CHAPTER XVII

LITERARY HINDI DRAMA IN THE PUNJAB
Upto the thirteen of the present century, Panjab had no Hindi drama worth the name. First one dozen years of the 20th century have been called period of vacanoy and the period 1912-1933, the period of revival, by historians of Hindi Drama, Panjab could not boast of more than a few solitary figures who wrote plays in this province so far as Hindi drama was concerned.

SUDARSHAN.

Sudarshan wrote four plays- 'Anjana', 'Honorary Magistrate', 'Bhagya Chakkur' and 'Sikander'. In the matter of the use of language in his dramas, Sudarshan like a true dramatist was not a purist and his plays use Hindustani, neither Hindi nor Urdu. He is described as a Hindi dramatist mainly because he did not employ Urdu or a Mauvi, and also because his plays are also available in Dev Nagra, the script employed these days for writing Hindi.

But credit goes to Sudarshan for writing his 1st play 'Dya Mand Matak' in Hindi and not in Urdu in the year 1916. Although an unimportant creation, it brought the author much fame and much needed monitory reward. Incidentally this was the 1st publication of his literary career. The play was not meant for the stage, full of technical defects as it was but it sold well because of the subject matter which appealed to the Arya Samajists of the country.

Sudarshan was born in 1896 in Sialkot in a poor Brahman family and wrote in Urdu from childhood days. A prolific journalist, short story writer, novelist and play writer, Sudarshan turned to Hindi much later and has been very popular and eagerly read by the present generation in the Panjab and outside. He was named as a Hindi writer of Panjab by the Panjab Government in 1930-31.
'Anjana', his very important play with a Pauranic story to tell, was published at Bombay in 1926 and for which the Panjab Government gave an award of Rs.700/- a big sum in these days. 'Honorary Magistrate' came out in 1926, 'Bhagya Chakkar' in 1937 and 'Sikandar' in 1947. Sikandar was awarded Rs.2000/- by the new Indian Independent Government. This play and 'Bhagya Chakkar' have been prescribed as courses of study by many universities of the country and are still being prescribed and have sold more than a lakh copies each.

'Anjana', although a Pauranic story, has a very modern socio-psychological theme and interpretation to offer. Written by a rather raw hand, the play does not bear the impress of a mature production and lacks compactness; it is no doubt a very bold departure from the traditional and the conventional drama of the Company theatre of the times. The dialogues, in stead of using artificial rhythmic prose and verse are in simple spoken prose and songs are rare and appropriately located.

'Honorary Magistrate', published in 1926 is full of caustic humour and is a sort of a farce, denouncing the institution of Honorary Magistrates inaugurated by the Brit rulers to strengthen their imperialist strangle-hold over the country. It was a very popular play by Sudarshan and because of its patriotic theme in those very early days when commerce drama was completely irresponsible, its publication was highly significant.

Sudarshan never wrote for the stage and this was precisely why his achievement as a playwright did not rise to his full capacity. The two later plays, 'Bhagya Chakkar' and 'Hamid Sudarshan' (Shasha Vibhag, Panjab Publication, Patiala 1960) pp.3-4.
'Sikander' were actually written originally for the films. 'Bhagya Chakkar' was filmed by New Theatres, Calcutta, many years before it was printed as a book in 1947. The story treats of the evil and goodness in man and is constructed as a cine play, full of surprises, improbabilities and artificial turns in plot and characterisation.

'Sikandar' too was published in book form towards the end of 1947, having been filmed much earlier, years before partition and independence. The film 'Sikandar' was produced by director Sahab Modi in which Prithvi Raj Kapoor played the leading role and Sudarshan wrote the story. In the book form 'Sikandar' was greatly reduced and altered. It is a play in three acts and is well wrought and organised. Maharaja Puro, the Indian adversary of Alexander has been idolised and idealised and is shown superior to Alexander, the Greek, in character and humanity. It is a mixed play, linguistically speaking, for the Greek characters speak in Urdu, while Indians use Hindi.

Sudarshan has been read much as a dramatist but staged very little even by the amateur college stage in the Panjab.

The General Scene.

