CHAPTER-V
CONCLUSION

The Indian English drama though not equivalent to other forms of literature like poetry, novel and prose writing, the Indian drama is able to create its own place in literature. Some of the dramatists like, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, A.S.P. Ayyar and other wrote plays focusing on philosophic view of life and not free from the touch of Indian classical plays and the Western drama.

The Indian English theatre, witnessed a marked change with the advent of the eminent theatre personalities like, Habib Tanvir, K.N. Pannikar, Asif Currimbhoy, Girish Karnard, Vijay Tendulkar and many other who further carried on the Indian English drama in India to the further step of maturity. Some Indian dramatists tried to highlight Indian tradition, folklore, custom, rituals, conventions, and rites amidst the innovativeness of the Indian English drama. Other dramatists with substantial output includes the poet Nissim Ezekiel, Dina Mehta and Manjula Padmanabhan. The saga of English theatre, which began long back during the British Imperialism, continued further and is still an eminent part of various forms of theatre in India. Continuous study, deep understanding and above all the tuneful blend of the West and East have helped Indian English drama in India as a distinct art form whilst aiding it to stand apart with pride and dignity. The incidents like the economic
The crises in 1930 and the Independence movement influenced dramatists to write realistic dramas on social issues. Some of the playwrights like, Lobo Prabhu, A.S.P. Ayyar and Harindranath Chattopadhaya others wrote dramas on the social issues.

The credit of writing plays on contemporary issues like, socio-political, religious, art and east-west encounter, goes to Asif Currimbhoy who has successfully written actable dramas in English. There are nearly twenty-nine plays written in the span of the fifteen years, all plays are reflection of incidents that took place in India which influenced the author to pour out all the emotion in the dramatic form.

Asif Currimbhoy is a versatile playwright. All his plays prove Currimbhoy as a writer with calibre as he focuses on variety of contemporary incidents like the flight of Dalai Lama on *Om Mane Padme Hum!*; east-west encounter and planters life in the romantic play *Darjeeling Tea?*; the influence of the Nexalites on farmers to fight for their rights in *Inquilab*; the refugee struggle in *The Refugee*; the creation of Bangladesh in *Sonar Bangla*; the miseries of the farmers in Maharashtra during drought in *The Miracle Seed*; the dissolution of the assembly in Gujarat in *The Dissident MLA*; and the alienation feeling in *This Alien ... Native Land*. There is touch of humanity and optimism in all plays of Currimbhoy. The dramatic values are at the highest level. Bayappa Reddy observes: "His plays are first and foremost meant for the stage and he brilliantly succeeds in
writing plays for the theatre. His best plays are powerfully dramatic, revealing as they do his ability in contriving interesting situations, creating proper atmosphere, sustaining coherent action, portraying realistic and animated characters, writing sinewy dialogue and above all, experimenting boldly and successfully with variety of theatrical techniques." 1

The later phase of Asif Currimbhoy have greater universal appeal. Having a cosmopolitan background, he studied in California, and worked in France. Now he lives in India and writes on important international events and situation focuses human condition everywhere with compassion and truth. Hence his plays have universal appeal.

The three important plays of Asif Currimbhoy are Inquilab (1970), The Refugee (1971) and Sonar Bangla (1972). These plays are grouped together and called Bengal trilogy as they deal with the different problems and conditions in Bengal. Inquilab is a popular play of Asif Currimbhoy written in 1970; it deals with real incident and situation occurred in Bengal. The play mainly focuses on Bengal Naxalite movement. It is a movement of agrarians, who are influenced by few naxalites against the landlords. Prof. Datta is a major character in the play, a Professor of law in a University and staunch follower of Gandhian and Asutosh philosophy and teaches non-violence to the students. Amer is a son of Prof. Datta, fails to follow the principles of his father. Ahmed is an important character went
into Mizo hills, returned as a Naxalite loaded with revolutionary ideas. Another important character is Jain, a rich landlord. Shomik is an active member of this revolution. He is aware of exploitation of the farmers in the hands of landlords. Most of the farmers live in the state of cruel slavery and he must fight to set them free and give their legal right. Jain has become the victim of the riot of farmers as he is treated as an enemy which they hated. The social problems like unemployment, injustice, inequality lead to frustration of the young; the frustration is turned to violence. Asif Currimbhoy successfully uses theatre to reflect the anguish of youth who fail to realize the fact that society cannot be changed within short span of time but revolt is necessary to survive.

