag Alag Raste' etc. and in Assamese plays like 'Nayika Natyakar', 'Biswa Rupa' (Prabin Phukan) 'Samadhi' (Anand Kumar), 'Pratibind' (Anil Choudhury) etc. Madan and Sudarsana in 'Alag Alag Raste'; Dinesh and Daya in 'Na dharm, Na iman'; Himanshu- Shaswati in 'Nayika Natyakar'; Shashi Prasad and Renu in 'Biswa Rupa', Pradip and Indu in 'Samadhi' are the characters who either left their former lovers or their mates agreed to re-marry. In Assamese play 'Pratidan', (Swaraj Nath) the serious problem of widow re-marriage was depicted. The acceptance of the proposal of re-marrying Aroti after the death of her husband by Haren Kalita proves that widow remarriage has never been looked down upon by the Assamese society. But in Hindi literature no play depicting re-marriage of widows is found till now.

It is sadder side of our conjugal life that even after living as husband and wife there is no emotional integration between them in some cases. It is found both in Assamese and Hindi plays that due to domestic or social circumstances, one can not marry one's beloved but one has to marry a person other than one's beloved. But one can not forget one's former beloved. Generally one becomes unhappy when reminiscence comes to him or her. Appi in 'Kaid' and Arati in 'Pratidan' could not forget their respective lovers Dilip and Adhir and therefore, it was difficult for them both to recognise their husbands as husbands. Appi regarded the house of husband as the prison-house and felt that she had been a life long prisoner there.¹

II) Dramas concerning economic problems:

During the post independence days the economic problem becomes more and more complex. There are exploitation, corruption, unemployment and imbalanced property everywhere. Our industrial policy cannot do away with the exploitation of the labour class. Even the policies of the government help the capitalists only. It is therefore, seen that the rich becomes richer and poor poorer. For this imbalanced economic system, there are clashes between the capitalist and the labour, and the result bandh, strike, corruption, mal administration etc. are

¹Kaid - U.N. Ashk. Page 72
rampart during these days.

This imbalance growing out of economic inequality gave birth to bewilderment among the middle and the proletariat classes. They have witnessed with their own eyes that there are black marketing in necessaries of living, failure of government controlled-policies, the illicit connection between the government officials and the black marketers, unemployment, and garbing of land of the politeriat by the land lord and capitalist etc. etc. The following plays relating to different sides of these problems are available in Assamese and Hindi,

**Assamese Plays:**
1. Papiya Tora (Baldev Saikia)
2. Makarajal (Abdul Malik)
3. Natun Purush (Ramhari Maral)
4. Pratidan (Swaraj Nath)
5. Kiya (Phani Sarma)
6. Kala Bazar (Phani Sarma)
7. Nimila Anka (Lakshyadhar Choudhury)
8. Anadhikar (Sarbananda Pathak)
9. Mandanda (Panchanan Deka)
10. Pahila Tarikh (Sharada Bardalai)
11. Shilpi (Bhadraram Saikia)
12. Ghat Pratighat (Ananda Sharma)
13. Parachit (Dandinath Kalita)
14. Mok vot diyak (Medini Kanta Thakuri)
15. Natun Samaj (Prabirmalla Buzarbarua)
16. Samadhi (Anand Kumar)
17. Bagh (Himendra Kumar Barthakur)
18. Artanad (Jiten Bhagawati)
19. Janma (Mahendra Barthakur)

**Hindi Plays**
1. Kuhasa Aur Kiran (Wishnu Prabhakar)
2. Apni Kamaj (Rajendra Kumar Sharma)
3. Mok Abhiman (Dr. L.N. Lal)
4. Kala Raja (Lalit Mohan Thapalyal)
5. Ved Ki Suraj, Vi 'an Ka Chand (Satish Kumar)
6. Bakuri (Sarbeswar Dayal Saxena)
7. Dharti Aur Akash (Dr. Shambunath Singha)
8. Subah Ke Ghante (Naresh Mehta)
9. Andhi Gali (Upendranath Ashk)
10. Rakta Kamal (Dr. L.N. Lal)
11. Wah Desh Johan Bhukh Nehin (At)
12. Saput (Ramashray Dixit)
13. Rupaya Tumhe Kha Goya (Ghagwati Charan Verma)

From the above list it may easily be proved that plays concerning economic problems are abundant in both Assamese and Hindi.

For the sake convenience of study dramas concerning
economic problems may be subdivided into following three sub-classes:

   a) Dramas relating to bribery;

   b) Dramas relating to black marketing and exploitation.

   c) Dramas relating to economic problems of the middle class family.

a) **Dramas relating to bribery**:

The plant of bribery which was planted in our society has now been grown into a full-fledged tree with all leaves and branches, and devoured the whole society. First of all bribery was confined to courts only; but now it has been spread right from the cooking shed to the Parliament.

In 'Apni Kamay', big guns like Seth Kishorilal, Seth Hazarilal, Chanda, Lala Zinjat Prasad, Champat Ray jumped into business with bribery as their capital. Verma, who was a government official, also joined hands because he had some earnings from them. From outward appearance he seems to be an honourable man but at the heart of hearts he was a corrupted person who took bribes from them. But his wife hated such incomes from evil sources and did not regard it as their proper income. In the 'Janma', while the old generation of officials were taking bribes, the evil way of making money, the new generation objected to
this illegal way of making money through bribery. Under such circumstances conflict between these two generations came to the forefront. In the 'Bagh', the B.D.O. Mr. Kakati was such a corrupt officer that he tried to increase the mileage in his T.A. bills for which he was suspended several times. In the 'Natun Purush', it is tried to bring to light the real nature of the political leaders who are corrupted, criminal against social and economic justice selfish and agents of the exploiters. Madan and Ramal were both the agents of such exploiters and sold the rice sanctioned for the flood affected areas in the black market and gave a part of their profit as bribe to the government officials. Madan did not pay heed to the rebuking of his wife and of his son Hiren and began to amass money through this evil way. He asked his son Hiren to give up idealism and to take up his line. The corruption and bribery which became rampant throughout the whole country is going to be depicted in the 'Andhi Gali'. After the partition of the country, many refugees took refuge in the camps. Mr. Misra was one of such officer in a certain camp. He began to mis-appropriate almost the materials sent for helping the refugees. He said, "If some machine is to be presented, it should be allowed to be taken as own property. There are several refugees here but no body comes to take the things. If some house is allotted or loan is granted or some property is allotted
they will just give it to others." In the 'Mantrir Hukum', corruption of Conservators and D.F.O.'s and bribery have been depicted. In this way, the friendship among the businessman, government officials and political leaders has made the economic problems more complicated and it has been successfully depicted in our plays.

b) Dramas relating to black marketing and exploitation:

From economic point of view the present age may be described as the age of black marketing and exploitation. In both these fields, our society has offered facilities to businessmen, Capitalists, agents of the exploiters, political leaders, land lords and to mill owners in such a way that no other person received such wide field of profit.