Upto the thirties of the present century, Panjab had no Hindi drama worth the name. First one dozen years of the 20th century have been styled 'period of vacancy' and the years between 1912-33, the period of revival, throughout the country by historians of Hindi drama. Panjab too, could not boast of more than a few solitary figures who wrote plays of indifferent value in the 'vacant period' while very little revival took place in the later period of 1912-33 in so far as Hindi drama was concerned.
Uday Shankar Bhatt and Hari Krishna Premi both hailing from outside have lived and written in the Punjab and gained country-wide renown. They have written on mythological, historical and social themes. Chander Gupt Vidyalankar and Upinder Nath Ashk are two other big names as playwrights of whom the latter is decidedly more successful on the stage. He is also more deeply rooted in the Punjab soil and interested in his environments and the humanity around.

There developed a tendency away from the Paumani legends and the medieval period of Indian history to be exploited in preference. There were more urgent themes of social import near at hand and Hindi drama now thought of coming to grips with more intricate and significant social and national problems. In the Punjab, Vidyalankar, Bhatt and Premi led the way and Ashk took the movement forward to its natural climax by adopting realism, pure and simple, for his dramatic style and expression.

Parsad tradition of Historical plays was, however, kept up and developed by Chander Gupt Vidyalankar in his 'Ashoka' and 'Reva' and by Uday Shankar Bhatt in his 'Mukti Path'. These historicals fall out of the spirit of the times which stressed the Hindu-Muslim unity theme and for this took up the Indo-Muslim period of medieval Indian history to write drama about. Thus Uday Shankar Bhatt wrote 'Dahir', Hari Krishna Premi wrote 'Raksha Bandhan', 'Shiva Sadhana', 'Ahuti' 'Suvapan Shang' 'Kittor', etc., and Upinder Nath Ashk wrote 'Jay Prasaj'. In these the spirit of chivalry and suicidal jealousies of the feudal times and Rajput clans, burning patriotism and communal unity became the subject matter.
Drama in the Panjab

HINDI OPERA.

Some important problem plays came to be written at the hands of dramatists like Lakshmi Narain Mishr and Seth Gebind Das outside Panjab but this province came to this type of drama comparatively late. Another type of drama that originated in this period and attained certain level of achievement was the opera or verse-play and Panjab’s contribution in this genre is formidable ‘Bhagya Gandha’, ‘Vishwamitra’ and ‘Radha’ by Uday Shankar Bhatt are Hindi operas. One-act plays proper also developed during the period and Upinder Nath Ashk and Udayshankar Bhatt are prominent one-act play-wrights from the Panjab.

‘Chhata Beta’ by Upinder Nath Ashk and ‘Bhagya Chakkar’ by Sudarshan belong to this period but fail to fall into any of the categories mentioned above.

DRAMA OF THARAD TRADITION.

Among these we include, ‘Ashoka and ‘Reva’ by Chander Gupt Vidyalankar, and ‘Nukti Ikat’ by Bhatt. Ashoka (1935) is the maiden composition by Chander Gupt Vidyalankar and was written less for the stage and more for the screen to which fact the author has himself alluded in the introduction to the book. He further states that in this play he has given a number of scenes that cannot be easily depicted on the stage but these can be filmed with no difficulty. Though broken into the usual 6 acts some structural looseness was inherent in the composition of the drama. There is also superfluity of scenes. The dialogues are sometimes longer than they should be, monologue is also employed. Simple Hindi is used so that the Persian vocabulary which also occurs sometimes, does not harmonise. Interludes are also interposed between the scenes. In the matter of characterisation and historical verisimilitude, the play is better than most
of its predecessors of the historical school. 'Rawa' (1938) is maturer, although this too was written for the screen and suffers from lack of proper stage sense. Scenes are described in detail in the introductory directions, while 'Ashoka' is a tragic-comedy, 'Rawa' is an unrelieved tragedy.

'Mukti Path' (1944) by Bhatt is less lengthy than his preceding plays. There is, however, multiplicity of scenes, some of which are depictable only on the screen and are visibly beyond the capacity of the existing stage. The story is based on the life and teaching of Lord Buddha and has been told with real dramatic effect. Monologue has been reduced to the minimum.

A mention has already been made of 'Sikander' by Sudarshan (1947) It may be said that Chander Gupt Yidyalankar and Uday Shankar Bhatt, alongside Sudarshan are the historical playwrights of this school from the Punjab and they have succeeded in keeping up the tradition of Parsad in the province.