*Inquilab* is a well-structured social play with single theme and limited characters. There are always two or more paths. There is a confusion among people to select the paths in the play. One group believes in non-violence, bloodshed, and immediate result. They are influenced by Maoism and communism. There is lack of discipline in the agrarian movement. The proletariat also join the revolt which finally results in nightmare, bloodshed and disillusionment. The another group believes in non-violence and peace to change the society. In violent fight innocent people become victim like common women, children and Jain, a kind hearted landlord, who is made as a symbol of the system of which they hated. The opportunists like politicians make use of their power and try to
gain vote bank. The police are helpless as they have less power and facility. There are idealists who wanted to find out moral values and correct the situation. The words like mortality and conscience have no meaning in revolution. Water Meserve says "*Inquilab* shows the same anguish as the author extends his play about the Naxalite movement far beyond Bengal. By dramatizing different views of government, he builds his plot to the point of a test for self or nation - where everyone must, act, perhaps revolt, to survive..."\(^2\)

The plot- construction of the play *Inquilab* has three acts and three sets. The setting lies in classroom, prayer room and green Bengali countryside portion of a fertile plot of cultivable land of the Zamindar house. The emotions and tensions of the characters are brought out through dialogues and actions. Music is used to reveal the intentions of the characters. The sound of chapples' tap of the students reveal the anger and unity among them. The sound of the Shahanai of marriage symbolises happiness, hope and new life. The two important devices of humour and romance are used to reduce the tension and relax the situation.

*The Refugee* deals with the predicament and psychological trauma of the refugees of East Pak, who were wiped out of their native land in East Pak by Pak army. *The Refugee* is a one act play, published in 1971. The main theme of *The Refugee* is the struggle of refugee to survive and impact of refugees on Indian people. This play also deals with search of conscience
of Yassin, who is also a refugee. The characters of the play are full of different views of life who look at refugee problem from their outlook. Mita has humanitarian approach to help the refugees irrespective of religion. All six characters are concerned with the exodus of over ten million Bangladesh refugees into India in 1971. Yassin runs from Combilla University, takes shelter in the house of Sen Gupta who was also a refugee at the time of partition, nearly 24 years ago. Yassin quests for his consciences, finally decides to liberate his fellow countrymen from the clutches of Pakistan and joins the Mukti Bhaini.

Asif Currimbhoy is a non-practicing Muslim writer who brought out the victory of the humanity rather than the religion. In this play the dramatist presents the affection towards their religion and people belonging to their own religion. The dramatist skillfully constructed the plot of the play. Majority of the action takes place in the house of Sen Gupta; later the action moves in the refugee camp and the play ends in the house of Sen Gupta. There are five scenes in the play. The arrival Yassin forms the beginning of the play, his stay in the house of Sen Gupta forms the middle of the play and his decision to liberate East Bengal forms the end of the play.

There are five scenes in this one act play. The plot is well structured and has a proper beginning, a middle and an end. The characters are well portrayed. Yassin is type as well as an individual. Sen Gupta is a dominant
character as he is confident and behaves like a politician. Ashok and Nita are ideals youth and committed to their works. Prof. Mosin also becomes selfish and Yassin finds out the attachment of Mossin as an Indian-Muslim. The language used in the play is simple, lucid and clear. Asif currimbhoy dealt with burning problems of the Indian society and he experimented with dramatic language and melodramatic technique.

