CHAPTER VI

COMPARISON BETWEEN BENGALI
AND ASSAMESE CHRONICLE PLAYS

The beginning of the triumphal march of the Bengali patriotic drama can be traced against the background of Swadeshi Movement. The composition of chronicle plays in Bengal started with some objects in mind. The plays were not designed with the sole object of depicting history. In most cases the playwrights wrote dramas of their own imagination with the aid of history, and preached patriotism through their plays. This purpose is revealed by the selection of characters. The playwrights gave new shapes and new dimensions to the characters taken from the pages of history. The purpose of this dramatic creation becomes clear if one looks at the time of their composition. The glorious tales gleaned from the pages of history blazed the path of the people rushing headlong into the action stirred by the Swadeshi Movement to realise their dream of freedom by tearing off the chains of dependency. The heroic self sacrifice of the Rajput hero Pratap Singha, his struggle unto death to keep freedom alive, his self-banishment into a forest where he suffered starvation and passed sleepless nights, inspired the people to a great extent to endure the slings and arrows of freedom movement. By reading these plays and seeing them acted on the stage the desire to

contd. . . .
accomplish a noble mission became firmer in people’s mind. The history of Bengal was not the only source of these dramas. Since their main object was to awake patriotism, the playwrights chose materials from the Rajput and Marhatta history along with themes taken from the history of Bengal. The great activities of the Marhatta hero Sivaji found a place in the play of Girish Chandra as well as in 'Gairik Pataka', a play by Sachin Sengupta. Dwijendralal portrayed the glorious characters of Pratap Singha, Durgadas and other with the help of the history of Mewar. Girish Chandra succeeded in reusing love of country in the people of Bengal by giving a new shape to the character of Siraj. Khiredeprasad adopted the story of the Bengali hero Pratapaditya in his play and preached patriotism on the one hand and called upon the people to keep clear of communalism on the other.

This new genre of chronicle plays found a place in the Assamese literature some time after they had been written in Bengal. The litterateurs of Assam came forward to liberate their countrymen from the agony of dependence and to instil into them the spirit of nationalism. The chronicle plays of Assam of that period were mainly based on the history of their own land. Padmanath Gehain-Barua wanted to inspire the people with the idea of nationalism by adopting the heroic tale of Lachit Barphukan in his play. He also tried to achieve his...
purpose by dramatising the stories of heroine 'Jaymati' and the Ahom hero 'Gadadhar'. In the same manner another eminent literateur of Assam Lakshminath Bezbarua told the stories of Sati Jaymati and Chakradwaj Singha in his chronicle plays. As the chronicle plays in Assam in the twentieth century were based on their own history, the same characters came again and again in the plays of different authors. The influence of the Bengali playwrights is felt in the works, especially in the plays of Lakshminath Bezbarua. While discussing the dramatic talents of Bezbarua in the book, "Lakshminath Bezbarua, the Sahitya Kanta of Assam", it has been written by Shri Satyendra Nath Sharma—"The historical plays of Girish Chandra and Dwijendralal of Bengal probably inspired Bezbarua to a certain extent. He has candidly expressed his indebtedness to Dwijendralal in designing the first two scenes of his 'Jaymati'."

The Assamese dramatists in their efforts to write historical plays were inspired by the Bengali playwrights when they looked for materials outside the history of their own country. This becomes evident when the plays of 'Chatrapati Sivaji' by Atul Chandra Hazarika and 'Chanakya' by Janardan Thakur are considered.

* 'Lakshminath Bezbarua, the Sahitya Kanta of Assam'— By S.N. Sharma and Edited by Dr. Maheswar Neog.

contd...
The Assamese playwrights with their historical plays were able to inspire their countrymen with the spirit of nationalism. The appeal of their plays became sufficiently fruitful as they told the glorious tales of their past. The Bengali playwrights realised the importance of Hindu-Muslim unity in regaining the freedom of the country. So in their plays they propagated the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity. In 'Sirajdeullah' Girish Chandra has put touching dialogue in the mouth of Siraj- “ore hindu-musâlman esa kari paraspar marjana ekhan” (Hs, Hindus and Muslims, come, let's forgive one another. Act. I, Scene-V). In his play 'Pratapaditya' Khiredeprasad kept both communalism and untouchability at arms' length and expressed his intense desire for unity. Besides, Dwijendralal and other Bengali historical playwrights in their various plays urged people to avoid communal disharmony.

The Assamese playwrights, too, expressed their views against the untouchability. In this connection a few lines are quoted from 'History of Assamese Literature' *

“Nevertheless the dramatists do not forget whenever an opportunity presents itself, to sing the value of Assamese army of these days, as also the gospel of Hindu-Muslim unity, as in the dialogue between Emperor Aurangzeb and Ram Singh in Act-IV, Scene-I of the play Chatrapati Sivaji”.

* History of Assamese Literature - Birinchi Kumar Barooah. Page - 158.
The Bengali dramatists portrayed the events of history with the sweetness of their heart. As a result of this, in many places history has become secondary and the dramatists' views get the upperhand. In the heydays of Swadesh Movement the Bengali dramatists expressed their own views in their plays with a view to reusing their countrymen. In order to bring a newness into the subject matter, they took the heroic characters from the history of the Rajputs and the Marhattas. To achieve their ends they composed dialogues to suit their purpose and kindled the fire of revolution in the hearts of the people. Boundless is the importance of these historical plays in the turbulent days of Swadeshi Movement. With the portrayal of the historical characters, whose steadfastness to ideas and self-sacrifice for the protection of liberty knew no bounds, these dramatists urged the people to suffer every kind of ills for the sake of the country.

In their plays the Assamese playwrights mentioned time and again the stories of Jaymati's forbearance, Gadadhar's self-inflicted poverty to bring back freedom and the daring attempts of the Assamese army under the leadership of Lachit Barphukan for the protection of country's liberty.

That the Assamese historical plays were influenced...
by those of the Bengali ones can be observed if one looks at the time of their composition. In this context Shri Satyendra Nath Barma has commented - "bimā satābdīr parambhik dui satakāt kārlaprabha aru Dwijendralal adyo bāngadahāt estihaṃśik nāt janapriya kari tele jātiya chetana āru svadesi āndalanaucchāsar patakāhāsit, seidare jātiya jāgaraṇar prabhāb, purani buranjir punarudhāvār āru aṭīt geurabar prati bālhi aha śaḍvasāl maṇebhābe asamata buranjimalak nātar udbhāvāsit sahāyātā karē."

(In the first two decades of the twentieth century Khiredeprasad and Dwijendralal in Bengal made historical plays popular in the effulgent backgrounds of Swadeshi Movement and National regeneration. At that period the influence of the resurgent nationality, revival of buried history and a great sympathy and veneration for the past glory helped the birth of historical plays in Assam).

A discussion of the historical plays of Bengal and Assam of the twentieth century proves beyond doubt that literary medium is a great vehicle for the fulfilment of noble objects. These plays written in the context of the Swadeshi Movement deeply impressed on the minds of the people and their immense popularity make that object a success.

* E. N. Sharma - Asamiya Natya Sahitya (Page-186).
The history of the country is reflected on the historical plays. The history consciousness in Bengal emerged at a time when the country was under the alien rule. The people were burdened with oppression, injustice and exploitation and the dream of self rule was far away. The ruling class termed this awakening of national sentiments as crime against the state. But at the touch of the freedom movement known as the Swadeshi Movement the whole of country was surging with life. In this milieu Girish Chandra ushered in a stream of patriotic plays. Although the source of this stream is very old, the historical plays of Girish Chandra tinged with nationalism heralded a new chapter in the history of Bengali drama. A comment by Dr. Sukumar Sen can be cited here:

"পুরবাগমিদের নিকট গীরস্চন্দ্রের রিন অধিক না, কিন্তু তাহার নিকট পরবাগমিদের রিন অত্যন্ত অধিক, তিনি বাংলার রংগালায় যেনাম, বাংলার নেতাকে তেমন যুগ প্রবালতাক।"

(Girish Chandra's debt to his predecessors is not great, but his successors are very much indebted to him. As in Bengali stage, so in Bengali drama, he was really the founder of an age). By making a drama with Sirajuddin, Girishchandra portrayed Siraj as a luckless patriotic Nabab. Portrayed as the last sentinel of Bengal's freedom the character of Siraj has become very impressive at the hands of the dramatists.