MEDIEVAL - AGE DRAMA.

These plays pertain to the Muslim, Rajput and Maratha periods of Indian history and among the playwrights who attempted these historical Maha dramas in the Punjab are included Hari Krishan Premi with his 'Raksha Bandhan', 'Shiva Sadhana', 'Swarup Bhung', 'Mitr', 'Pratishodh' and 'Vish Pat', Uday Shankar Bhatt with his 'Dahir' and Upinder Nath Ashok with his 'Jay Prajat', (not for the stage). These also belong to the Parsad tradition.

'Raksha Bandhan' (1934) made history as it dramatized the little known story of brotherly regard and affection of and the supreme sacrifice made by Humayun, the Mogal emperor for Maharani Karmwati, wife of the valiant Rana Sangram Singh.
who had fought against Humayun’s father, Babur, the founder of the Moghal empire in India. The theme of the play was national unity based on Hindu Muslim friendship. The Muslim characters speak in Urdu while Hindus speak simple Hindi.

'Ahuti' (1940) relates the story of the friendship between Rana Hamir and Mir Mehma Shah (an army commander of emperor Ala-ud-Din Khilji) and the supreme sacrifices made by them for each other. The theme is again inter-communal unity inspiring much needed patriotic fervour in the modern times. In 'Shiv Sadhna' (1933) Shivaji has been described as a protagonist of Hindu-Muslim unity, 'Pratishodh' takes us to Bundel Khand, the birth place of the author, and to the times of Aurangzeb, the bigotted Moghal emperor at Dehli. The story is rather long and intricate, full of heroic and as well as tragic incidents of great emotional intensity. 'Swami Bhang' (1940) is a play about Dara, the elder brother of this same Aurangzeb and is written again with a view to foster Hindu-Muslim harmony in the country. The same theme is maintained in his next publication 'Nittir', in which friendship of an ideal type is portrayed between a Hindu and a Muslim of the times of Allau-din Khilji.

'Vish Pan' narrates the story of Princess Krishna of Kesar and here we find sacrifice on the altar of patriotism. Roop Narain Rande tells the same tale in his 'Krishan Kumari', the translation of Bengali play by Madhusudan Datta but Premi does not give merely the drama of the happenings in the life of heroines, he has a way of emphasising the patriotic theme and inspiring love for the country.

As Premi’s plays have always a patriotic purpose he has idealised some of his more important characters and some of these have the aspect of preachers and missionaries. Not often they seem to be mere spokesmen or symbols, yet there is no
dearth of living characters in his plays. Premi has used the spoken Hindi or Hindustani in his dialogues of Muslim and Hindu characters alike and the language used is generally appropriate and with necessary dramatic truth. Acharya Ram Chand Shukla has found his dialogues better than those of Parsad and the characters have their several idioms and expressions which make him ring true. Unlike Chander Gupt Vidyalankar and Bhatt, Premi has written for the stage and his plays are eminently stage worthy. With the sole exception of 'Shiva Sadhna' which has five acts, all other plays by Premi are divided in 3 acts, each usually having many scenes.

'Jay Prajay' of Ashk which professes to be a historical play, is concerned more with the study of the split personalities of its main characters and unlike later dramas by him, is not eminently stagable. 'Dahir' or 'Sindh Pathan' by Bhatt is a tragic writing in the linguistic style of Parsad and recount the causes based in national irrationality that led to the fall of Sind as an independent state at the hands of Arab invaders. The plot is replete with long undramatic didactic speeches and digressive monologues, rendering it unsuitable for the stage 'Vikrama Ditya', 'Ambe', 'Sagar Vijay' Mukti Path' and 'Nya Smaj are some of his more important plays of various descriptions and styles.

One characteristic of these plays is that they are informed by a desire to solve some present difficulty in the context of past historical happenings and are thus closely related to the national present. The dialogues are generally high flown and characters idealised both ways.

Among the more important Pauranic plays written in the Panjap during the period, we can enumerate 'Ambe'(1935)
and 'Sagar Vijay' (1937) by Shatt, 'Atal Vijay' by Premi and 'Revan' (1949) by Dev Raj Dinshah. Of these, 'Revan' is a more popular and successful attempt.

REALIST SCHOOL.