Through this play Asif Currimbhoy upholds the moral values of life. Sarala is the mother (ma) loved by all. She shows motherly love and affection to Ashok and Yassin. She feels concerned and cries while Yassin leaving home to join Mukti-Bhaini. Mita is an incarnation of commitment to help human being irrespective religion, caste and creed. She awakens the conscience of all the characters to uphold the humanity. Ashok is concerned with the people in the clutches of Pak army. Someone has to fight against Pak army, that someone might be anyone either Ashok or Yassin. Ashok took decision to join Mukti-Bhahini and convinced his parents that he took right decision. These values are skillfully brought out in the play.

*Sonar Bangla* is one of the Bangal trilogy of Asif Currimbhoy. The play is written in 1971, deals with division of East Pak with West Pak. The playwright pictures the pathetic condition of East Pakistan before its partition from Pakistan. The trauma of common people and military harassment is presented in the play. The emergence of independent
Bangladesh was not easy but it is a consequence of the struggle of common people and the horrors of war. The eternal struggle of the humanity against suppression and repression as well as the ultimate victory of the humanism over brutality forms the subject matter of the play. The common people of East Pak are full of the national feelings. The students also involve in the nation building activity and they also involve in the political field. They want to see their land free from the West Pakistan government. They create the revolutionary history. The playwright is successful in giving the real picture of the East Pakistan in the play.

*Sonar Bangla* is a well structured play, there are four acts with proper beginning, middle and an end. The actions in Act I take place in the country side of the West Pak (Now Bangladesh). In Act II actions take place on road where refugees move to Indian border, then moves to Ray house, dining table, then to hospital of refugee camp. In Act III actions take place in forest, bridge side road and ends with the ruined house and the tomb of Hussain.

The characters are loaded with the ideas of freedom. Mr. Anwar Hussain and Mujib Rahaman are the two diplomats sacrificed their life to liberate East Bangla from the clutches of Pak army. The two woman characters Sumata and Elizabeth are also sacrificing and devoted to their duty.
The title of the play is taken from a poem of Rabindranath Tagore. Anwar Hussain sings the poem and recollects the memory of his beautiful native place. The dream vision of his golden Bangla (Sonar Bangla) is shattered at the end of the play. His home is plundered, his mother’s tomb is destroyed and whole East Bengal is ruined. After the victory of the Indian army, there is a dream to construct "Sonar Bangla".

The language is simple and suitable to characters and understandable to Indian audience. The use of the Hindi words like razakar, mukti bahini, jihad, musalman give the touch of native place. Music is used to intensify the incident of bloodshed in Kushtia village. The international event of independence of Bangladesh is brought on the stage. The playwright is successful in giving the real picture of East Pakistan in the play. John Russel says: -" For a mirror to hold up to human nature that can reflect the unspoken and the unspeakable with more clarity of form and continuance of pleasure than dialogue of statement".

The other three important later plays of Asif Currimbhoy are An Experiment with Truth (1969), Darjeeling Tea? (1971), Om Mane Padme Hum! (1972). The main theme of the play An Experiment with Truth is Gandhi’s faith in satyagraha, truth and non-violence. The play also reveals the inner conflict of Mahatma Gandhi who has accepted the fact that every man has some faults, no one is perfect. Asif Currimbhoy also dramatizes the personality of Gandhi in the same light. The play covers the historical
incident of the Salt March, Gandhi's experiment with sexual desire, the death of Gandhi and Kasturi Ba.

There are three sets, in the first set Gandhi started his fasting unto death to bring unity among the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian and to stop violence. The second set is the main set of the play; it deals with the salt march. The seventy-eight satyagrahis with Gandhiji move from village to village. These seventy-eight satyagrahis are led by Gandhi are going to shake the mighty empire of the world. The non-violent satyagraha against salt tax is successful, the satyagrahis tolerated the brutal attack of the police. Gandhi propagates that love and non-violence can bring change in the society. The third set of the play forms the epilogue. In this set Gandhi looks more tired. The three wise men – a Hindu, a Muslim and an untouchable ask Gandhi to stop fasting and Gandhi is shot and dies with last word of 'He Ram'.