Being attracted by the popularity of the historical plays in Bengal, the Assamese playwrights introduced...
this type of plays in their literature. Although their main source was the history of Assam, the influence of Bengali drama on their work is very much perceptible. The first man to introduce this new genre of historical plays in Assam was the celebrated litterateur Padmanath Gehain Barua. He depicted the character of Sati Jaymati, Gadadhar and Lachit Barphukan in his plays. The accounts of sufferings of Sati Jaymati in the maddening movement of freedom, Gadadhar's struggle for liberty and the heroism, bravery and patriotism of Lachit Barphukan exerted a great influence on the people's mind. Padmanath Gehain Barua used dialogue in verse in his plays. In the plays of Lakshminath Bezbarua the influence of Bengali dramas is considerable. About this influence it can be said that Lakshminath got his education in Bengal and passed most of his life in that country. Besides, he came into contact with the famous Tagore of Jorasanko through marital ties. Bengal and her environment influenced Lakshminath to a great extent. A mention of these facts is found in his Memoir. He wrote in Bengali in the first phase of his literary career. He composed many poems in Bengali, but at last this distinguished Assamese litterateur began to write in his mother tongue and enriched his native literature. The main feature of Bezbarua's dramatic art is his elegant prose dialogue. He portrayed, the character of 'Jaymati' in the image of 'Piyara', a character in the Bengali dramatist

contu.....
Dwijendralal's 'Sajahan'.

Atul Chandra Hazarika wrote his play 'Chatrapati Sivaji' under the influence of 'Maharastra Jiwan Pravat', a Bengali novel by Ramesh Chandra Dutta, and 'Gairik Pataka' a Bengali play by Sachin Sengupta. Janardan Thakur imitated Dwijendralal's play 'Chandragupta' in writing his own play 'Chanakya'.

The two most distinguished writers of Assamese literature Padmanath Gohain Barua and Lakshminath Bezbarua based their historical plays on the history of Assam. Besides their own history they had recourse to the heroic stories of the history of other states of India, and dramatized them. While the Bengali playwrights, in order to sing the glories of their ancestors, took stories of patriotism from the Rajput and Maratha history and sometimes from the history of Bengal, their counterparts in Assam depended mostly on the history of their own place. The reason why the Assamese dramatists mostly continued themselves to themes relating to Assam's history is the easy availability of historical episodes from the large number of medieval chronicles in Assam. On the other hand, absence of such historical materials on medieval Bengal naturally diverted the attention of the Bengali playwrights to the glorious episodes of the Rajput and Maratha histories.

When we discuss the Bengali chronicle plays, it is...
scene that the playwrights in writing patristic plays very often moulded history according to their need. To serve their purpose, in many places subsidiary plots of their own creation have been placed by the side of the main plot. Girish Chandra Ghosh, the main protagonist of Bengali chronicle plays and successful creator of Bengali stage, wrote his play "Sirajdoullah" with the help of the history of Bengal. In this play Girish Chandra has looked at Siraj from a new angle of vision. The Siraj we find in history does not evoke our admiration. Siraj of history is a lecher, addicted to drinking and above all oppressor of his subjects. Besides, the main defects in the character of Siraj have been revealed in his unwillingness to fight the British and his humiliating retreat from the battle field like a coward. Of course all these have been found in the accounts given by the English historians, and most probably this is not free from bias. In spite of this the character of Siraj does not attract us. It was Girish Chandra who first of all portraying Siraj as a patriot brought him before the public to serve the need of that time. In his play we find the tragic picture of a doomed, albeit free, Nabab. In the sight of Girishchandra, Siraj is a patriot, a lover of his subjects, a hero and above all a bridge of union between the Hindu and the Muslim communities.

In his play Dwijendralal took his materials from history but passed his own judgment on them. In some
places he introduced imaginary characters. In his play 'Chandragupta' he mostly relied upon his imagination.

In his plays Khirodeprasad has given predominance to romance over history.

In their historical plays the Assamese playwrights have given dominance to their land's history. As the playwrights have shown great reliance on the facts of history, their works have seldom reached the level of excellence. Where the Bengali dramatists in their missions to preach love of country, unhesitatingly praised the prowess, heroism and patriotism of the Rajput, the Marhatta and the Meghal heroes, the Assamese dramatists sang the songs of bravery and patriotism of the heroes of Assam. When they took their plots from some other history than that of their own, they found some subtle means to hold out the account of bravery of the Ahom people. In his play 'Chatrapati Shivaji' Atul Chandra Hazarika has shown his predilection in the dialogue he has given to Ram Singha. In reply to Aurangzeb's sarcastic remarks Ram Singha says -

"Rajpute birpuja jane, gunir gunkarita kariba
par sakti sakalere na, asamla gat seorya-
birya pura matri ai ache, pratijan asamia senar
gat manusya sulabh gun sakalber ache, one nirun
aru kajuya sena mai hindustanar kene thaita
dekha na. Asam kame kame asam, dhanya
asamia praja, dhanya asamia senapati".

cont...
(The Rajput knews how to worship a hero. Not every man has the power to sing the good deeds of an accomplished person. The Assamese possess strength and valour to the full extent. Every Assamese soldier has got the human qualities in him. Such a skillful and brave soldier cannot be found anywhere in Hindusthan, Assam is non-pareil. Glory to the Assamese people, glory to the Assamese generals). (Chatrapati Shivaji, Act. IV, Scene-I).

Besides this, in the dialogue assigned to Yasewant Singha a respect towards Assam can be traced, and this shows the inherent patriotism in the heart of the dramatist.

Yasewanta Singha says - "ki sunile? Punjāb, Kājasthān ādi hindustānar kene thāite yi swādhīnātā nai, sei swādhīnātā samantak mañī etiyā sebhā kari āche giridurgarāṇī asam desar sirat, senar asambhumī iyar parāi rājput yasebantāsimhar sata sahashra pranām grahan kara".

(What do I hear? There is no freedom in any place of India including Punjab and Rajasthan. That freedom decks Assam, the queen of hilly forts like ‘Samantak Mani’. The golden Assam, take hundreds of thousands of salute from the Rajput Yasewanta Singha). (Act. IV, Scene-I).

Atul Chandra has propagated the idea of patriotism at all possible places in his plays. In composing dialogues and in designing scenes he has followed Sachin Sengupta’s 'Gairik Pataka' to a considerable extent. In some places there is no much similarity in dialogues that it seem that they are nothing but...
For example some dialogues from both the plays are quoted:


**Peseya** - Raghunath ek duhsambad bahan kare eneche maharaj.

**Sibaji** - kena durga adhikararcyata hayeche, kena senanir patan.

**Peseya** - na maharaj, ter ceyeo dushambad, prabhu sahajil aj bandi.

**Sibaji** - Bandi, pita bandi, ke take bandi karle.

Raghunath - Bijapur darbar. Mahamad adil saher prarecanay bajil ghelapure biswaghatakata kare prabhuke dharaye diyeche.

**Sibaji** - santener prati abicar karena ma. Bijapur ami dhuler satho misiyedebe.

**Jijabai** - Sibba.

**Sibaji** - asirbad kara ma, yena pita ke mukta kare aparadhyder saisti diye aber temar kelei phire aste pari.

**Jijabai** - bandi ke nay sibba? durbhaga ei dese karagarer hitar bai baire - ye yekhane rayeche sei bandi, sri ta lanchana saiche, niryatan bheq karche, santan tumi pitar muktir janya byakul haye uthbei; kintu centu...
bhuleśa tumī sudhā santān nae; 
tumī rajā, prajā sahāraner 
āuktir byābasta temākai karte 
habe.

Sibaji  
- tāte karbāi ma. kintu tar age 
ami pitār mukti cai. amar 
samasta sakti diye ami jijapurke 
āghāt karte cai.

Sibaji  
- kaman kare eman pāsāne bāk 
bāndhle mā.

English Version:

Peshwa  - Raghunath has brought a bad news, 
your majesty.

Sivaji  - Has any fart been out of hanaś? Has 
any general been killed?

Peshwa  - No, your majesty, it's a far greater 
bad news than any of these. Our mastēr 
Sahajī is a prisoner to day.

Sivaji  - Prisoner, father is a prisoner! who 
has imprisoned him?

Raghunath - The court of Bijapur. At the 
instigation of Muhammed Adil Shah, our 
master has been arrested through the 
treachery of Bajī Gharpūre.

Sivaji  - Don't do injustice to your son, mother. 
I'll reduce Bijapur into dust.

Jijabai  - Sibba!

contd....
Sivaji - Bless me, mother, that I may come back to your arms after releasing father and punishing the culprits.