Characteristic of the more modern times however, is the Hindi realistic problem-play written under the direct influence of the contemporary west. Prithvi Nath Sharma, Uday Shankar Shatt and Upinder Nath Ashk are playwrights from Panjab who have written on contemporary themes concerning individual or national psychology. Approach to the dramatic art in these plays is different and the present and the real predominate over the past and the unrealistically romantic.

The capacity of the available realistic stage is also kept in view and generally speaking, greater stagability is obtained. Non-realistic dialogue, monologues, asides etc. stand discarded. The story has straightened out, while characterization is subtler and more complex and the element of internal conflict is introduced in a far less obvious style. Sex has demanded its share of attention and the modern Hindi playwright has concentrated on this aspect of the social situation in our present times.

The new realistic movement was led by Lakshmi Harain Mishra and the cue was taken up by playwrights of the Panjab. Prithvi Nath Sharma wrote 'Dubidha' in 1934 in which the dilemma of a highly educated Indian woman was delineated with characteristic effect. The story centres round the contradiction inherent in the concept of marriage and free living. 'Apradhi' (1939) is a study in the nature of crime, born of social circumstance. In 'Sadh' (1944) Prithvi Raj Sharma has delved deeper into the problems of matrimony and demands of sex and is definitely
maturer and superior dramatic creation specially in the field of characterisation. The problem of the changing man under the growing impact of western modernism and the Indian conservative outlook is searchingly analysed and a compromise is invariably suggested. 'Kamla' by Uday Shankar Bhatt is another feminist play, championing the aspirations for equality of the modern Indian educated woman but in 'Chhaya', by Hari Krishan Premi a very different problem, that of a writer in the clutches of the ruthless and callous publisher is presented.

Among the realistic play-wrights with the nationalist theme, only two writers from Panjab are mentionable Upinder Nath Ashik and Hari Krishan Premi. 'Swarg Ki Shaalik' by Upinder Nath Ashik deals with the problem of women and education and is a powerful satire on the un-educated and the mis-educated both, and advocates 'progressive' conservatism as against false radicalism. The play is eminently stage-worthy and was first performed at Simla Kali Bari Hall on 10th December,1946.

SOME NON-PROBLEM PLAYS.

'Vikas' and 'Chhata Beta' are fantasies with a rich social content. 'Chhata Beta' was also staged at Kali Bari Hall Simla on 10th August,1949. 'Qaid Aur Uran' and 'Vidrohini Ambe' are two other problem plays from his pen 'Bandhan' by Premi grapples with the modern problem of labour-capital conflict while this drama is full of external strife, it is deficient in internal conflict and preaches Gandhian Socialism in the fashion of an idealist and is, on the whole, a mediocre creation.

1. I was present at the performance—G.S.
Verse play came to be written in these days. Although there is general profusion of poetry in the old Sanskrit drama and passions and emotions are abundantly displayed in all, verse drama did not exist. Thus opera (poetic drama) came to the Hindi world from England mainly, where Shelley, Browning and Swinburne had composed beautiful verse dramas. In 1913 Parasad published the 1st opera 'Garumalya' in Hindi. Hari Krishan Premi has given us 'Swarn Vihan', an opera with nationalism for its theme. Premi's political cult has not gone beyond Gandhian nationalism and he has advocated this philosophy in most of his dramas. But Uday Shankar Bhatt rises higher as a verse dramatist and a writer of operas. Only, he errs in using Sanskritised Hindi in them. He has written 'Mataya Gandha', 'Vishwamitter' and 'Badha'. 'Mataya Gandha' treats the eternal woman and her conflicts and contradictions while 'Vishwamitter'(1938) depicts the unresolved conflict between man and woman. He has forged a sort of free verse, a fit instrument for stylised dialogues. Although lyricism dominates here, characterization is good. There is some good poetry in these verse plays of Premi and Bhatt (more so in the latter) but as operas these have not gained popularity on the stage. Radio has however taken kindly to them.

ONE-ACT TO THE FRONT.

1936 'Mata Duniya Saapantins', 'Var Nirvachan', 'Seth Labh Chand' etc. were published by 1940. 'Istri Ka Hriday', 'Sammasaaya Ka Ant' 'Adim Yug' and his six melo-dramas are out of market. 'Jiwan' and 'Jawan' were in a novel style.