The play An Experiment with Truth has theatrical vitality because the dramatist has used flashbacks, shadow cutout and music technique to give unforgettable impression of the play to audience. As Meserve says-" Asif Currimbhoy is very systematic in using stage-the front portion of the stage is used for Salt March, the same stage is used for Ashram and on the other side of the stage is Patel interrogating the prisoner. These three activities take place on the stage without disturbing other scene and giving clear meaning to the audience, through music and shadow screen the dramatist
has given more information and movement description, which enable him to complete play within three acts. Through these device dramatist has control over the audience and he gives scope for a highly complex theatrical event in which the dramatist’s twin forces of dialogue and action fuses on stage to entertain and instinct an audience.”

Image of Theatre during 1970’s
*Darjeeling Tea?* is Asif Currimbhoy's outcome of tours in the tea gardens during his visit to Darjeeling in 1970. The play presents the picture of the planter's life with its nostalgic memories of the good old days, its fears of competition from new rival planters. The play has romantic stories of Bunty and Didi. This play also focuses on the changing values in the society, indigenous and expatriate, the lack of values leads to strained relation. The inner agony, dissatisfaction and loneliness is expressed. The play has proper beginning middle and happy end with vision that Bunty, an indigenous planter and Didi, the daughter of Mac would be the life partners. And change in the scenario that foreign planters move to their native and Indian planters take the place of expatriate planters. Irony and satire are the elements used in the play to reveal several truths. It's very ironic that Darjeeling Tea is grown but not served in its place. Asif Currimbhoy uses the device of satire to reveal the hidden meaning of the play. The drunkenness, the aping of the Brown Sahib and lavishness of the expatriate planters is satirically presented in the play. The dramatist, Asif Currimbhoy is known for innovative theatrical techniques in his plays. The scene shows the Himalayan range strengthens the play by exposing the lives of the hill people. This must be projected on the screen to show the gigantic eruption of nature. The playwright has used slides and shots to present Himalayan mountains and imagination of hill people worship as deity manifestation of Lord Krishna.
The language used in the play is lucid and easy to understand. To impress the audience and to give India language flavor, Currimbhoy uses some Hindi words in the play- marwari, sethji, pucca, brown sahib etc. The Hindi words appeal to joy and mirth the feeling of the audience. The use of spoken language suits the theme and characters. By using every day speech playwright has given a natural touch to the play.

The plot construction of the play is very systematic with proper beginning middle and an end. There are two acts in the play. In Act I, all characters are introduced except Didi. There are continuous switches of scenes between the planter's house, the club and tea estate in this act, and there are quick transitions through lights. The play ends with Act II scene II and this act can be called as climax of the play because Jennie pours out her inner grief to Mac and leave to England and Mac dies with heavy drink with the hope that his daughter will be happy with Bunty.

There is a lot of joy, mirth and laughter in the play. On the Annual Darjeeling do, Jennie and Bunty enact a play, songs are sung, parties are given and everybody is found in cheerful mood. For few minutes the English people are able to forget their gloom and bitterness. It is assessed that the play Darjeeling Tea? presents romance of Bunty and Didi, strained relation of the British Planters who enjoyed the supremacy in the earlier days but reluctant to cope with changing scenario. The natural beauty is
described in detail and the same is brought through shadow screen on the stage.

The play *Om Mane Padme Hum!* successfully presents Chinese invasion on Tibet and flight of Dalai Laman to India due to the political reasons. The play gives succinct account of the Chinese invasion, occupation of Tibet, cultural revolution in Tibet and dramatizes the conflict in the mind of the Dalain Lama. The followers of Dalai Lama are worried of the security of their spiritual leader. Finally, Dalai Lama reaches Himalayan region.

Asif Currimbhoy demonstrates the fine sense of the theatre in treating themes based on public events. This play is a pictorial representation of the living history of Tibet. The interesting elements of the play *Om Mane Padma Hum!* is juxtaposition of the opposite and the elements of conflict. There is opposition of the Buddhism and the Communism, the past and the present and violence and non-violence. The main purpose of Chinese invasion is to transform Tibet from the Buddhism to the Communism. There are attempts and effort of the cultural reformation through the military threat. The play *Om Mane Padme Hum!* proves the dramatist Asif Currimbhoy as a skilled writer of the theatrical plays. The political theme and public events are successfully treated in the play. The true historical events of Tibet are dealt successfully with the help of the dialogues of the Dalai Lama, the Monks,
the Chinese chief general and other generals. The proper mixture of the past and the present, dream sequence, juxtaposition of opposite and the element of conflict have been critically dealt, which enrich the value of drama.