Jijabai - Who is not a prisoner, Sibba? In this deemed country every man - be he inside or outside a prison - is a prisoner. He is bearing neglect and suffering oppressions. You are a son, so you are anxious for the release of your father. But don't forget you are not only a son but also a King. You are to work for the freedom of your people.

Sivaji - That I'll do, mother. But before that I want my father's release. I want to strike Bijapur with all my force.

Sivaji - How do you make such a stony heart mother?

Chatrapati Sivaji - Act.I, Scene-III(Sivaji's chamber)

1. Tane - Mahārāj, etā bar bipedar sambād.
Sib - Keśā bandhu! bipedar mājhe diye sibājīr jayyātra, kene durga satrur hātlee gal neki?
Tane - Tātakē dāṅgar bipad māharaj, prabhu śahajī bandhī.
Sib - Ki kalā Tāneji? bandhī - sibājīr pīṭā śahajī bandhī? kene maradname tak bandhī karile.

contu.....
Tane - There's a dangerous news, your majesty.
Siv - Say it, friend. Sivaji marches to victory through danger. Has any fort been cut ot hands.
English Version :-

Ram - Maharaj Sivaji, look - this is the world famous Megal Court - It’s Dewan-i-am.

Ram - It’s better not to discuss these things here.

Aurangzeb - Prince Ram Singha, is this person my guest Sivaji, the leader of the robbers?

Ram - Right, your majesty. This is our honoured guest Sivaji, the King of the Marhattas.

Ram - Go, Chatrapati, submit to the Emperor of Delhi.

Sivaji - Why do you talk of submission, Prince. I have not come here to surrender. I have come here to establish friendship between the Moguls and the Marhattas.

Ram - Don’t delay any more, maharaj. Salute the Emperor in the way I’ve taught you.

Sivaji - Sivaji never bows down his head to any body except Bhawani, mother Jijabi and my preceptor Ramdas Swami.

Sivaji - In the midst of this hateful dependent society of slaves, which is a disgrace to the country, a disgrace to the nation, my breath is about to be stopped. It seems as if I’ve forgotten myself. I’ve gorged so that I’m Chatrapati Sivaji, the father of free Maharastra. The hot blood of liberty is flowing in my veins and arteries. I’m not a slave. I’ve not come to offer the liberty of my country as the feet of the aliens.

contu....
Ram - सनाचा जहापनाच, एभेचे आमर सांमानिता
   अथित श्रीरामराय मित्राची 

Siba - भयैक चात्रातील दिल्लीच्या बायटा
   स्विकार करके

Ram - या कारणात अखु तो नाही, मला तुम्ही श्रीरामराय मित्राची
   स्विकार करिल्या आहे नाही, याचीने माझाळ्या
   वरातील माजेत बंदुतंक चात्राची

Siba - तुम्ही पाळी नाही किंवा महाराज. मला
   येण्यास खींचिल्या तेंकीसाठी समर्थक
   खंभांत्या ठोकली

Sibaji - देशाच्या कलामक्रम, जैती कलामक्रम, ग्रहितिने
   पर्यावरण किंवा समाज माजेत सोम
   मर उसांचा निजी बद्ध नसे याचे
   उपक्रम हेचेच, मला येण्यास किंवा
   पहारी गेल्या, पहारी गेल्या येता नसे माझ्यांच्या
   महाराष्ट्राच्या जन्मदत्ता चात्रातील मित्राची
   सिरी, सिरी मर बाबा लागले स्वाच्छिनीत
   तप्तरा, तयाचे नसे माझ्यांस किंवा
   समाज समाज, माझ्यांस किंवा स्वाच्छन्नता
   बिदेसीर पदातल समर्पण करिली

Ourangjeb - तर आर्थ इच्छा याचे दैलानात सिवाजक
   ठीकाच्या मित्राची ठीक लागली येण्यास किंवा
   केर येण्यास. रत्यांमध्ये वाची साधूत
   प्रहारी नियुक्ता ठीकाच्या तत्काळ
   पहारात, तयाचे आमर बिनूकमुक्त केले
   तर परा एला यांच्या नेरही. ते
   अभिनाव ब्याबास्ते जगहूळ मराठा
   बंदरात काबु करिला लागिला.
Sivaji - I never bow my head to any body except mother Bhawani, my mother Jijabai and my preceptor Ramdas Swami.

Sivaji - Prince, it is true that I've forgotten myself. Coming amidst this shameful and hateful band of slaves I've forgotten that I'am the great terror, the ever wakeful horror of the Megals. I'am the founder of free Maharastra - I'am not a slave - the slavish manners are not for me to be obeyed - the slavish manners are not for me to be imitated - the slavish religion is not for me to be observed.

Aurangzeb - The house which has been allotted to Sivaji must be kept on guard day and night by armed soldiers. No one will be allowed to visit that house without our permission. I have to make some extraordinary arrangements, Jafar Khan, to tame the Marhatta fox.

3. Chatrapati Sivaji - Act.IV.Scene-IV(Uswan-i-am at Dehji)

Ram - maharaj sibaji, caa laek - eye biswabikhyat megalar darbar, iyar nam desan-i-an.

Ram - ami eneber kathaa iyat alechana na karilei bhal.

Ourangzeb - Kumar ramsinha, eijani haela amar athiti dasyu sardar sibaji.

cont...
Sibaji - মার বধানি, জানি জিজাবাই এর গুরু রামদাস বামন ব্যাটিতা এর কার কাছে অমি মাথায় নাটা করিনি।

Sibaji - আমার আত্মবিশ্বাসে পৃথিবীতে কুমার।

Oiramjeb - সিবাজি তো গ্রির্থে ঠাক্তে দেয়া হয়েছে যে গ্রিনে দিবার রোথা সাসাস্ত্রা সেনিক সেই গ্রিনে অবারে কার ঠাক্বে, অমা আনন্দি ব্যাটিতা কার সে গ্রিনে যাতায়ত কার আধিকার ঠাকবেনা, মারাত্মা সীরাজে পেস মানাবার খান এক অস্ত্রার হ্যালেন ব্যাবস্তাই কার্টাহে হাজার জানা।

**English Version :-**

Ram Singha - This is the world famous Dewan-i-am.

Ram Singha - Ah, maharaj! this is not the place for such questions.

Aurangzeb - Is this King Sivaji?

Ram Singha - Your majesty has guessed rightly.

Ram Singha - Go, maharaj, convey your submission to the Emperor.

Sivaji - Why do you talk of submission Prince? I have come here to establish friendship.

Ram Singha - Don't delay any more, maharaj. Salute in the manner I have taught you.

...
Cayesta - tathapi ami huclar thakiba legibe. ken phalar para ki hay ake melum nai.

English Version A-

Sayesta - Is it the time for merriment, courtiers? Our enemy Sivani can attack us at any moment. The emperor wishes the fall of Sivaji. Is it the time and condition for pleasure?

First Courtier - The Subedar has captured almost all the forts from the hands of Sivaji. What more is to be done?

Sayesta - Still I'll remain cautious. I can't understand what might happen.

3. Gaurika Pataka- Act. IV, Scene-IV (Levan-i-am at Delhi):

Ramsinha - ei biswabikhyata desyan-i-am.

Ramsinha - ah maharaj le sab prasner stan a nay.

Oursajeb - ini-i sibaji raja.

Ramsinha - jnahapanah yatharthha anuman karechen.

Ramsinha - yan maharaj, samrat ke basyata jnayapan karun.

Sibaji - basyata kena kumar. bandhuta pratisthar janyai ekhane eseci.

Ramsinha - ar bilamba karben na maharaj, ami yeman kare sikhya diyechi temni karei abhibaden karben.

cent.....
sībājīko dhare niye dilli yete.

**Pratham**

- hujur yebehbe duryen par durga āj

**Sayesta khana**

- sībājīko teura jēnana. ye kena

**English Version:**

**Sayesta Khan**

- Is it the time for merriment? The

**First Soldier**

- As our Lord has been capturing forts after

**Sayesta Khan**

- You haven't seen the real Sivaji. He can

2. **Chattrapati Sivaji - Act. II. Scene-VI (Camp at Pune):**

**Sayesta**

- i jāne amader samay amārasakal.

**Pratham Orah**

- cubēdar cāhaba sībājir hātar para

centi...
Tanu - It's more dangerous than that. Our master Sahaji has been made a prisoner.

Siv - What do you say, Janaji? Princes- - Sivaji's father Sahaji is a prisoner! What wretch has imprisoned him?