'Jhagralu' a humorous satire by Ashk was written in about 1931. In 1937 he published 'Papi Vaishya', 'Lakshmi Ka Swagat', 'Adhikar Ka Rakshak' etc. in the western style, 'Dubida' by Prithvi Nath Sharma (1937) has been considered a one-act play by some critics although it is a full three-act play as it stands.

'Hams' a Hindi monthly brought out its special one-act play issue in May, 1938. These monthlies and the Radio were mainly responsible for the birth and development of Hindi one-act play. Uday Shankar Bhatt, Ashk and Vishnu Prabhakar made their start in this field as writers for the radio and were making experiments for sometimes in order to discover for themselves the true one-act play technique.

The greatest contribution of Bhatt to the literature of the small drama is his emotionally surcharged plays, like 'Vishwasmitra' 'Radha' 'Matsya Gandha', 'Kalidas', 'Naagrdoth', 'Vikram-o-vrashiya' but is a basically realist playwright. He started as a one-act play-wright in 1921-22 when he wrote his first one-act play, 'Aashyog Aur Saarajya' and 'Chitrnanjan Das'. It is said that 'Chitrnanjan Das' was staged and Sri Bhatt himself took up a role in it. 'Ek Hi Qabar Ham' (1936) (the theme being communal harmony) Das Hazar' (1936) 'Istri Ka Hriday', 'Naqli Aur Asli', 'Bare Admi Ki Mritu' 'Vish Ki Puja' 'Munshi Anokha Lal' were published between 1936-1942. His one-act plays came in 1945 when he published 'dim'. It was published by Hindi Bhavan, Lahore, U.S.A. 2. Ram Charan Mahender: Hindi Ekanti Ka Udbhav aur Vikas, P.160.
Prathm Vivah), "Jannu Aur Gannav" and "Ramar Sambhay". From 1945-1954 he wrote social one-act plays discussing national and other problems. These are in dozens, some of which have been successfully staged as well. According to Shiv Ran Singh Chauhan in plays like 'Nai Bat' 'Babu Ji ', 'Yeh Sawantarta Ka Yug' 'Nyopia' 'Apni Apni Khat Par', 'Bargain', 'Uruh Dasha', 'Farda Ke Rechha', the art of Bhattas one-act playwright touched its highest mark. He has written especially for the Radio, plays like 'Gandhi Ji Ka Ram Rajya', 'Bharam Pragnya', 'Chila Chalo Re', 'Amar Ashama', 'Balji Madan', 'Sange Butt', 'Ishq Charitra (an adaptation) Himalya Ke Shikhar Se 'Van Mahatmay' 'Madan Dahan'. Bhatt has achieved a poise and an ease and a balance between the old and new techniques, a difficult job indeed.

Bhatt has steadily perfected his one-act play technique from year to year and is a prolific creator. He has written for the journals, radio and the stage. Most of his one-act plays are also one-act affairs with unities of time, space and action. These are full of stage directions also.

Spinder Natar Ashik is a talented one-act playwright and possesses perhaps the keenest sense of the dramatic. Realistic in conception and execution his plays are very well wrought, full of local colour, fine characterisation and some very crisp dialogue. He has a keen insight into human motive and possess a unique grasp of the problems of middle class Hindu Society. His hold on the speeches of his realistically drawn characters from various walks of life is his strong point. His technical skill leaves nothing to be desired.

Ashik is a progressive writer, an ardent advocate of socialist values; he has no truck with the orthodox and the
conservative. Irony, wit, humour and satire he uses with very good effect, slashing and denouncing the old time institutions, beliefs and superstitions. "Ashk inaugurated the Hindi drama of symbols and suggestions. These one-act plays are highly realistic, their environments are romantic and their main attribute is suggestiveness."

Ashk started writing one-act plays in 1936 and by 1939 gave us about a dozen one-act plays on social satire. These include 'Lakshmi Ka Swagat', 'Crossward Paheli', 'Ashikar Ka Rakshak', 'Swarg Ki Jhalak'.