Within two acts, Asif Currimbhoy exposes the Tibetan culture, faith and their way of life. In the act I, scene I all the characters are introduced, the monastery is beautifully described. The Act I, Scene II describes the flight of the Lama from Lhasa to Himalayan mountains with the help of Khamba tribes under the cover of the sandstorm. In this scene the discovery of two-year-old boy as reborn 13 Dalai Lama is presented through flash back technique. The Act II scene I introduces a new technique of six photos who goes back to the Lama’s examination of metaphysics which proves him as a great genius of religious and philosophical learning. Many important incidents take place in this scene. The Act II, scene II gives proper conclusion to the play. Jan Kuan San orders to attack Potala, the consequence is death and destruction in Lhasa and the Dalai Lama safely crosses the border of India with heavy heart. There is proper beginning, middle and end in the play.

The Language of the play is lucid and simple. The dialogues are crispy and easy to understand the intension of characters. The Hindi words like ferenghi and local word balaklava, a cap are used. The names of the characters in the play are Tibetan and Chinese names.
The other three later phase plays of Asif Currimbho y are- *The Miracle Seed* *The Dissident MLA*, and *ThisAlien... Native Land*. The play *The Miracle Seed* is a one act play with five scenes, presents the struggle and challenges of endurance of farmers in a village, a few hundred miles away from Bombay in Maharastra during drought in 1972. It is a well knit play of five characters - Ram is a farmer, Malti is his wife and she is pregnant for second child, Savitri is their sixteen-year-old stammering daughter, Bapa is the father of Ram and Laxman is Malti's nephew, an orphan arrive from Bombay to help his Mama and Masi.

The play is best known for realistic presentation of drought in a village few miles away from Bombay in Maharastra as it is a social play. The Farmers are struggling to get food and water, waiting for rain. They expect that the city people would help them at this juncture as they have fed city people earlier. The scorching sun blazing down on the earth, there is no rain for two years, resulting thirst, hunger and disillusionment. Everyone around are either quarrelling or crying. The domestic animal like cow is getting thinner and become shadow of itself. The helplessness for the farmers and the haphazard arrangement of government presents heavy air of harsh reality. The playwright Asif Currimbho y is successful in presenting the voice of farmers in theatre, the spectators realise to the harsh reality of life of farmers during drought.
The structure of the play is very systematic with proper beginning, middle and an end. The dramatist gives a great attention to the structure of the play, the pessimistic outlook of Ram and his frustration; agony and disappointment with the existing situation; Malti's patience, her understanding capacity and her great faith in idol Lord Ganesha; the arrival of Laxman with miracle seed and opening of new information of agriculture forms the beginning of the play. The consecutive failure of two monsoons results death of miracle seed and shakes faithful in God, Ram loses his temper and goes to work to cut the rock in mountain, where he earned two rupees a day which could feed the family, forms the middle of the play. Asif Currimbhoy always ends his plays with ray of hope, this play also ends with Ram's optimistic view as he decides not to go to the city for relief camp but to stay in village and wait for next monsoon. He gets the optimistic hope from his daughter Savitri's vegetable patch where she has grown healthy food grains from Laxman's miracle seeds.

Asif Currimbohy juxtaposes the poverty of the rural life with the prosperity of city life. The two opposite outlook through two characters – Ram and Laxman results in conflict. Asif Currimbhoy satires against the government schemes in providing relief to the drought affected public. The dream like sequence, the sound of construction of building reveal the inner tension of the characters. Asif Currimbhoy satires against the government schemes in providing relief to the drought affected public.
The language of the play is simple, clear and suitable to characters. There are some Hindi words which give touch of native language such as – Bapa, Mama, Masi, Namaste, beta, biri, charas, bhang etc. The use of the simple language has expressed deep feelings and suffering of farmer like Ram. Some of the auditory images like the creak of the rope, the painful dying breath of the cow, the stammering of Savitri, the pregnant Malti’s taking a deep breath of exasperation and the giggling of the grandfather have widened the meaning of the play and presents difficult condition of farmers for survival.