Tanu - It has been done at the orders of Bijapur Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah.

Siv - I'll shatter little Bijapur with my cannon.

Jija - Bibba!

Siv - Bless me, mother, that I can avenge this insult to my father, hurling the foolish Adil Bahadur out of the world and set my father free from prison.

Jija - Who is not a prisoner in this desolate country, Bibba? Beside-walled Bijapur is not the only prison - the whole of India is a prison to-day. Why are the missions of Indians are retreating in the prisons of the Pathans and the Moghals? Whose country is this golden Hindusthan? Whose native land? Why is it that the Hindus have to pay 'jijia' tax in their own country. Who is there to remedy it? Great Bibba, a great burden rests on you.

Bibba - That's what I want. By uniting the whole force of the nation I'll fall upon Bijapur and release my father. After that -

Bibba - Mother, how do you transform yourself into a stone image?

2. Gaikik Pataka - Act. Ill, Scene-1(Palace at Pune):

Sayesta Khna - ei ki amader samay? samratt
hukumar par hukum pathaschen

cont...
Aurangzeb - The meaning is this - the house which has been given to Shivaji to live in will be his prison. Armed guards will remain watchful day and night. No one will be able to meet him without my orders. This unique arrangements have been made to curb this barbarous Marhatta.

It is not only in the domain of dialogue but also in designing scenes and dividing the play into acts Atul Chandra was influenced by 'Gairik Pataka' of Bachindranath published 'Gairik Pataka' in 1930. 'Chatrapati Shivaji' is divided into five Acts. 'Chatrapati Shivaji' by Atul Chandra came to light in 1947. The similarity of ideas and dialogues amply prove that Atul Chandra could not avoid the influence of Bachindranath's play on his 'Chatrapati Shivaji'. Besides this, the influence of the novel 'Maharastra Jiban Prabhat' by Ramesh Chandra Dutta can be detected in this play. A great affinity of language can be discerned between the dialogues of the novel and the play. The similarities are shown below:

   
   Chapter-VII (Raja Yashobanta Singh):

   Yasebanta - 'ami apnar prabhur patra paiyachi.
   tahate yaha likhita ache abagata hauyachi, taha bhimna anya kena prastab ache.

   Yasebanta - kebal puna e caken durga aroatter hastagata hayache matra.... eijanya khed.
Mahadee - durganase tini kshudwa nahen, tahar asankhya durga acha.

Mahadee - rajputer geurabi anath bharatbarser ekatra geurab, rajputer yasegit amadiger ramanigan ekhana gaiya theke, rajputdiger udaharan dekhiya amadiger baldakan sikshita hay. kshtrakutielik! rajput senite amadiger kharga ranjita haibar purbe yena maharastra nam bilupta hay, amara yena bara 0 kharga tyag kariye punaray langal dharan harite sikhi.

Mahadee - sibaji kabe hindur nikat ye bakyia dan kariyache, tahar anyatha kariyachen?
Kahatriyer nikat ye pratigna karichen tahai biswrita hayachen? Desi sata sata debulay acha, anusandhan karun, sibaji satyapalan karite, braman ke abray dite, hindur upakar karite ge batasami raksha karite, hindu deber guja cito paransukh?

English Version:

Yasebanta - I have received your Lord's letter - and have come to know all that is written in it. Is there any other proposal besides this?

Yasebanta - Only fortresses of Puna and Chakah have come into our possession and you bewail much that?

Mahadee - He is not aggrieved for the loss of the fortress - he possesses innumerable forts.
Mahadeo - The glory of the Rajputs is the only glory of orphaned India. The Rajputs' songs of glory are still sung by the women of our country, the Rajputs' examples help to teach our boys. O, you crown of the Kshatriyas! before our swords are reddened with Rajput blood, may we give up the spear and sword and hold the plough again.

Mahadeo

- When has Sivaji taken back his words given to the Hindus? Has he ever forgotten his promises given to the Kshatriyas? There are hundreds of temples in the country; make inquiry whether Sivaji is ever reluctant to abide by his promises, to give shelter to the brahmins, to do good to the Hindus, to protect cows and calves, to worship hindu gods.

1. Chatrapati Sivaji - Act. II
Scene-III (Camp of Yasobanta):

Yase

- mai sibajir petra path kari sakale kathaa bujiba parichna, aru kiba natun batara ache neki?

Yasobanta

- bujichne, bujichne kataki. bhulow bujichne, pana aru chakan durga satrur hastagata hee dekhii sibajije kandiche, na jay na baru?

Siba

- kotiyee nahiyy maharaj. tenee durga tenur bahuj ache.
Sība
- rājputar swadesprenake adarsa kari aji mārāṭhā mātramantar dikshita. pratyek mārāṭhā ramanir kanthar para uccārīta hāa rājputar yasēgīty pratyek mārathar antarat saday jāgarit. mārāṭhā balake rājput adarsat nijar jīban gathibalee saday yatnabān. rājput āru mārathar majat bhāi-bhāi sambanda. sei bābei rājput sārlrat astrāghāt kari mārathāi nijar nāmat kalamka nāne. ādes kurak mahārāj rājput sonitare mārāṭhā asī ranjita heēr āgeye mārathāi yuūda bidīyā pāhāri yaēk, astra-sastra arab sāgarat bisarjan diyak.

Mahārāj ! sībājīk prabāncak belār āgat eṇe ejan hindur nām kaba pāre ne yār āgat pratigga kari sībājiye pāharānit perie tāk pālān karibalew parāmmukh heeche ? eṇe ejan brāmmār nām jāne ne yēk sībājiye abbay di punar tākei āghāt kariche? eī subisāl hindustānār mājat eṇe etā dehmandir ulīhā pare ne ji sībājīr dvari ketiyāba ākranta heeche.

English Version:-

Yase
- I’ve understood everything by reading Sivaji’s letter. Are there any new proposals?

Yasebanta
- I’ve understood. I’ve understood that because the Puna and the Chaklan forts are in enemy’s hands, Sivaji is shedding tears, is not it?
- This is not true, maharaj. He has many other forts in his possession.

- The Rajput ideal of patriotism initiated the Marhattas in the Mother cult. Every Marhatta woman sings the glory of the Rajputs, and that glory is ever wakeful in the heart of every Marhatta. The Marhatta boys are always careful to mould their lives in Rajput ideals. Brotherly relation exists between the Rajputs and the Marhattas, that is why a stroke of Marhatta sword on the Rajput body brings disgrace to the Marhattas. Let the tactics of Marhatta warfare perish and let her armours be sunk into the Arabian Sea before a Marhatta sword is reddened with the blood of a Rajput.

- Maharaj, before calling Sivaji a cheat, can you name a single Hindu from whom he has taken back his premises given to him earlier? Can you cite the name of a single brahmin whom Sivaji had given protection and then struck him? Can you find a single temple in India which has been attacked by Sivaji?

2. 'Maharashtra Jiwan Prabhat'.

Chapter-XVI (Reward of the Conqueror):

Rahamat Khana - Āpnār senār mañey biṣēs anusanchān kariyā dekhun, sakale prabhubbhakta nahe, kālyā durga ākramaner āpanāmnusanchān āmi pūrbeī prāpta haiyāchilam, seijanyak samasta sena...
Rahamat Khan  - Make an inquiry into your army - all are not loyal to their master. I received the secret report of storming the fort before hand. So the whole army was ready with arms for the whole night. One of your soldiers is the informer - I can't say more than this.

2. 'Chatrapati Sivaji' - Act. III, Scene - V (The Court).

Chaleman - Year āgāte āru esār kathā kēe yāne chatropati, temār pratijan maratha seenyi prabhuphakta nahay, tār mējat dusmana āche, āmi tēne ejan dusman mārathār patā āgāte durga ākrāmāte bātāri pāi teeyār hēe ānchile. nahale temār jay āru sahaj hal hēnten, bechi kabalē nāi.

English Version:-

Sealeman - One more word before I go, Chatrapati. Not everyone of your Marhatta soldiers is loyal to you. There are enemies in the army. I was informed of the storming of the castle by one of them and kept ourselves alert. Without this your victory would have been much easier; I have nothing more to say.