The 2nd period of creation lasted another three years i.e. from 1940-1943, when he wrote symbolic and suggestive plays, including among them, 'Chharnah', 'Chilman', 'Shirki', 'Shumbak (satire) Devtaon Ki Chhaya Men', 'Chhata Beta', 'Bhikhi Bati' and 'Andhi Gali'. Again from 1944 to 1952 he wrote quite a large number of psychological plays and burlesques. Among these are included, 'Adi Marg', 'Anji Didi', 'Bhanwar', 'Kalsa Sabu', 'Maaji Aya', 'Andhi Gali', 'Parda Uthao, Parda Girao', 'Batsiya Siama Malik', 'Nave ka Nrikat club Ka Udghatam'.

Upinder Nath Ashk has practical stage and radio experience and is very acceptable playwright for the A.I.R. He incorporates profuse stage directions in the texts of his plays for the guidance of the producer. A talented actor himself, he has taken his troupe all about India including Panjab and given performances to huge audiences.

Hari Krishan Prami as one-act playwright has acquired some stature, mainly because his out put in that type has been formidable. He too has written for the student theses:
1. Dr. Ram C. Ram Nahan ri: H in 'Ekunk Ka Gabbav Aur V Kaas, etc.'
   (Translated from Original Hindi- G.C.)
2. Upinder Nath Ashk in present settled in Allahabad (U.P.) G.C.
and the Radio and made his one-act plays like his full plays
the medium of his social and political idealism (Gandhism)
'Saatish Mandir' is his representative one-act play. 'Man
Mandir' takes forward his favourite integration theme. 'Niyay
Mandir' is another example of Premi's historical idealism.

His one-actors give the impression of being summarised full plays and are not technically sound. These are
generally broken into three scenes and the opening scene is
often as long as a full one-act play of the longer play and
moves at a slow tempo. The plays make weak climaxes or even
fail to make them and are on the whole rather simple things
lacking in dramatic economy and strength.

Jay Nath Malin has also written much by way of one-
act plays and has found favour with the journal and the
broadcasting station. He has tried to introduce the dramatic
1 element of J.C. Francis into Hindi. Malin started his career
as one-act play-wright with his 'Loosarion Ka Shikar' (1956).

He is good at burlesque and has written a number of plays in
this line. 'Lakhnavi Bahadur'; 'Savabe Sahib Ka Insaaf'; 'Bateron
Ka Shamaan'; 'Pathanj Ka Khilari'; 'Kauhi ka Ghils'; 'Bare
Admi', are some more known. 'Navabi Shanti' was recognised
as the best radio feature of the year 1949 in which year it
went on the air. 'Parmatma Ka Pachchhhatap', 'Yudh ke Saud;
'Vidrohi ki Gristari'; 'Desh Ki Jitt'; 'Lal Din' are plays
saturated with the feelings of progressive national spirit.

'Philosopher' (1950) 'Democracy' (1950) 'Convancing' (1950)
'Hehman' (1950) 'Piimi Kastri' (1950) Chitt Bhi Meri', Patti
Bhi Meri' (1950) 'Maar Mar Kar Hakim' (Translation 1950) 'Babu
Khai Chand' (1953) 'Lottary' (1955) 'Abbishap' are some of his
1. Dr. Ram Charan Mahender: 'Hindi Ekanki Ka Vishav Aur V kes
P.252.
Radio plays like 'Samvedni Sadan' (1951), 'Chanti Sammelan' (1954), 'War Nirnachan' (1955), 'Neti' (1955) and 'Hai Ki Jis' (1956) are some of his longer one-act creations.

Malini is a producer and an actor himself and thus is practically experienced in the art of drama. He is a man of very incisive and biting wit and humour and is acknowledged quite a successful dramatist for the Radio Station as well as for the stage.

Prithvi Nath Sharma has published his one-act plays in the following order: 'Vaglanik ki Patni', 'Chhoti Sat', 'Bhal Aur Vijay', 'Sadhi', 'Kukti', 'Dubidha', 'Aparadhi', 'Saundarya Pratigya', 'Bati'.

He is a moral idealist but has a rational approach to all problems be face. The greatest distinction of his one-act plays is his incorporation into it of high thinking, rationality, new logic and philosophical depth which compels us to think at every step. These plays are, however, not quite stage worthy for they have not been composed for performance and are to be read only.