*The Dissident MLA* is a work of art on the socio-political event that took place in Ahmadabad in Gujarat in 1974. The play deals with Manubhai, a shroud, selfish, cunning and ambitious politician, who does not even hesitate to use his son to achieve his aim of dissolution of the legislative assembly. This play is full of realism, satire and indirectly suggest moral implications, which are lacking in politicians. The play is an attack against the selfishness and dirty game of politicians and reveals the truth that who endeavor to root out corruption, themselves fall a pray to it.

The funny use of prop is donkey. Shanti brought an ass to home to give ass milk to her husband Manubhai. The presence of an ass gives a dirty idea to Manu to insult the minister, shave the head of the Home Minister and sit him on the donkey. Aisf Currimbhoy probes into the mind of the character and present points of view rather than developing
character. Manu is as surrealistic character; he is a schemer, cunning, hypocrite and ambitious. Kantibhai is a staunch follower of the non-violence and the satyagrah. He adopts the weapon of fast and declares that he is going on fast for the dissolution of the Assembly and the restoration of normalcy. Asif Currimbhoy presents the typical mentality of the Indian politicians who go to astrologers to know their fortune. Ramesh represents the students who are misguided by the politicians and enraged to fight against the corruption. Later they turn to be the part of corruption. The harsh reality of the politician and corrupt system of society is brought on the stage.

*ThisAlien... Native Land* is the last play written by Asif Currimbhoy in 1975. The play deals with inner plight of a Jew family who live in India. Asif Currimbhoy goes into an Indian Jewish family’s psychology and sensibility, connections with India and the call of the newly instituted Jewish state of Israel. The family is dissatisfied with life. The strained relationship among family members is discussed through dialogues of the characters. Joseph is the head of the family, his wife is Rachel, Jacob and David are two sons, Sarah is the only daughter. Tara comes in the middle of the play, as a wife of Jacob. Love and sex are the two motives of the play. The playwright clearly depicts young people are drowning towards these two instincts easily. They don’t have control over these. They are attracted towards each other easily. The theatrical devices are the special
The various props are used in the play to make the action more impressive such as dining table, upstairs, bedroom setting, rocking chair, chairs, telephone, and door bell sound. The sound of waves and sound of building construction indicate disturbed mind of characters. Most of the action takes place at dining table. The chairs are kept more and later reduced as characters Jacob and Tara come and go away from the house. When Sarah departs the house and Joseph dies chairs are removed to show their absence in the house. The rocking chair is the indication of authority.

There is a proper beginning, middle and an end in the play. There are two acts, the act I, introduces all the characters of the play. In act II the conflict among the family members is intensified and in the act II, scene II Jacob becomes the head of the family which gives proper conclusion to the play. A picture of the plight of the Jews who find themselves alienated in India and the land of their adoption is skillfully presented.

Asif Currimbhoy recreates imaginatively the significant events in his dramas. The special skill of the dramatist lies in use of techniques like music, dream-like sequence, shadow screen, use of props on stage. The dramatist has great potentiality, creativity and talent to use special technical devices. After analyzing the nine later phase plays of Asif
Currimbhoy, it is assessed that "Currimbhoy is an expression of real voice of social events and inner plight of people through theatre." The later plays of Currimbhoy which are maturer and more significant in understanding social, political life in contemporary India. The contemporary social issues are incorporated in his plays.

The plays of Asif Currimbhoy deal with basic human conditions and shows powerfully how the human endeavor affected by the national and international problems and events. He is a dramatist with a genuine concern with the human life and the same is interpreted through his dramatic art. Thus through his powerful dramas, he emerges as a major Indian English dramatist of contemporary times.
REFERENCES