Besides the composition of dialogues, Atul Chandra imitated 'Maharastra Jiwan Prabhat' for the characterisation contu...
of his play. The character of Amiya in 'Chatrapati
Bivaji' has been portrayed in the image of Lakshmi in
'Maharashtra Jiwan Prabhat'. Gopal and Lilip Rao of the
play have been modelled on the basis of the characters
of Raghunath and Chandra Rao of the novel. The patriotic
plays of Bengali literature created a treasure of
excitement in the mind of the people in bondage. These
nationalistic plays found a place of their own by the
side of the varied activities of the freedom movement.
In 'Sirajdoulah' and 'Pratapacitya' the dramatists
Girish Chandra and Khirendrasam placed before the
people the extinct glory of Bengal. Girish Chandra
glorified in his story the tragic history of the loss
of Bengal's independence. A new valuation was made of
the character of the timid, vile last independent Nabab
Sirajdoulah. In the play Siraj has become a loving,
large-hearted, patriotic, albeit a luckless Nabab, at the
magic touch of sympathy and the dramatist's adherence to
historical facts. As a result, the acting of the play on
the stage achieved a tremendous success and made a deep
impression on the minds of the then Bengali audience.
Bengali literature assumed a new look against the background
of national regeneration in the nineteenth century. Taking
the heroic tales of their forefathers from the pages of
history and unfolding them before the public the dramatists made them serve their own purpose by making
continue...
a new valuation of the characters. It is true that the Bengali historical play writers in many cases displayed a tendency of the flight of fancy, but in most of the cases they kept the historical framework intact. Although Girishchandra gave a new look to Siraj, his love for historical veracity in the play is surprising. Dwijendralal was true to history when he wrote his plays of 'Sajahan' and 'Noorjahan'. In his plays based on the history of the Rajputs, he has kept, as far as possible, the main historical theme unchanged. Suchin Bengupta in his 'Gairik Pataka' adhered to the main historical events in the life of Shivaji. In the plays of Khirode Prasad romance has shaded history. The main reason for success of the Bengali Chronicle plays lies in the fact that there is a perfect amalgam of history and imagination in these plays. The literary excellence of the plays written in the first half of the 20th century depends on the marks of originality given on them by the Bengal playwrights.

The Assamese playwrights without deviating from history showed the efflorescence of patriotism in this chronicle plays. But the total dependence on the historical incidents hindered the blooming of originality of the playwrights. In many cases they are nothing but recount of history, and failed to reach the dramatic height. The literary values of the plays are also insignificant. Despite these shortcomings it must be...
admitted that some of the dramatists have shown originality in some parts of their plays. A good example of this is the character of 'Lalimi' in Lakshminath Bezbarua's 'Jaimati Kunwari'.

Janardan Thakur's 'Chanakya' is one of the remarkable plays written under the influence of Bengali drama. This play has been written in imitation of Dwijendralal's 'Chandragupta'. 'Chandragupta' was written in 1911. Forty-two years after in 1953 Janardan Thakur followed Dwijendralal in writing out his play 'Chanakya'. As a detailed and true account of the life of Chandragupta is not available, Dwijendralal took help of imagination in the play. Janardan Thakur inserted most of the events imagined by Dwijendralal in his play. The similarity of the placing of events and dialogues between the two plays is easily detectable. Dwijendralal included unhistorical incidents of Chandragupta's marriage with Helen and the love of Antigonus for Helen, and the same incidents were incorporated by Janardan Thakur in his play. There are five acts in 'Chandragupta', but only four in 'Chanakya'. Though 'Chanakya' is smaller in size than 'Chandragupta', a similarity between the dialogues of the two plays doubtlessly shows that they are nothing but new translation. Some examples of the dialogues are given here —

...
1. **Chandragupta** - Act. I, Scene-II (Greek Camp):

   Chandragupta - bhebechilām ye sekendār sāha bīr dekhchī tīni bhītū. ek grihahīn nirāśray hindu rājputra chātra hisābe tār kāche upastit, tātei tīni bhaye trasta. Sekendār sāha eta kāpurus tā bhabī nāi.

   English Version:

   Chandragupta - I thought Sekandar Saha is a hero, now I find him a coward. A houseless shelterless hindu prince has come to him as a student, and he is frightened at this. I never thought that Sekandar Saha is such a coward.

2. **Chandragupta** - Act. II, Scene-I (Greek Camp):

   Chandragupta - mar kalpānāre atīt āchil ye bīr cikandārār dakhīn hasta Čekekāc kāpurus. ek sahāyīn, sambalhīn yubakar bhyat trastamān.

   English Version:

   Chandragupta - It was beyond my thought that Sekandar's right hand man Selukas was a coward - he is afraid of a helpless and shelterless youth.


   Nanda - ei dāsiputra āj magadher simhāsane yadi mukti pāi -

   English Version:

   Nanda - This son of a slave woman is on the throne of Magadh to-day. If I get release -

   contd....
2. **'Chanakya' - Act. III, Scene-VI:**

Nanda - Sudra nī mūrā garbhajāt pura ājī magadhar simhāsanat - yadī muktī pāne

**English Version:**

Nanda - The son of the 'Sudra' Mura is on the throne of Magadh to-day. If I get release—

3. **'Chandragupta' - Act. III, Scene-V:**

Chandragupta - brāhmānāt eta spardhā ye āmāk kena sambōd nā diye - āmār anumati nā niye - ascarya, āmi yena cāsājayer kahai nai, cānakya hāter yantra mātra.

**English Version:**

Chandragupta - Such is the arrogance of the brahmin that without informing me - without taking my permission - strange! as if I'm a nobody in the empire - only an instrument in the hands of Cānaka ya.

3. **'Chanakya' - Act. IV, Scene-II:**

Chandragupta - brāhmānāt imān spardhā, imān sambōd ye mer anupastitit, mer agnātī tak bach kare.

**English Version:**

Chandragupta - Such is the arrogance and vanity of the brahmin that in my absence, behind my back, he does away with him.

4. **'Chandragupta' - Act. III, Scene-V:**

Chandragupta - brāhmān abadhya, teṃāke āmi rajya theke nirbasita karām.

contd....
English Version 1-

Chandragupta - A brahmin can't be killed. I, banish you from the kingdom.

4. 'Chanakya' - Act. IV, Scene - II.

Chandragupta - Brāhmāṇ abadhyā .... Kintu mūr ādesā eī mūhurtei pātaliputra tyāg karā.

English Version 1-

Chandragupta - A brahmin can't be killed .... But it's my order that you must leave Pataliputra at this very moment.

5. 'Chandragupta' - Act. IV, Scene-VI.

Canakya - mahārāj Chandragupta Sālukaske 500 hasti diben, binimaye sālukas hindukusār dakshīne o pūrbe samasta bijita rajya candraguptakes arpan karben.

English Version 1-

Canakya - Maharaj Chandragupta will give Sālukas five hundred elephants and in lieu of these, Sālukas will return all the conquered Kingdoms on the South and the East of the Hindukush.

5. 'Canakya' - Act. IV, Scene-II.

Celukas - eī sandhīsūtre mai hindukusār dakshīn āru pūbar samasta bijita rājya candraguptakes eī dīle -

Canakya - āru āmie upaśheukan swarupa samratīstīt pracā hātī āg bachhāle.

contd...
English Version:-

Selukas - In terms of the treaty I return all the conquered Kingdom on the South and East of the Hindukush.

Canakya - And I too give five hundred elephants to the emperor as a present.

6. 'Chandragupta' - Act. V, Scene - V : 

Mura - sei südrānī mā sambedhaner āj e samucit uttar hal. sei südrānir putra āj bhubanbijayi bhārat ā samrāt Chandragupta.

Chandragupta - ar sei mātār nāme ei rājbasēr nām heuk 'mauryabāmsā'.

English Version:-

Mura - It’s a befitting answer to calling me a 'Sudrani'. To-day the son of that 'Sudrani' is the world-conquerer Emperor of India.

Chandragupta - And in the name of that mother this dynasty will be known as 'Maurya Dynasty'.

6. 'Canakya' - Act. IV, Scene - III : 

Canakya - ei rājmatā mūrā..... mūrā nāmērei ei rājbasēk 'mauryabāmsā' buli jagate jānība. itihāsar pētāt candragupta hee thākiba bijayi hindu samrāt hee.

English Version:-

Canakya - This is queen mother Mura - the world will know this dynasty as 'Maurya Dynasty' from the name of Mura. In the pages of history Chandragupta will live contd...
as the victorious Hindu Emperor.

The bright and shining picture of Chandragupta's devotion to his mother that we find in Dwijendralal's play has been reflected in Janardan Thakur's 'Chanakya'. In Dwijendralal's play Chandragupta says -

"........ tumi yai, kara; tumi amar keche ciradinai ma, - 'janani janmabhumiśca swargaśadapi gariyasI'.