In Hindi several such plays depicting the characteristic specialities of people who exploited the artists are available but only three such plays are available in Assamese. They are 'Shilpi' by Bhadram Saikia, 'Kiya' by Phani Sharma and 'Purbashri Theatre' by Anil Chandra Thakur. It is to be mentioned here that in the 'Kiya' and the 'Purbashri Theatre', the exploitation on

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Andhi Gali - U. N. Asmik - 73
the artist Phani Sharma has been depicted. In all these
three plays the capitalist tried to exploit Arun, Tarun
and Karun in 'Shilpi', Pradip in 'Kiya' and Suryya in
'Purbashri Theatre'. In 'Kiya', Ratneswar Barua was a
patriotic man who appreciated the artistic creation of
Pradip but began to exploit him without caring for his
material needs. Even when the sons of Pradip (Kiya) and
Suryya (Purbashri Theatre) were dead, their progenitors
did not break the news to them for the sake of their
gains in the business. In 'Kiya', the progenitor handed
Subodh who came to break the news to Pradip over to police.
On the other hand Subodh was going on with the performances
in a constrained mood even after hearing the death news of
his child. He promised before the audience that looking
towards the necessity he would perform his acting forgetting
the death of his son in such a way that he never did it in
his life. In the 'Kiya' the exploitation becomes very
much touching. When Pradip came to know about the exploi-
tation made on him he become very angry upon the present
economic system. Addressing the audience he declared that
although the world has enough of every thing and some body
is enjoying them, yet some others are not allowed to enjoy
them. In some families there are enough of riches while
others are not able to meet the expenses for medicine even.

4Purbashri Theatre - A. C. Thakur - 65
His two children also died only for his poverty. In the 'Silpi', the uselessness of an artist in the present context is depicted. It shows how great artists become the victim of disregard, neglect and exploitation and has to die a slow death. The tragic end of an artist is also depicted in Arun Sharma's 'Nibaran Bhattacharyya'.

In both Assamese and Hindi plays black marketeering and corruption have been picturised, 'Kala bazar', 'Papia Tara', 'Makarajal', 'Natun Purush' in Assamese and 'Apni Kamaaj' in Hindi depicted the lively pen pictures of such black marketeering and corruption. Seth Kishorilal and Seth Hazarilal in 'Apni Kamaaj'; Madan and Ramalal in 'Natun Purush' and Bijoya and Utpal's brother in 'Makarajal' are the characters who establish relationship with different classes of people in the society and indulge in black-marketeering, corruption and exploitation.

Feudal Lordship and Zamidary did not come to an end even after independence. From time to time they exploited simple cultivators and labour class for their own benefit. In many of both Assamese and Hindi plays, the exploitation of feudal lords, zamindars and capitalists on cultivators and labourers, and committing of rape on women have been picturised successfully. Such a picture is depicted in the 'Subah Ke Ghante' (Hindi) and the 'Samadni' and the 'Natun Samaj' (Assamese). In the 'Subah Ke Ghante', there was exploitation over the family of Ema and in addition to that the zamidar and the police
committed rape on the mother of Eman. In 'Samadhi'
Mr. Madhab Choudhury misappropriated the property of
Pradip. In the Assamese play 'Pahila Tarikh', the finan-
cial difficulties of workers and exploitation of Capital-
list (Mahajans) are clearly depicted. All government
servants right from the officers to the peons are swall-
owed by wants. Due to their limited income they are
compelled to borrow from capitalist and agents of capita-
list at a high rate of interest. In this play, Rajendra
Barua is from a high class family while Bapuram from a
middle one. But both of them took loans from exploiter
mahajans Jay Chand, Kripal Dey, Harabilash and others at
high rate of interest to depay the expenses of their
families and paid their instalments on every 1st days of
the months. As such their whole salaries were spent on
the 1st day of the month; and they had to take loans
again. They had even to meet the expenses for the treat-
ment of their children from such loans. But it is shown
in the play that unlike the high and the middle class
families, low class families have lesser wants. In Hindi
no such play is available.

There is not dearth of people who exploit the
simple villagers in the name of religion, justice, police
etc. Such an exploitation over the uneducated simple
villagers has been reflected in Hindi plays like 'Kala
Raja', 'Bakri', 'Ved Ka Suraj', 'Vigyan Ka Chand', etc.
In 'Kala Bazar', Seth Gallaram took the advantage of blind faith, simplicity and stupidity of the villagers and misappropriated their property. In 'Bakri' some so-called political leaders got united and began to go on with exploitation in the name of Gandhi, Religion, Constitution, police etc. In 'Ved Ka Suraj', 'Vigyan Ka Chand', the exploitation and oppression over villagers, Commission of adultery are clearly depicted. The Headman of the village in association with the priest took the advantage of their simplicity and blind faith in religion and exploited them and fulfil their dirty sex desires. In Assamese a play with such a picture of exploitation is not available.

The picture of exploitation is more heartening in the Assamese plays than that in the Hindi. In Hindi plays exploitation is total and collective. On the other hand it is individual in Assamese plays. Collective exploitation gives rise to grudge and cherish ill will while in individual cases it does not have the same reaction. In all the Assamese plays exploitation has been shown in an individual stage. The following are the Hindi plays depicting exploitation in a collective stage: - 'Bakri', 'Kala Raja', 'Ved Ka Suraj', 'Vigyan Ka Chand' etc. In Assamese plays, Bapuram in 'Pahila Tarikh', Pradip in 'Kiya' and Harakanta in 'Nimila Anka', could not meet the expenditure to buy medicines for their children, Bapuram had to sell out the gold ring to pay the fees of the doctor and devoted
teacher Harakanta sold his utensils to buy medicine for his children. Strangely, they got counterfeit money only in the exchange. In this way, Bapuram, Pradip and Harakanta became the worst sufferer of exploitation and their children died. All these three are the representatives of the middle class society. But in Hindi only the members of the low class families suffered from exploitation while in Assamese all classes right from the upper class to the middle class suffer.