Chander Gup Vidyalankar, has added lyrical quality and intellectual content to the naked realism of his one-act plays. 'Manush Ki Qimmat' (1940) is his most known one-act play in which the author has shown that the price of man in society is his complete self-immolation 'Hindustan Ja Kar Kahina' (1948) is a radio play, almost a feature. 'Yanewalid' (1943), 'Bhera' (1943), 'Cosmopolitan Club' (1945) and 'Yav Prabhat' (1947) are some of his other one-act plays. A social idealist, Vidyalankar uses wit and satire to criticise the prevailing social institutions and beliefs.

Yagya Dutt Sharma has also written some one-act plays during the period under review.

- *Ram O Tum* (translated as *M. V. Aur* 219 (Translation wins, G...).
Among those who write mainly for the radio, Vishnu Prabhakar, Chāranjīt and Harish Chander Khanna require special mention besides Bhatt. Premi, Ashik and Malin who have been already noticed. Dev Dutt Atal, Krishan Chander, Prof. Durga Dutt Manon, Dev Raj Dinsh, Yashpal, Ram Vatsyayan, Ashey Kumar Yadav and Mohan Rakesh, Satook and Mohan Chopra are also related to Punjab and have written plays with different degrees of success to their credit. Some of these like Chāranjīt, H.C. Khanna and Satook have had direct association with Radio production of dramas and features and are persons of sufficient personal experience in the line. Others have also been influenced by the Radio broadcasting and the newly developed uses of the medium of sound.

Vishnu Prabhakar with his reality based idealism has studied middle class man in his radio one-act plays, features, monologues, fantasies etc. He has written on national, social, psychological subjects and themes for adults and the young alike. His conscious of his character in some of his plays and is known to have used his art as an instrument of psychological analysis. His scope is vast and he has gone into different questions of political, social economic or psycho-analytical significance. In ‘PaPa’ ‘Vahant’, ‘Ratishodh’ ‘Insan’, ‘Devton ki Chati’, ‘Vira Punjab’, ‘Chander Karm’ ‘Rakat Chandan’, ‘Door Aur Paat’ ‘Kee Purano’ ‘Shavat Andhikar’ ‘Bagdan’, ‘Naya Smaj’, ‘Vichar Aur Karm’ and ‘Prem’ his themes are varied and treatment, of different degrees of achievement. In another category of socio-psychological plays can be included his creations like ‘Namta Na Vish’ ‘Uphatna ka Chhall’, ‘Main Dooni Kohin Hoon’.
DRAKA IN THE PANDAB

'Hatya Ke Band', 'Jahan Dahiya Deu Mile', 'Doraha', 'Dur Vaan Ji Na Saki', 'Khat Das Baje', 'Judge Ka Faizla' and 'Din Kharab', play like 'Bimar', 'Kranti', 'Congressman Bano', 'Namara Swadhiita Sangram' have India and patriotism for their theme. A number of farces and burlesques and light comedies also came out of his multi-sided pen. History and legend too had their share of tribute and 'Ashok', 'Tarvedin', 'Jhansi Ki Rani', 'Nahush Ka Panan', 'Kans Bordan', 'Janamashtai', 'Ganga Ki Gatha' etc. are his plays belonging to this category. He has written especially for radio miscellaneous compositions, features and adaptations of passing interest.

It is agreed that Vishnu Narshankar rarely writes for the stage but there are exceptions to the rule. His later works like 'Ashok' and 'Rakt Chandan' are one-scene plays and reach carefully constructed climaxes but didacticism generally dominates at the expense of dramatic intensity. His achievement on the whole is uneven and one-sided, for he generally writes for the radio station and rarely for the dramatic stage.

Chiranjit is another talent concerned with radio broadcasting. He writes plays of romance, reality and light comedy. He has also put his poetic talent to good effect and has given us a number of musical plays as well. In all, he has written more than a hundred radio plays, operettas and features. 'Madhur Milan', 'Pratham Bandhan', 'Jivan Sakti', 'Nagri Duk' 'Chhabi Bandhan', 'Dev Danav' etc., have characteristics in musical quality of the western opera about them and have been successfully broadcast 'Shahjai ko Ansho' was very successful on the air. Music in this case was provided by Bari Shankar.