(what ever you do, you are eternally my mother. Mother and Motherland are superior to Heaven).

(Act-III, Scene-VI).

In the play 'Chanakya' similar sentiments are expressed by Chandragupta -

"janani mor ..... temar ades
anyathā karibar sakti mor nai ....
abanta sīre āgya temar pālen karim .....' 

(My mother, I have no power to go against your order ....... I'll obey your orders with head leward). (Act.III, Scene-V). In Chandragupta 'Dwijendralal's love of country has come to light in Chandragupta's equation of mother and motherland, Chanakya's dream of ornamental and melodious Mother India and Sekandar Saha's hymn to Indian Nature. In 'Chanakya' too, the rink of patriotism has been sounded in the speech of Chandragupta -

"Griñ adhikrita rājya punar adhikār
kari, aryābartaś śrīnkhaṃuktā kari
mēr cirakāmya swādhīnata rakṣā karim"

(By conquering the lands taken by the Greeks, by unchaining 'Aryavarta' I'll protect my ever cherished freedom). (Act-I, Scene-II).
In Dwijendralal’s ‘Chandragupta’ Chanakya has been depicted more as a revengeful person than as a statesman. An echo of revenge has been resounded in Chanakya’s speech -

“Chaṇaka - ār tumī ki bujhbe nārī. -
lupta geuraber dīna mahimā - yār rudhwa
ābeg karāgār leuholwāre māthā khneche,
nijei raktākta haye bhulanthita hay.
tumī ki bujhbe nārī - e pratihīṃsār
jwālā, e marmadāha - yāe birakta
karonā.”

(Chaṇaka - What will you understand, woman - poor
grandeur of dead - whose pent-up emotion striking its
head at the iron gates of prison bleeds itself and tells
to the ground. What will you realise, woman, - this
passion for revenge - this aching heart - be off, don’t

In ‘Chaṇaka’ too, Janardan Thakur has revealed the
revengeful side of the character of Chaṇaka -

"ei karun kātaratā leś byāthār kāhīnī
sunabālae lari ahichā cānakyar ecarale?
dekhā nāi āji bāmmanar swabhāb
sulabhh soumya mūrtir paribarte tār cakut
jwalīche pratihīṃsār jñāi".

(Have I come to Chaṇaka with a heavy heart to tell
him about my painful story? To-day instead of the
natural disposition of a brahmin to be gentle and
humane, we find the fire of revenge burning in
his eyes.) (Act.I, Scene-II).

In Dwijendralal’s ‘Chandragupta’ despite her revengeful
attitude towards Nanda, we find a perfect mother in
Mira -

...contd....
"Chandragupta amār putra, ār nanda—see
amār putra. candragupta ār nanda—ek
brinte duti phul. āmār hriday akāsēr
surya-candra, tāder samghāte ye akāś
cūrṇa haye yābe, nā gurudeb, kaj nai.
candragupta amār pather bhikārī hok,
bibāde kaj nai".

(Chandragupta is my son; and Nanda—he, too—is my son.
Chandragupta and Nanda—two flowers in a single stalk.
They are the Sun and the Moon in the sky of my heart.
Their clash will shatter that sky. No, my preceptor,
it's not necessary. Let my Chandragupta be a street-
beggar. I don't need tragic pains). (Chandragupta—
Act.II, Scene-II).

In Janardan Thakur's 'Chanakya' behind the veil of
Mura's revenge, we find the loving nature of a mother's
heart—
"Mūrā—hriday uburiyai yāk sneha
karichile..... stan-dugdha di yāk cāngar
karichile..... si ye bīb hēe mer i
sarbanās kariba mai najānichile .........
āji yadi dui-bhāye mīlī rastra-gaṭhan
karile heteren .......... magadh ek
saktīśailī rājya hal heteren".
(Mura—I gave him love pouring out of my heart—he grew
up with the milk of my breast—ah, that milk has now
turned into poison and has become the cause of my ruin.
If the two brothers jointly formed the state, Magadh
would have been the strongest kingdom. (Act.III,Scene-I).

In Chandragupta we find 'Katyayan' taking the sides
with Nanda appears at the Greek camp; in the same way in
Chanakya we find Chandragiri's presence in
cont...
the Greek Camp as an advocate of Nanda. Moreover, the various scenes in Chandragupta, like the assistance of the hill-soldiers to enable Chandragupta to gain the throne, a description of the battle with the Greeks, besmearing of the pigtai of Canakya with the blood of Nanda, are meticulously followed in the play of 'Canakya'. But the playwright has rejected some parts of 'Chandragupta', and in some places has given proof of his creative power. He has carefully excluded the episodes of Chandraketu, Chhaya, the account of Atreyi, the identification of the father of Antigone etc. The episode of Chandragupta's captivity in the Greek Camp and his rescue with Helen's help is the playwright's own creation. We do not come across such an event in the play of Chandragupta. The character of 'Arundhati' is also the creation of Janardan Thakur. This character has been introduced with a view to helping Chanakya to accomplish his revenge.

Compared numerically the Assamese historical plays in the first half of the 20th century are much smaller than those in Bengali. As there is variety in the choice of subjects, so the number of Bengali plays written during the period of the freedom movement is numerous. In support of this numerical strength it can be said that the Bengali playwrights did not solely depend on the history of Bengal for their plays. To preach patriotism they took help of the history of different provinces of India; as a result both variety and number of the plays have been contd.....
increased. Moreover, towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the 20th century a galaxy of litterateurs appeared in Bengal, and at the touch of their pen Bengali dramatic literature was enriched.

On the other hand, the genre of historical plays in Assam began with the influence of Bengal. It began with 'Jaymati' by Padmanath Gohain Barua, but the number of plays written before independence is meagre. As most of the playwrights depended on the local history, the same subjects came again and again in the plays of different dramatists. Limited subject matter has made the number of dramas limited. Besides at the beginning of the 20th century very few dramatists came forward to write historical plays.

In the historical plays of Bengal it is also found that different dramatists wrote their plays with the same subject matter. Both Girish Chandra and Sachin Sengupta composed their plays with Sirajedoullah and Shivaji. The history of the reign of Asoke found places in the plays of both Girish Chandra and Khirede Prasad with a short interval. The difference of subject cannot escape our eye, when we compare the patriotic plays of Bengal with those of Assam. The first emergence of successful
historical plays came from the pen of Girish Chandra. Judging from the standpoint of the variety of subject matters, his plays are startling. An account of his historical plays are given here –

His 'Chanda' was based on the history of the Rajputs.

'Satnam'(1904) - The subject matter of the play is the revolt of the Satnami community against the Moghal Emperor Aurangzeb.

'Siraj-O-doulla'(1906) - It was written with the help of the history of Bengal. Besides, 'Mirkashim' based on the history of Bengal and 'Chatrapati' with the Marhatta hero Sivaji, are remarkable.

Khirodeprasad composed 'Pratapaditya' (1903), 'Palasir Prayschitta' and 'Banglar Masnad' with the help of the history of Bengal. Besides, 'Padnini' based on the history of Rajasthans, 'Asoke' based on the life of the Maurya Emperor Asoke and 'Chandbibi' based on the character of the Sultan of Ahmadnagar are noteworthy.

Another memorable name in the field of historical plays is Dwijendralal Roy. He wrote 'Tara Hai'(1903), 'Pratap Singh' (1905), 'Durgadas'(1906), and 'Mewar Patan'(1908) with subjects taken from the contd......
history of Rajasthan. His 'Noor Jahan' (1908) and 'Sajahan' (1909) were based on the history of the Moghals. In 1911 he composed 'Chandragupta' with the life story of the founder of Maurya Dynasty. Based on the history of Bengal he composed his 'Singhal Bijoy' in 1915.

Another famous writer of historical plays in Bengal is Sachindranath Sengupta. He wrote 'Gairik Pataka', 'Sirajdoullah' and 'Udatri Panna' with the help of the history of Maharashtra, Bengal and Rajasthan respectively.

Only some important names of the playwrights of the historical plays of Bengal in the first half of the twentieth century are mentioned here. The plays written before independence i.e. 1947, is the topic of discussion here, because patriotism exerted a great influence on the plays against the background of freedom movement.