In both Assamese and Hindi literature the capitalists, the businessman, the propeltors, the Zamidars, the Mouzadars, the political leaders and the priests are depicted as the exploiters, oppressors, agents of exploiters and black-marketers. The new generation raises a voice of protest against exploiters in the plays of both the languages. The characters raising the voice of protest against exploitation are: Abinash and Ajoy in 'Janma', Rajen in 'Jiwan Britta'; Ajit and Kaliram in 'Pratidan', villagers in 'Kala Raja', Gadadhar and Banwari in 'Ved Ka Suraj', 'Vigyan Ka Chand', Mahesh in 'Saput'; Suresh and Astanandji in 'Akash Zhuk Gaya'; Chandra Kishore in 'Vah Desh Joha Bhukh Nehin' etc. In both Assamese and Hindi languages, the voice of protest is not limited in the educated new generation but it gave rise to rebellion in all types of exploited classes, for example, Katiram, who is the representative of agelong exploited cultivator, reminded the land
lord Mauzadar with the words - that the blood which they sucked from the cultivators since time immemorial would have to vomited now as the cultivators were not sheep but men.¹

It shows clearly that in our plays the pictures of exploitation in some pretext by the Capitalist, agents of exploitation, so called political leaders, Zamindars, landlords, priests over the cultivators, labourers, workers, and low class families, are clearly depicted. The exploitation of labourers of modern technical era is also depicted in our plays. The economic problems have been clearly reflected in Assamese plays like the 'Ashar Balichar' (Prafulla Kumar Barua) and the 'Dharti Aur Akash' (Dr. Sambhunath Singh) in Hindi. The problems of industrialisation have been dealt with only in one Hindi lyrical drama, 'Yaksh Ki Nagari, Pratyaksh Ki Nagari' (Bhagwat Prasad). In Assam there is neither industries nor any problem relating to industrialisation. As such no Assamese play depicts problems of industrialisation.

c) Plays on domestic and economic problems of middle class family:

In our society it is seen that the middle class families have to face financial problems more. The income

¹Pratidan - S. Nath - 64-65.
of this class being limited one, they can not keep pace with the changed socio-economic environment. In most of the families, although troubles are there yet the outward show is kept alive. They neither can give up their 'ego' nor can make up the deficiency in domestic life. Our Assamese and Hindi playwrights tried successfully to depict this weakness through their plays.

The economic distress of both higher and lower middle classes has been handled in the following Assamese and Hindi plays:

**Assamese:**
1) *Abelar Nat* (Bina Devi)  
2) *Nimila Anka* (Lakshadhar Choudhury)  
3) *Jiwan Britta* (Ram Goswami) etc.

**Hindi:**
1) *Adhe adhure* (Mohan Rakesh)  
2) *Alag Alag Haste* (U.N. Ashk)  
3) *Andhi tiali* (U.N. Ashk) etc.

Fashion loving wives, extravagance wastage and lack of understanding in domestic affairs and such other social weaknesses helped to make the domestic problems deeper and deeper. In the *Adhe adhure* and the *Abelar Nat* the fashion loving wives went to such an extent that they suffocated their families. In the former play, Mahendra who was the head of a family, was an unemployed after losing everything in his business. The only earning member in the family was his wife Savitri. She had to shoulder the
responsibilities of her children also. But she arrived in such a position to which she was deadly afraid of. Being driven out from all practicabilities of life, Mahendra began to ruminate his past life where he had only a fashion loving wife. He remembered - "the rent of the house was Rupees four hundred monthly; the Refrigerator was purchased in instalments; and children were sent to convent schools." The family in which refrigerators were purchased once, has not a single paisa now to spend and to defray the expenses of school going children. Due to financial hardships she had to keep illicit relationship with Juneja, Shivajit, Jagmohan, Manoj and with his boss. In the latter, Dharyya charan was the owner of a tea garden. But due to his limited income, extravagance in the garden affairs and expenditure for a better future for his son made him a pauper. Without caring for the financial condition his wife Madhu Chanda, daughter Rupnanda and son Chanchal Kumar began to spend. None of the members of his family helped him to keep the balance of his income and expenditure. Madhu Chanda pleaded for changing the old fashion wall-clock of her drawing room and replaced it with a befitting new one. In the

1 Adhe Adhure - M. Rakesh - 81.
2 Adhe Adhure - M. Rakesh - 20
3 Adhe Adhure - M. Rakesh - 62
4 Abtalar Nat - Bina Devi - 2
same manner his daughter Rupnanda pleaded for replacing the old motor-car. As a result, Dharrya Charan fell unconscious and was dead. Hara Kanta (Nimila Anka), Dharmeswar (Jiwan Britta), and Mr. Kaul (Andhi Gali) were defeated in the struggle of life; but they did not give up struggle in the face of defeat. To lift up the family from financial distress, Hara Kanta after being driven out from his services, joined the Pioneer Co. But due to his limited income, he felt his inability to shoulder the responsibility of his family. His wife was busy with the 'Nari Mangal Samitee' (an association for welfare of women) and had no leisure to look after her family affairs. His eldest son Gopal was physically handicapped and was unfit for earning. His second son Narayan was a poet and third son Keshab was a revolutionary. They had nothing to do for the family but wanted their food regularly at time. Hara Kanta's fourth son Shon was suffering from typhoid. Under such circumstances the selling of utensils by Harakanta, cheating of the mahajan (capitalist) and stealing in the Pioneer Co. by helpless Hara Kanta clearly show the financial stringency of a middle class family. Dharmeswar who was a school teacher, worked hard day and night as a tutor. His eldest son Tapan although was an educated person kept himself away from the family at the wishes of his wife. His second son Rajen led the

\[1\] \text{Adhilar Nat - Bina Devi - 18.}
life of a vagabond and cared little for any earning. He did neither seek any job nor expected to get one. Under such circumstances, Hara Kanta and Dharmeswar are two characters who had to sacrifice their whole life for the benefit of their families. But both of them were defeated.

Mr. Kaul had the same fate. He had neither a place to live in nor a place to cook his food. He used the only one room for all purposes - from cooking to sleeping. He worked like a machine right from morning till late at night but could not manage to defray the expenditure for the schooling of his daughter Puspa. Through the description of his lot we find a clear picture of the financial difficulties of a middle class family. "Subah uthta Piche hun aur naah pahle shuru ho jaia hai. Ghanta bhar sen ke yahan taip karta hun, ath ghante daphtar me jan deta hun, do ghante sham ko tyushan parhata hun, tin sarhe tin saa me bhi tum gujara nahin chala sakti". Mr. Kaul had nothing like oil, sugar, sweets etc. in his house but had to invite guests only for show. When he came to know that his friend Tripathy would come to his house as a guest, he sent his wife with her children away from his house and he himself went to some other place in fear of the guest and tried to give the understanding to Tripathy that he really did not receive the telegram. Harakanta, Dharmeswar and Mr. Kaul are the representatives of the middle class who struggled against the reality of modern age.