1. Dr. Mahender: Hindi Munshi, 'Dohay Aur Vikas' P. 5
"Dadi Man Gai" is a sort of a critical review of the rapid changes that are coming about in our environments. His humour is not pungent but sweetly critical. He has rejected the time honoured conception of mystic love and advocates physical love bound by economic relationships in a number of his well-known plays. 'Matak Ka Ant' is his typical creation in this respect. Mystery plays have also attracted his creative talent and he has written one-act plays like 'Satmala Makan' and 'Maha Shaveta'. 'Dastar Jate Same' was perhaps his first 39-tripshamasa light comedy, which was followed by plays like 'Telephone', 'Shaqal Biri', 'Apharan', 'Dadas Ki Ki Sanjha', 'Holi Ke Din', 'Vivah Ki Dhoome' 'Mahman', etc. 'Nacho Nagar' is a novel experiment in construction. 'Tarang' is a socio-psychological study of frustration of a lower-middle class school teacher trying to enter into the ranks of the middle class above him. His 'Hamara Swadhinata Sangram', (1950) is his best-known play which has six features.

Chiranajit has inventive imagination and his plays are full of action, his humour is of a higher order, born of intellectual and mental incongruities. He is a master playwright of the broadcasting studio and his drawbacks are also due to the medium in which he specializes.

Dr. Hardev Sahiri has written 'Osh Bhakat Smrati Puru', a historical play with a patriotic theme. Mention also may be made of Day Datt Askal who has given us plays rooted in revolutionary experience and are replete with patriotic feelings. He has published ten one-act plays 'Swarg Maa Gandhi', 'Katyayi Vijay', 'Yeh Vijay Dakshini Hai', 'Dhada Ki Mar', 'Asaf Kharyantar', 'Rug Ka Ina', 'Dakshina Swarg', 'Muktta Datta Gandhi', 'Noakhili Tarath Itera', and 'Stya grah aur Duragren'.

DRAMA IN THE PUNJAB

Of late Krishan Chander the progressive playwright has come to write in Hindi. His "Hamar Hakhir", is a powerful denunciation of our capitalist system. "Rajya ka Band" published in 1948, is a one-act play based upon a famous western novel. "Samai ka Bahir" is his collection of selected plays which are very popular with the amateur stage in the Panjab. Prof. Durga Dutt Hanon has given "Samrat Anant Dev", "Illind", "Menander", "Pili Andni" are some of his mentionable works in the line. History is his main field.

Mohan Bakesh has achieved distinction as the author of "Agra Hamd Din". It has won government award and has been prescribed a course of study in the colleges. Principally a man of fiction, Bakesh is a promising playwright as well.

Inder Singh Chakkarwati, a prolific writer of Panjabi, has attempted one-act plays in Hindi. His "Chandi Qaidi" is a powerful drama with the patriotic life of "Namdhari Ram Singh" for its theme. "Sachter Bhasha" is a satire on the new Sanskritised Hindi. Some of these were originally written in Panjabi.

It is after the achievement of independence and the Partition of Panjab that Hindi was really free from the influence of Urdu and real Hindi drama came to be written by men living in the Indian Panjab or belonging to the Panjabi stock. Some big names in the field of Hindi drama either lived in the Panjab or belonged to it. All types of drama with multiple themes and diverse styles came to be written in this stage. It is however true that while Panjabi came to display formidable creative faculty in the field of Hindi drama, the drama itself has not yet found its place on the stage in the province, accept on, what we have chosen to call the Ram Leela Stage. Authors like Shatt and Hari Krishan Premi and Vishnu Prabhakar are considered Punjabi writers because of .

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their domiciles or because they happened to write when living with in the geographical boundaries of the State. Some other men of all India renown and distinction like Ashok Mohan Rakesh, Chiranjit, Yashpal and Krishan Chander have actually gone out and settled elsewhere as if for good Other Hindi dramatists belonging to this state either write for the university or for the radio and almost always from the all India stand point. They generally lack the provincial touch. In fact they have the large Hindi speaking and Hindi knowing people in view and their real market has been outside Punjab. It is a strange phenomenon that they the Hindi speaking region of the bilingual state has not produced any great playwright of Hindi, while almost all Hindi dramatists of more or less distinction hail from the Punjabi speaking Panjab, where, of course, the stage for the literary Hindi drama has so far remained almost non existent. The rising Hindi knowing generation of the Panjab, is however free from the domineering influence of Urdu and prospects for Hindi stage are bound to be brighter in the future.