The two writers whose pens enlivened the dramatic literature in Assam in the first period of the twentieth century are Padmanath Gohain Barua and Lakshminath Bezbarua. But these two famous playwrights never felt an attraction for the variety of subject matters. As Padmanath based his plays on the historical materials found in the history of Assam
for his 'Jaymati'(1900), 'Gadadhar(1907), 'Sadhani' (1910) and 'Lachit Barphukan'(1915). So also, Lakshminath Barua depended on the same history for his 'Belinar'(1915), (Chakradhar Singha) and 'Jaymati Kuari'.

But some eminent playwrights of Assam gave importance to the history of other states over their own. Among these plays Atul Chandra Hazarika's 'Kanouj Kuori'(1933) and 'Chatrapati Sivaji(1947)'; Faziruddin Ahmed's 'Gulemar'(1924) and 'Sindhu Vijoy'(1928) and Janardan Thakur's 'Canakya' deserve mention.

But it may be stated again that these Assamese plays written against the background of Swadeshi movement were influenced by the Bengali plays in the sphere of ideas and dialogues.

The creator of Assamese Chronicle plays Padmanath Gohain Barua came to write his plays being attracted by such plays in Bengali.

Lakshminath Barua could not keep clear of the influence of Dwijendralal over his plays. It has been mentioned before that the character of Jaymati in 'Jaymati Kuori' is a prototype of Dwijendralal's 'Piyara' in 'Sajahan'. It is surprising to note the similarity of the dialogues of 'Piyara' and 'Jaymati'.

Some dialogues are given here -

contd.....
Suja

Sunecha piyārā ye dārā, aurānjīber kāche sēṣ yuddē parājita hayechen.

Piyara

Haiyechen nāki?

Suja

Ate āścarya haccha ki piyārā? Ete āścarya habār kichu nāi.

Piyara

Nei nāki? Āmi bhāblām bujhi āche! Tai āścarya hacchilām.

Piyara

Āmi ei bhebe āścarya haccchi ye - āge āścarya hacchilām ki bhebe?

English Version:-

Suja

Have you heard, Piyara, that Lara has been defeated by Aurangzeb in his last battle too?

Piyara

Has he been?

Suja

Is it astonishing to you, Piyara? There's nothing to be astonished at this.

Piyara

Is it so? I thought there was. So I was astonished.

Piyara

I wonder, why I was astonished before?

Jaymati Kuéri - Act. I. Scene-II:

Gadapani

Sānichā ne jayā, tomāk imān cin etā kathā koā nachile, āji ko lara rajāi heno tale tale mok dharāī marabalee thir kari manuha pathiāiche.

contd...
Jaymati - śuniche.
Gada - ketiā śunilā ī
Jaya - etiā.

Gada - tirutā manuhere seete gurutar kathār paramarsā kari eks lābh nāi.
Jaya - eks lābh nāi.

**English Version**

Gadapanl - Listen to me, Jaya. I wanted to tell you one thing. I'll tell it to day. The infant King has sent men in secret to capture me.

Jaymati - I've heard it.
Gada - When did you hear?
Jaya - Just now.

Gada - There's no good in consulting grave matters with women.
Jaya - No good at all.

Behind the apparent fickleness of the dialogues of the two ladies, lies the forbearing image of womanhood. Piyara tries to wipe out the desire for battle from the mind of her husband Suja by means of dancing, singing and light hearted conversation. In the same way Jaya knowing fully well the possibility of impending separation from her husband Gadapanl tries to lighten the heavy burden of her heart by indulging in frivolous
cotu...
talks. The sorrows and depths of pain behind the apparent frivolity of the two women characters easily touch the sympathetic chord of our mind. The twin combination of dramatic and poetic genius are found in the two plays.

In discussing the dramatic talent of Atul Chandra Hazarika, Shri B. K. Barua says * "it must be noted that Atul Hazarika wrote dramas to meet the demand of the Assamese stage which, before he started writing, had been practically monopolised by the dramas of the Bengali playwrights, Girish Chandra Ghosh and Dwijendralal Roy. As the influence of Bengali dramas is found in the works of Atul Chandra Hazarika and Janardhan Thakur, so the elements of romance can be detected in 'Qulenar' and 'Sindhu Vijay' by Faziruddin Ahmed. One of the features of the Bengali and the Assamese patriotic plays is to preach the harmony between the Hindus and Muslims. In this field too, the Bengali dramas scored a fair amount of success in comparison to their counterparts in

* Shri B. K. Barua - History of Assamese Literature,
Page- 158.

cont...
To unite the people against the dividing policy of the British, the Bengali playwrights placed before the people their dream of synthesizing all religious and establishing a united India. Siraj, in Girish Chandra's play 'Sirajdoulah' expressed the keen desire of Hindu-Muslim unity. In the same spirit Khirendrasad's 'Pratapaditya' breathed the message of equality - *bāṃglā sūchu hindur nay, sūchu musalmanere nay, bāṃglā bāṃglār* (Bengal doesn't belong to the Hindus alone - nor does it belong to the Muslims, Bengal is for Bengalees). ** In Sachindranath's (Gairik Pataka' the picture of an ideal king in the person of Sivaji, who sustains his subjects irrespective of Hindus and the Muslims, has been brought into focus - "daridra musalman prajārā ta utpītā karena, tārā ta mahārāstra ke grās karte cāyānā, tārā mātrabhūmite śasyasālinti kare, deser sakaler janya tārā kare svārtha bisarjan". (The poor Muslim tenants are not the oppressors, they don't want to devour Maharashtra, they make their motherland green with crops, they sacrifice their own interest in the interest of the country).*

* Pratapaditya -  (Act.1, Scene-V).
** Gairik Pataka-  (Act.1, Scene-V).
The same voice is heard in the mouth of Sivaji in Atul Chandra Hazarika's 'Chatrapati Sivaji'—“eikhan mahādes sībājirē nahay, ourāṃjībare nahay, eikhan mahādes' kūtī kūtī bhāratīya jānatār”.* (This sub-continent belongs neither to Sivaji nor to Aurangzeb. This sub-continent now really belongs to the millions of Indian people). In 'Chatrapati Sivaji' Atul Chandra Hazarika has expressed the hope of independence in the speech of Gelap Singh, a follower of Sivaji—"sībār Gelāp Simhar brata swāmētār, svajātir muktimāṛgāḷ. sībājir swapnai āji pratijan bhārat santānār swapnā, prayojan hale cibā lāγība mātrir pūjabedīt raktar āhūti. jānajī janmabhūmiścā swargādāpi gariyāśi".** (From this time Gelap Singh's mission in life is to free his own country and own people. Sivaji's dream is the dream to-day of each and every son and daughter of Mother India. If necessary, I'll offer my blood at the altar of Mother. Mother and motherland are superior to Heaven).

* Chatrapati Sivaji - (Act-III, Scene-II).
** Chatrapati Sivaji - (Act-I, Scene-III).
In the plays of Dwijendralal the concept of independence of a united India is found too. On the eve of the battle against the Moghals the call that we hear in the mouth of Pratap Singh in the play of the same name is not only a call to preserve the freedom of Rajasthan but there arises also a hope for the freedom of greater India —

"dāhā dāhā samarkshetre gāo ucce
ranajay gāthā,
rakshā karite pilita dharme suṇa
dāke ei bhāratmatā".*

( Run on to the battle field and sink aloud the song of victory,
Hark, Mother India called upon you to preserve the religion abused)

In Sachindranath's 'Gairik Pataka' the gorgeous image of India has been adored —

"Mahāmānaber e mahāsāgare mahābhārater
ārati cāi
jāti cāle āj naba manorathe
jebane kare sārathi bhāi".**

( We want the adoration of great India in the ecen of humanity
the nation marches to day with new hopes with youth as her guide).

Besides this, in almost all the Bengali historical plays of the twentieth century a hope for the recovery of India's freedom has been expressed.

* Pratap Singh - (Act.IV - Scene-VII)
The Bengali playwrights in writing plays with themes taken from the history of Bengal did not speak of the freedom of Bengal alone. But the Assamese playwrights in that case became vociferous with the glories of Assam. This mental attitude has been displayed in the speech of Lachit in Padmanath's play "Lachit Barphukan"* - "ei desar nām assam, āndes ei desar samān haba neāre" (The name of this land is Assam - no country is equal to this).

In contrast to the Bengali plays, the playwrights of Assam have shown the uniqueness of their native place, and have doubtlessly expressed their deep love for her.

Although there is an influence of the Bengali plays on the plays of Assam written with the themes taken from outside the history of Assam, the aim of both remains the same. That aim is to call the Indians into struggle and to realize the dream of freedom by driving away the British power.