1Andhi Gali - U. N. Ashk - 16.
In 'Dharti Aur Akash', 'Rupaya Tumhen Kha Gay', 'Paisa Parameswar', 'Biswa Rupa', 'Anadhikar', 'Purbashri Theatre', 'Mandanda', and 'Chirantan' etc. the struggle between reality and idealism has been depicted where idealism wins in some places and loses in some others. In 'Dharti Aur Akash' and 'Anadhikar', capitalists tried to gain intellectuals and doctors and to keep under them. In 'Paisa Parameswar', doctors, lawyers, professors, mahajans and all regarded money as great and have given up all the good qualities of heart for it. In 'Rupaya Tumhen Kha Gay', Manik Chandra who was after money forgot his family altogether. Money became the worship for him. In 'Biswa Rupa', Ram Prasad and Reba deceived their father, brother and sisters only for money, and tried to exploit them. In 'Mandanda' Amal tried to purchase Rekha with money and Anjan, in 'Chirantan', asked his wife Jeuti to sell herself. In 'Purbashri Theatre', Suryya was compelled to go on with his acting even after receiving the death news of his son. In these plays, there is a difference between the wants of the intellectuals like the doctors ('Dharti Aur Akash' and 'Anadhikar'), Ram Prasad and Reba ('Biswa Rupa') and the wants of Suryya ('Purbashri Theatre'), and Anjan ('Chirantan') as the former is of necessity and the latter of luxury or enjoyment. Thus we find that in our Assamese and Hindi plays the lively picture of economic condition has been depicted.
3) Plays concerning social and domestic problems:

The changed age has a great influence over our dramatic literature. This age has topsy-turvyed the social life and diffused the individual life. Hence the society has to face problems after problems. It is therefore, the discipline and social bindings which were prevalent in old societies began to give away now. The humanitarian relationship which existed between the father and son, old and young, mother and daughter, and sisters and brothers began to collapse. In the social life everything has been changed. Nobody cares to know about others and nobody has time to think for others. All thinking centres around one self only. To fulfill our small interest, we do not care to induce great loss to others. The influence of this artificiality has overshadowed many plays in both Assamese and Hindi languages. We can clearly prove our proposition with the help of 'Adhe Adhure' (Mohan Rakesh), 'Tute Paribesh' (Bishnu Prabhakar), 'Alag Alag Hast' (Ashk), 'Abelar Nat' (Bina Devi), 'Ninila Anka' (Lakshadhar Chaudhury), and 'Jiwan Britta' (Ram Goswami) etc. In 'Adhe Adhure', hatred between man and wife and their artificial relationship; love between Ashok and Varna; elopement of Vina by a lover of her mother and her return to family and expression of sexual desire prematurely by the younger daughter etc. are depicted. While in 'Tute Paribesh' separation of members of a family, marriage of Manisha
with her beloved without the consent of her parent, rebellion against morality and family life by educated unemployed Vivek, smoking of Cigarettes in presence of elders by Dilip are shown. In 'Abelar Nat, it depicts the hatred of Madhuchanda, Rupnanda and Arun towards social customs, and Rupnanda's hatred and want of faith in age old customs and traditions, while in 'Nimila Anka' it related to indifference of Hara Kanta's wife to the duties and responsibilities of the family; to escapism of Hara Kanta's sons Narayan and Keshab even after witnessing the financial distress of the family; to rebellion of Keshab for difficult question papers in the examination; to indiscipline of Hara Kanta's minor son shon and to such other artificialities of the society.

This is an age of science and technology. There has been a change in all age old idealisms, old values and principles of morality; and a new value has been established in their place. The growing economic inequality, social injustice, unemployment, assassination; and plundering etc. changed the social and domestic life into such a defective position that it becomes quite understandable to the old generation. We have to live in this defective environment. The dangerous and inevitable result of this defective environment is insatiable sexual urge, sexual perversion, diseased mentality, absence of rightful thinking, mental imbalance, artificiality in
manners and customs etc. Such results are seen in 'Adhe Adhure', 'Tutte Paribesh', 'Rat Rani' (Dr. Lal), 'Nimila Anka', 'Jiwan Britta' and 'Abelar Nat'. In 'Rat Rani' while Kuntal and Joydev were discussing about the lifelessness in the so called modernity, they remarked - "To-day the modern society is in its physical stage only; and that is why so much falsehood, gorgeousness, faithlessness and heartlessness is found in it". 1 In 'Abelar Nat' restlessness (Chanchalata) has been tagged together with Chanchal Kumar.

In our plays enough attention has been given towards the new generation. This generation, the future of the country, stand itself like a big question-mark. On one hand this generation stands for the probability of change and on the other, stands for a life which is futureless and falling and lack of all probabilities. Along with these there is the third evil - Confusion. Both Assamese and Hindi plays deal with these complicated problems.

The youth, who have the dream of making the future of the country, are quite self-conscious and active. They want to make revolutionary changes in respect to valuelessness, lack of confidence, hopelessness, pompiousness, changed values of life, corruption, injustice, 

1Rat Rani - Dr. Lal - 59.
oppression and exploitation etc. They are very much angry upon lack of prosperity and discipline which is growing due to environment of the country and the age. They are not sceptic; and their performance proves their healthy thinking and hopeful voice. They want to break down the age old social customs but show their faith in the good in them. They are against meaningless customs, reforms, showiness and artificiality. They dream a dream of making exploitation-free society by mixing up all that good in both the old and the new society. The new youth have been depicted as very much active and energetic in the struggle against all the evils of the age in Hindi plays like 'Kuhasa aur Kiran' (Vishnu Prabhakar), 'Rakta Kamal' (Dr. Lal), 'Yeh Desh Jahan Ehukh Nahin' (Dr. Ajat), 'Sahi Rasta' (Raj Kumar), 'Saput' (Ramashray Dixit), 'Bhagirath Ke Bete' (Vinod Rastagi), and in Assamese plays like 'Janma' (Mahendra Barthakur), 'Haroa Sur' (Panchanon Deha), 'Deshar Mati' (Medini Kanta Thakuri-a), 'Son Rup Neuchi' (Parag Chaliha), 'Naton Purush' (Ramhari Maral), 'Pratidan' (Swaraj Nath) and a dozen others. Amulya, Sunanda, Prava in 'Kuhasa Aur Kiran', Kamal in 'Rakta Kamal' Chandra Kamal in 'Yeh Desh Jahan Ehukh Nahin', Rajib and Dinesh in 'Saput', Narendra and Abhoy in 'Sahi Rasta', Kundan and Mangal in 'Bhagirath Ke Bete', Abinesh and Ajoy in 'Janma', Rajib in 'Heroa Sur', Biren in 'Deshar Mati', Kushal and Namita in 'Sonrup Neuchi', Hiren in 'Naton Purush' and Ajit in 'Pratidan' are the representative of this new generation.
The new generation wanted to escape from the other side of life. They bear hatred to the present environment but this hatred is their own creation and they never think of changing the environment themselves. They are inactive and after pleasure. They themselves become Europeans or want to turn our society into a European one after accepting the western culture and education and following the life style of the western world with Zeal. They do not have any decision or any ideal of their own. Most of them, educated and uneducated alike, became the prey for diffidence, distress and defective mentality and leave boat of the future life without a sail or a sailor. This fact can easily be proved in the following Hindi and Assamese plays:

**Hindi:**
- I) Chindiyon Ki Ak Jhalar - Amrit Ray;
- II) Abdulla Diwana - Dr. Lal;
- III) Andhi Aur Ghar - Mohan Chopra;
- IV) Tutta Paribesh - Vishnu Prabhakar;
- V) Virodh - Abhimanyu Anat Shabnam;
- and VI) Alag Alag Raste - Ashk. etc.

**Assamese:**
- a) Abelar Nat - Bina Devi;
- b) Chat Pratighat - Ananda Sharma;
- c) Kunja Kutir - Mani Bora;
- and d) Nimilla Anka - Lakshadhar Choudhury. etc.

In 'Chindi Yo Ki Ek Zhalar', Nandan who was an active
member of revolutionary association found one day while he was inquiring about the intolerable noise in the upper floor that a section of new generation — all boys and girls lost balance as a result of drinking and was making noise and that his son, Mangal also joined the party. Mangal was dissatisfied with his father and rebuked and insulted him. When Nandan witnessed this he felt very much insulted, ashamed and defeated and committed suicide.

In 'Kunja Kutir', idealist leader Prasanta found his brother Pradip drinking wine and playing cards with bad characters particularly with Miss Eliza in his own house—Kunja Kutir. To his utter surprise Pradip also compelled his wife Minoti to dance before his friends.

There is a tendency in the middle class to exhibit aristocratic image. This tendency of exhibitionism is perhaps not so much prominent in the high class as it is in the middle class. Generally middle class imitates the high class. This is for this exhibitionism, the middle class generally faces economic difficulties. Not only this, but some other complex psychological problems like dissatisfaction, difficulties, diffidence, suffocation etc. also come to the forefront. In many of the Assamese and Hindi plays this problem has successfully been handled. For example:

**Assamese Plays:**

I) Abeler Nat — (Bina Devi);

II) Kankan — (Sarbeswar Chakravarty);
III) Interview (Amar Pathak);
IV) Natun Samaj (Prabirmalla Bajarbarua);
and V) Makarajal (Malik).

**Hindi Plays:**

- a) Bhanwar (Ashk);
- b) Anjo Didi (Ashk);
- c) Alag Alag Raste (Ashk)
and d) Adhe Adhure (Mohan Rakesh) etc.

In the plays, referred to above characters like Pratibha (Bhanwar), Anjo (Anjo Didi), Trilok (Alag Alag Raste) Mahendra and Savitri (Adhe Adhure), Madhu Chanda and Rupnanda (Abeler Nat), Upen Barua (Interview), Hakimani (Natun Samaj), Vijoya (Makarajal) etc. are busy in exhibiting false ego and aristocratic image. Hindi play-writer Ashk, for whom the world of the middle class was very familiar, depicted it in his three dramas very successfully. Pratibha gave birth to a very complex psychological situation with all her attractive loveliness, higher education and aristocratic images. She could have been happy and got out of all diffidence and deceit had she given up the hope for Prof. Nilabh and married any one among Pradip, Narayan, Biswa and Nagendra who encircled her. She declared that from this hollow and worthless life there is no salvation.¹ But her way of salvation was closed by

¹Bhanwar - U. N. Ashk - 57.
herself. The other character in the drama, Anjali wanted to apply the aristocratic images received from her parents and grandparents to her present middle class family inside and outside. She wanted to follow some particular principles and to move in a particular way but the low class obsequies of her brother Sripat set her aback. Her husband was unhappy over her such ideals. Finally she had to commit suicide. Dharyya Charan's thought about his incapacity to buy costly Carpets for his drawing room according to the choice of his wife and daughter or to buy new model cars and Bijoy's attempt to show that she is from an aristocratic family indicate this tendency of exhibitionism.

The influence of western culture which befell over the educated class is quite opposite to our society, our customs and rites. (It is in consideration of fall of the new generation). Where there is influence of fatal western culture, there is no idealism, no definite thinking and no morality. In Assamese and Hindi plays like 'Kunja Kutir', 'Fehu jali', 'Jiwan Britta', 'Kibzanak', 'Ratrani' and 'Abdulla Diwana' this falling of character has been depicted. In 'Abdulla Diwana' one character did not care even when she conceived before her marriage. In the same manner Pratibha in 'Jiwan Britta' did not care even when she gave birth to Shonmoni prematurely. There was a time when abortion was a crime; but now for family
planning it has been legalised. Today abortion is related to the body only, it has nothing to do with mind or religion. Under such circumstances it is natural that the play writers have liberal views on abortion. Nisha (Fehu Jali), Pradip (Kunja Kutir), Rajesh (Kibanak), Joydev (Ratrani) etc. are the representatives of characters who follow western culture blindly and for whom there is no moral principle, idealism and who are always after pleasure.

After the world war II, one of the most remarkable changes is the change in values. There is a conflict of age old values and modern ones. The changes in values due to this clash have been clearly reflected in the following plays:

Hindi - I) Yuge Yuge Kranti ,
II) Na Dharm, Na Imam ,
III) Ratrani ,
IV) Saput ,
V) Chindiyan Ki Ek Zhalor ;
VI) Tutte Paribesh ,
and VII) Andhi Aur Ghar etc.

Assamese- I) Nayika Natyakar ,
II) Chirantan ,
III) Abelar Nat ,
IV) Janma ,
V) Parachit ,
VI) Lahanga ,
VII) Nabajug Abhijan,
and VIII) Natun Purush. etc.

In 'Yuge Yuge Kranti', it wanted to show the changes of values in five generations by means of marriages (1st in 1875, then in 1901, third in 1920-21 and then in 1942 and the last and the fifth in the present day).