The history of heroic deeds in Bengal is not limited. The proof of this is found in the stories of Pratapaditya, VijeySingha and others. But the Bengali playwrights brought in varieties

* Lachit Barphukan - Act.I, Scene-III.
in their plays by taking themes from the history of other states. As a result of this ever and above their own history, the history of the Rajputs, the Marhattas and the Mughals have found place in their plays. The inquisitive Bengali historical playwrights have vent, on the one hand to the power of expressiveness of their own, and on the other hand showed meticulous care to select materials from medieval Indian History. With untiring zeal and labour they gathered historical materials and wrote their patriotic plays. Although there was no dearth of heroic matters in the history of the "Twelve Land Lords" (Bare Bhuinya) or the Pallis and Sens, most of the Bengali plays have been written with the materials found in the history of the Rajputs. They depended only on the Indian History of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the backdrop of the Swadeshi Movement the Bengali dramatists tried to incite the people to plunge into the struggle for freedom with the belief that the heirs of the heroes of the different states of India, who only two or three centuries back showed...
ungorgettable self-sacrifice and heroism to free their country from the yoke of foreign power, must be imbibed with that spirit. Besides, against the expanding backdrop of Swadeshi Movement the Bengali dramatists going to discharge their great responsibility through literary medium, realized that though Bengal was the birthplace of this movement, it might not be possible to bring back the freedom of the country only with the struggling psychosis on the part of Bengal. So they wrote plays with the help of the history of other states with the object that all classes of Indian people would read these plays and see them acted on the stage and being inspired would rise against the foreign imperialists to bring back their cherished freedom.

Judged from another angle it may be said that the Bengali playwrights did not show equal loyalty to the facts of history in all places, be it the history of other states or their own.

The Bengali dramatists altered history, when...
necessary, to serve their purpose of preaching love of country: but the Assamese never deviated from the facts of history. In some places we find some imaginary sub-plots or characters, but the facts of history were never misrepresented.

The Bengali playwrights keeping the historical framework of their plays intact, made an assemblage of imaginary incidents and characters. In this context some examples from the Bengali historical plays are given:

The famous dramatist Girish Chandra in 'Sirajdoullah' showed his fidelity to history on the one hand, and on the other hand gave a quite new portraiture of Siraj. The character of Jahara and Karim Chacha are his own creation and quite unhistorical.

In 'Pratapaditya' Khiredeprasad invented subplots and characters in a captivating way. By imagining the character of Vijaya as the prototype of 'Devi Jossoreswari' he shows his love for romance.

The Bengali traits are found in many of the Rajput and Mughal characters of Dwijendralal. The characteristics of a Bengali daughter predominate in the character of Piyara in Sajahan. Moreover, in the contd.....
character of Sajahan himself more importance has been given to his unfortunate and helpless fatherhood than to the emperor like personality.

In "Mewar Patan" based on the history of Rajasthan Dwijendralal's own voice is heard in the speeches of Satyabati and Manasi. The dramatist has spoken of universal love in this drama.

In "Noorjahan" he tried to remain loyal to history, but the mental conflict of Noorjahan as he has shown in this play is not found in history. This character becomes unique in the description of the playwright in the face of the attack and counter attack of inner struggle.

The differences between the chief historical playwrights of Bengal with those of Assam are given here:

Padmanath Gohain Barua wrote his 'Jaymati', 'Gadadhar', 'Sadhani' and 'Lachit Barphukan' with the widely known stories in Assam's history. In the first three plays except one or two minor deviations, fidelity to history has been preserved. The love-episode between Lachit and Bamani Gavara is dramatist's own creation. But the dramatist could not show skill in this creation. Owing to the presence of incongruous elements in the character of Bamani Gavara the episode has not become believable.

contd....
The sources of Lakshminath Bezbarua's 'Selimar,
Chakravat Sinha and Jaymati Kuori' are also the
history of Assam. No departure from the facts of
history is visible in his plays. Though in the
delineation of the character of Dalimi he has shown
some sort of originality, it must be admitted that
this character is not wholly unhistorical. The
character of Dalimi created by mixing up history and
imagination points to the poetic genius of the
dramatist.

A picture of direct struggle with the English
is found in many Bengali plays written before
independence. In 'Sirajdoullah and Mirkashim' by
Girish Chandra and in 'Sirajdoullah' by Sachin
Sengupta we behold the pictures of face to face
struggle of the Indians against the English.

But in the Assamese plays written before
independence we do not come across even with any
sign of malice, not to speak of the direct fight,
with the English. In the concluding part of 'Selimar'
by Lakshminath Bezbarua we find a glimpse of the
English taking up the administration of the country
by defecting Manraja; but the drama ends with the
arrival of the English.

contd...
The Bengali dramatists upheld not only the heroic aspects of Bengali character but also pointed out the weaknesses of it. In Khirodeprasad's 'Pratapaditya', the Mughal general Man Singh speaks highly of the bravery of the Bengalis, at the same time he does not forget to mention the frailties of the Bengali character - "anya jātir dāse kārya, bāngalā, bāṃśīr dāse kāryahāṃ" (in other nations ten combined people perform a job, in Bengal ten people together war a job).

In "Mewar Patan", in such songs as - "gieche des duhkha nai, abar tera manus ha" (the country has gone, what's of that? Be man again) - Dwijendralal sang the glory of humanity and at the same time severely criticised the inequality and caste system in the Hindu Society.

The Assamese playwrights showed the heroism and sense of duty of their people, but hesitated to bring to light the shortcomings of their characters. So in their plays we hear the loud cheers of victory of the Assamese people. By dramatising the dry facts of history they could not express their own talents as the Bengali dramatists did.

The abundance of soliloquies in the plays of contd...
Padmanath Gehain Barua has marred the dramatic interest. In 'Jaymati' a considerable number of long soliloquies has been employed. In the character of Gadadhar action has been subordinated to long-winded soliloquies. Gadadhar had not to play any active role to establish peace in Assam by defeating King Lara and depriving him of his Kingdom. The dramatist has restricted this responsibility in some frequent soliloquies.

In 'Sirajdoullah' by Girish Chandra we hear from 'Siraj' the grandiloquent call to arms against the English, but in the actual battle field we find that Siraj is a greenhorn in the art of warfare.

In Dwijendralal we find an admixture of dramatic and poetic art. Emotional dialogues and dramatics are found on a large scale in his plays. But in many places overplaying of dramatics has overshadowed history. A profusion of dramatics is detected in the dialogues of Chanakya in "Chandragupta". The name of Dwijendralal comes first when we consider the language used in Bengali historical plays. It was Dwijendralal who first used lucid and sonorous dialogues in Bengali plays. In the historical plays of Girish Chandra a mixture of prose and verse has been used, while Khiredeprasad used prose in the contd....
dialogues. Although verse has been used in Tara Bai, the first historical play of Dwijendralal, prose has become the medium in other dramas. The distinguishing mark of Dwijendralal's language is its easy-flowing poeticism. The main drawback of this style is that he has put the same manner of language to almost all classes of characters, and this has created a discordant note in his plays. The most engaging factor in Sachin Sengupta's dialogues is its graceful prose.

The Assamese dramatist Padmanath Gohain Barua has used verse in the plays Jaymati, Gadadhar and Sadhani. But prose has been used in Lachit Barphukan, a play based on the character of the Assamese hero Lachit. Although his three plays written in verse are steeped with the sentiments of patriotism, the profundity of historical plays is absent there. On the other hand the plays of Lakshminath Bezbarua, though there is no such heightened ideas of nationalism, achieved success owing to their easy-flowing prose dialogues. His language has such an appealing character that it easily attracts the readers. Atul Chandra Hasarika and other playwrights mostly used prose in their contd.....
plays.

The uniformity of the characters of Lachit in Padmanath's 'Lachit Barphukan' and 'Sivaji' in Sachin Sengupta's 'Gairik Pataka' can be easily detected. Both the dramatists created their characters in keeping with the facts of history. Both Lachit and Sivaji engaged themselves to the service of the motherland. To discharge this noble mission both of them lived the life of an ascetic without renouncing world. Sivaji's adopted daughter was Shyanali and Lachit's Pijala Gavaru. Both Sivaji and Lachit performed their duties by giving them in marriage. Sivaji could not forgive his son Sambhuji because of the latter's non-allegiance to the country. In the same way Lachit never hesitated to cut his maternal uncle into two for neglect of duties. These two noble heroes enhanced the glory of their own countries by performing the same role in the field of action.