Kalyan Singha when he saw the face of his wife in the daylight wanted to rebel against age old customs and his son Pyarelal declared war against his father and existing customs by marrying Kalawati the widowed daughter of Sugan Ghag. In turn daughter of Pyarelal, Sharada came out of her home and took part in the freedom movement and married her beloved on her sweet will. His son Pradip registered his marriage in the court without the consent of his parents. Their son Aniruddha and daughter Anwita regarded love as primary whereas marriage as secondary one. That is why Anwita made love with Dipak and married Nilson afterwards. Aniruddha on the other hand, made love with Rita, Sabita and Nandita at different times. Rita declared that so long they would be able to make love with each other they would remain as lovers and as soon as they would fail to do so, they would be separated.¹ In this manner each generation tried to create values and to disapprove the values created by other generations. In 'Tutte Paribesh'

¹Yuge Yuge Kranti - V. Prabhakar - 74.
it is made clear that what was regarded as degradation by the old generation, has been regarded as reformation now a days.¹ In ‘Nayika Natyakar’ Mr. Chaliha regarded old values as outdated and tried to establish new values and therefore gave recognition to the marriage of Himansu with Bhaswati.

The dowry system in the Indian society is like a curse. This problem is present in the whole of northern India and of Southern India. Assam is free from this evil. In Assam marriage has been regarded as sacred and there is no place of such begging in it. That is why no such problem of dowry has been found to be depicted in Assamese plays, while in Hindi, it has been found to be reflected in most of the plays. This problem of dowry has been reflected in ‘Yeh Desh Jahan Bhukh Nahin’, Alag Alag Raste' and in 'Maan' by Suryya Charan Agrawal. In 'Alag Alag Raste', although lawyer Trilok in his heart of hearts wanted dowry yet he showed out wardly that he was not in favour of dowry. He did not choose educated girls. He wanted a girl from a good family who could give him pleasure and comfort of a home. He wanted to feel homely when he would come back from the din and bustle of the court and did not want a girl who would make his home a court house.² But when he

¹Tutte PariBesh - V. Prabhakar - 30
²Alag Alag Raste - U. N. Ashk - 17-18.
came to know from some middle man that a good amount of dowry would come in the shape of car, building etc. He forgot his idealism and readily agreed to marry. But when he received no dowry he declared that his wife Rani was uneducated, uncultured, ugly and proud; and did not show respect to her inlaws. In this way dowry gives birth to a social evil particularly in Hindi areas of which a clean picture is available in Hindi plays.

Disintegration of joint families is also depicted in our families. Under the pressure of our social, domestic and material problems, it becomes difficult to live in joint families. This process of disintegration begins for several causes like economic problems, difference of idealism of the old and new generations, dissatisfaction among the members of the family; giving priority to material happiness and necessity of living in different parts in search of livelihood by each individual member of the family etc. Such a problem is reflected in 'Tutte Paribesh', 'Vasant' (Pt Sitaram Chaturvedi) and 'Jiwan Britta'. In 'Tutte Paribesh' his joint family of forty people came to pieces after independence. At the face of artificial and unhappy life of broken families, Viswajit praised the joint family of his time. In 'Jiwan Britta' educated youth Tapan began to live separately from his parent at the behest of his wife and cared little to save his parent from the

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2. Tutte Paribesh - V. Prabhakar - 15, 21, 37 etc.
economic distress. We find some similarities in the viewpoints of these two playwrights as both of them tried to reunite the separated families.

Today price of everything is going up, but the value of life is not found to be increasing. It is decreasing gradually. The standard of living for the middle and lower class gradually deteriorating. Under such circumstances, people become extremely helpless and destitute. A picture of such condition has been depicted in 'Awaz', 'Abdulla Diwana', 'Kasai', 'Pratima', 'Chirantan', and 'Mina bazar'. In 'Kasai', due to famine in Bengal people began to eat rats, crabs, toads, insects etc. There is no food for children and people began to eat the flesh of a man even. On the otherhand, businessmen earned a lot by supplying fish and meat to the army. In Assamese play, 'Mina bazar', it was the time of ldd celebration and Muzid could neither buy new cloth for his son Latif nor a saree for his wife Fatema. He could not manage to pay the School fees for his sister nor he could get something for food. That was why he finally decided to steal in a shop where he was caught red handed. The shopkeeper took away the articles and gave him a good beating. He said that he was not sorry because they beat him but because they have taken the articles back.¹

¹Mina Bazar - G. Choudhury - 59.
In the post-Independence era there is enough of wakening of women. As a result each and every woman is more or less conscious of her rights. In Assamese and Hindi plays these types female characters are available: a) First type: The members of the first type have no idea of their rights and liberties. They are the victims of age old customs. They took the oppression of their husband and the society as the gift from God. b) In the second type, they wanted to know the reasons of their downfall. They are angry at the oppression, exploitation and injustice of the menfolk. Since they could not get rid of such oppression, they cannot rebel openly against the menfolk and the society. c) Women of the third type possess the capacity to go against the menfolk and the society to establish their rights and to clear up their own way. A gradual development of woman psychology is found in these three types of female characters. The development takes place under the influence of time and environment.

Rewa in 'Suhag Bindi', Suka in 'Andha Kuwan', Manjula in 'Jabala', Minati in 'Kunja Kutir', Rajo in 'Alag Alag Raste', Arati in 'Pratidan', and Shaswati in 'Nayika Natyakar' are some of the remarkable representatives of the first type of woman. Mention may be made of Mrinal in 'Mrinal Mahi', Kavita in 'Karphu', Appu alias Aparajita
in 'Kaid' as the representatives of the second type. In the third type of female characters come Maya (Udan), Jerina (Pratibad), Bhaswati (Nayika Natyakar), Renu (Biswa rupa), Indu (Samadhi) and Rani (Alag Alag Raste).

The women of the first type would bend low before the bindings and customs of the society and the family. The menfolk gives no worth to them. They did neither care to tell anybody about their joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations, and needs and requirements nor there was somebody to pay heed to them.

Mrinal, Appi, Kavita and others wanted to came away from the limit of the bindings when they realised their wants. And that is why Mrinal, Kavita and Appi established illicit connections with Mr. Hazarika, Sandhy and Dili respectively. The characters like Maya, Jerina, Bhaswati, Renu, Indu and Rani represent comparatively modern educated women. They were so much conscious of their self and their rights that they rebelled against the age long oppression and exploitation of women in the male-dominated world. A very strange similarity is found in between the Assamese play 'Nayika Natyakar' and Hindi 'Kaid Aur Udan'. Although Bhaswati found that she was deceived yet she rejected the proposal of divorce put forward by her brother Rebati and began to live with her husband Ramani and acknowledged the customery relationship with him. Appi alias
Aparajita also acknowledged the customery relationship blindly. Being hampered in her self interest, Bhaswati raised the voice of protest and said that the society was conscious of freedom of women. Why then the society did not protest when her husband wanted marry for the second time? Why then society did not remind her husband of his responsibility towards his wife? Her mind becomes rebellious when she remembers of the customs and conventions framed by the menfolk. She would not like to tolerate the oppressions of the society. In 'Kaid Aur Udan', Shankar, Madan and Ramesh wanted Maya as playmate for their carnal desire, a property and a goddess and not as a life-mate. She protested against them and asked - what do you think of me? Do you think that I am a low-bred' stray bitch who would wag her tail when you give something to her? Maya has been depicted here not as a woman but as a representative of a class of characters. It is well said by Dr. Dharmvir Bharti when he wanted to show the gravity of problems of women that a woman is shut up in a prison. Being away from her target and from her dream land under the pressure of domestic bindings and social customs. She began to melt away drop by drop. In 'Udan' also such a woman satisfied the carnal desire of

1Nayika Natyakar - S. P. Barua - 45.
2Kaid Aur Udan - U. N. Ashk - 140.
men and the hunger of man for power and freedom. But like a wounded hind, she came out for the solution. The woman who was inactive disabled and imprisoned in 'Kaid', became active and rebellions and came out in search of her own way in 'Udan'. In both the plays ('Kaid' Aur 'Udan') the play-writ depicted two sides of progress.¹

Communalism and Casteism were born out of our country. During the days of Gandhiji's attempt was made to root them out completely; but it was not successful and as such it affects the social and political forces at present. Communal disturbances become something like annual functions in India now a days.² In Assam this problem is less serious and complex than that in the Hindi speaking areas. Assam has another problem - a problem of boundary between the hills and the plains; and this problem is absent in Hindi areas. That is why a play on such a problem is not available in Hindi.

In Hindi the communal problem is not reflected so much in social plays as it is reflected in historical ones. In Assamese communal problem is much more reflected in the social plays than that in historical ones. The following are the Hindi and Assamese plays picturing Communalism, Casteism and problems of Hill and Plains:

1 Kaid Aur Udan - U.N.Ashk - 140 Bhumika.
In 'Alag Alag Raste' in Hindi and Assamese 'Setu'
Casteism has been depicted. In both the plays, the problem
is a problem of the brahmin-other lower caste people. In
the Assamese play, Dayanda first of all did not acknowledge
a marriage between a brahmin and a lower caste person; and
realised that need of such marriages after wards. In the
Hindi play there was excessive boasting of caste in Tara-
chand. He did not think of having any understanding with
other castes nor he felt a necessity for such understanding.
In Assam, we find, the feeling of co-operation and co-ordi-
nation among different castes, Communities and different
tribes. In 'Urukha Paja' Hemanta, Karim and Sadananda
came from different communities and castes, yet they regarded their 'mess' as the 'Bharat Tirtha' (a Holy place) and gave up their narrow feelings and joined the mess as one family. That 'Bharat Tirtha' could be regarded as a mini­ature of the Indian nation. The Gandhian dream can be found fulfilling when in 'Simhapathi' both Hindus and Muslims prepared themselves together to repair Temples and Mosques. In plays like 'Yamuna Aur Ganga Ki Lahrein', 'Sakot' and 'Magribar Ajan', unity between Hindus and Muslims are shown.

Intellectuals have a great part to play in the making of the society. It is the ardent duty of the intellectuals, doctors, lawyers and professors to give guidance to the society. But they have taken part in the procession of capitalists and businessmen and have neglected their own duties. They remain silent to see the exploitation and oppression of capitalist over the poor people and thereby they betrayed their own country. To tell the truth they are the misfortune of our country. Today the proletariat class came to know that the capitalist class made this intellectual class their tool for exploiting and oppressing them. In Hindi plays we find a picture of such selling of intellectuals to the capitalist while in Assamese there is an expression of hatred and anguish to the intellectuals. In 'Dharti Aur Akash' and 'Anadhikar', Professors and doctors were found to be sold out to capitalists like
Laxmipati and Mantu Das. Laxmipati told the Professor that the newspaper was under his control and that leaders and government officers were also under him. What else could be not do if intellectuals like him extend helping hand to him? In Assamese plays, anguish is quite clearly shown. In 'Artanad', the necessity of sacrificing great intellectuals to bring the society to the track back has been shown. The intellectuals were the root cause of the tragedy of heroine Jewti in 'Chirantan' as she fell into their grip. She declared that humanity has been encircled by the so-called intellectuals; one should remain aloof from them for the sake of the good of the country.  

In both Hindi and Assamese plays pictures of attempt made for saving the educational environment for children from deterioration is found. Now a days there is derth of people who think about the physical, mental and educational side of the children. Children can be benefitted only when education is imparted in proper environment. 'Spardha' and 'Jiwan Britta' are the two plays where for the first time attention has been drawn to the need of consciousness for education of children.

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1 Dharti Aur Akash - Dr. S.N. Singh - 39.
In this regard the responsibility of the guardian is maximum. In 'Spardha' the play wrote declared that responsibility of the guardians does not come to an end when they send their children to the school. Teachers are not with the taught around the clock. Parents should develop their taste for learning. In 'Jiwan Britta', the quarrels and disputes among the parents have psychological repercussions on their child Jonmani. Being deprived of love and affection of his grand father Dharmeswar Kataki, and getting the neglect from his parents with physical tortures, Jonmani became mentally as well as physically handicapped. Then the play wrote declared through doctor Barua that mothers are the best teachers and home is our best School. It is remarkable to note that similarity of both the plays here in this point.

IV) Plays concerning Political Problems:—

Politics controls almost everything. During the post-independence era, there have been certain changes in our politics due to changes of people in the administration with various principles. War with neighbouring countries, instability in politics and entry of low grade people in politics made political problems more and more

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1 Spardha - M. Kapoor - 66-67.
2 Jiwan Britta - K. Goswami - 55.
Division in the parties; plurality of parties and difference of words and action in the leaders lessens the faith of the people in Politics. Today decisions are not based on principles but on individuals. Under such circumstances political problems grew more complex. After independence the assassination of Gandhiji remained to be a historical event. With his 'Swadeshi movement' 'Satyagraha', Non-Co-operation, Civil disobedience and removal of untouchability Gandhiji rocked the foundation of British empire. Gandhian principles have tremendous influence over Assamese and Hindi plays. In 'Koi na Paraya', 'Saput', 'Deshar mati', 'Samadhan', 'Upahar' etc. Gandhian influence is quite evident. Rural problems, problems of Casteism, unemployment, opposition to heavy industries and problems of untouchability have been depicted with their solution in 'Koi na Paraya'. The pictures of making India free from exploitation and resolute through 'Bhoodan movement' in 'Saput'; establishment of 'Ramrajya' by educated and active youth through co-operative movement in 'Desharmati'; solution of rural problems by introducing co-operative production of Swadeshi cloth are found. Characters like Purnananda (Samadhan), Gopal (Sahapathi), Biren (Deshar mati), Rajib and Dinesh (Saput), Sitaram Sastri and Uttam Rao (Koi na Paraya) are spokesmen of Gandhian principles. In 'Saput', Bhoodan workers wanted to solve problems like division in the party, parochialism, Communalism,
language disturbances, fissiparous tendencies through the principle - 'Basudhaiba Kutubakam' (The whole world is our relative, a friend). In these plays Gandhian principles are depicted in such a way that they may be regarded easily as publicity to Gandhism.

The Indian Constitution incorporates the principle of Secularism. But in reality our leaders are playing Communal politics in the name of Secularism. It becomes the capital for all leaders. People with a Gandhian Cap, and 'Khaddar' dress fulfil their own hunger for power by escalating Communal hatred in the name of Communal harmony. They incite one community against another; one unit against another and followers of one religion against another and thereby fulfill their self interest. We find the picture of such politicians in 'Bagh' and 'Janma' in Assamese. In 'Janma', Ajoy was candidate in the election and was in need of 'Votes'. So he proposed to send a person of a particular community to a place where seven thousand five hundred twenty one voters of that particular community live. Such a position spreads into the politics of village panchayats also. In 'Bagh', Medhi was the president of a gaon-panchayat. He did not care when the tiger devoured many people of the locality and showed no willingness in the killing of the tiger. The reason behind it was that the tiger killed people from Punjab, Muslim and Kachari

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1Janma - M. Barthakur - 15
communities. But when he came to know that the tiger attacks people of his own community afterwards, he became sad and sent men immediately to kill it.

In many of our plays lively pictures of people indulging in politics through deceit, cheating, and betrayal of the simple mass people are found. In 'Sahi Rasta' (Raj Kumar) and 'Mok Vote Diyak' (Medini Thakuria) a very humourous picture is depicted. The leader Chitto Chandra, who could take law at his own hand with the help of money, was depicted as a traitor in 'Sahi Rasta'. In the latter, the flattery and mischievous nature of leaders were made open to the readers and the audience. It shows how the so-called leaders deceive the ordinary people and how they gather votes for them. The leaders would tell that they are in the election only for the welfare of the people. His victory means the victory for the people. In 'Mantrir Hukum', minister's hunger for money and power have been depicted. The dreadful cheating of the people by the leaders in the name of religion and the Constitution is shown in 'Bakra'. Taking protection from false Gandhism and Constitution the leaders have been exploiting the mass people. When the people speak of their rights and their due, the leaders made them forget all about them through false arguments. Kavita Nagpal gives a clear picture of the anti-people and anti-democratic character of present politics
and shows how the blind faith in religion has been imposed upon poor masses and how they were exploited by the leaders. She expressed anguish against such exploitation and from the point of view of reality her anguish may give birth to public consciousness. In the Assamese plays 'Artanad' and 'Natun Purush' and Hindi plays 'Mistat Abhimanyu', Prasanta, Madan and Gayadatt respectively represented corrupt political leaders. In 'Mistat Abhimanyu', believing that Rajan had some invisible hands in his success in the bye-election, Gayadatt made Rajan the Commissioner With the expectation that he would help again in the main election.

In the field of politics, there is a vast difference between one's words and deeds. There is no practical value of the speeches made in the public meetings particularly in the times of election. H.K. Premjee says in a dialogue that there is nothing more stupidity than to keep one's own words in politics. In many of the Assamese and Hindi plays this problem of differentiation between words and deeds has been depicted. For example, we find 'Nimila Anka' in Assamese and 'Sinsasan Khali Hain' in Hindi. In both these plays reveal this tendency of the political leaders. In 'Nimila Anka' Harakanta's wife Himla does not join directly in politics but she gives ideal advice

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1Bakai - S. D. Saxena, from Bhumik. 2An Kahan - H.K. Premi-93
to the audience in public meetings which she herself does not follow. In 'Sinhasan Khali Hain', the political leader cause to the people each time with promises through his valuable speech that within an instant he would solve the problems of poverty, starvation, unemployment and all other problems. But in practical field their promises and slogans in the election become valueless afterwards. These are only for deceiving the people in the elections. This play also wanted to show that the leaders after winning the elections turn into thieves and dacoits. They render the people homeless and snatch away of their dignity. In this way there is a successful depiction of present political crisis in both Assamese and Hindi plays.

Conclusion:

Contemporary and regional problems of the society have been reflected in both Assamese and Hindi plays. Our internal as well external problems grow keener and keener so much as the society has been changing sharply. The complexity of the changing environment has given birth to new problems in society, politics and in other fields. People, particularly the new generation, began to lose faith in

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1 Nimila Anka - L. Choudhury - 3-4.
2 Sinhasan Khali Hai - S. K. Singh - 11.
social and political ideals. The new generation dreamt a dream of establishing a new society by breaking all age old customs and conventions; but their dream is not complete as it is devoid of ideals, convictions, rules and customs. They want freedom in their personal and social life but after achieving freedom they are not happy and are suffering from psychological deformities. They are after individual pleasure and not after social happiness. In Hindi, plays of Ashk and Dr. Lakshminarayan Lal are more concerned with personal problems than with social ones. Women in their social life, wanted social and economic freedom and to free themselves from the clutches of men. Yet they, are unhappy and feel like lonely in their personal life. In Assamese plays, the social problems are depicted much more than the individual ones. In Hindi individual problems are depicted along with social ones.

Today in our social and political life, corruption has been more forceful than that of previous years. Because production and distribution of the present society is in the hands of the capitalists; exploitation, oppression, black marketing began to grow more and more. The middle class became the prey primarily. The lamentable social and economic condition of this class has been depicted in plays of both the languages. In our Hindi as well as Assamese plays, the picture of dowry, Communalism, regionalism, generation gaps, changing of age old values and infusion of new values,
treachery of leaders, corruption and such other problems, is depicted.

The basis of our domestic life began to give away in this age. The bond of a family which existed since long past began to fall apart now. As a result there has been quarrel of persons of different generations in the same family and there has been want of good will and unity. Persons of different idealism have to live in the same family and as such each of them has different customs, culture, education etc. Generally, today educated youths are indifference to domestic responsibility and duty is also a darker side of their education. In both Hindi and Assamese plays the picture of such modern educated youth, who are fighting against the evils of family, society and of the state and fulfil their dream has also been found.

Marriage is a sacred rite of human beings. In modern times, the customary idea of marriage has undergone a change. Now young people began to marry their lovers without the approval of their families. But in most cases such marriages are unsuccessful; and failed to satisfy their needs. The problems of divorce, re-marriage, illicit love affairs, etc. are the result of unsuccessful marriages. All these give naked exposures to over-sexuality and sex perversion of the people, the picture of which has been depicted in our plays.