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## CONTEMPORARY INDIAN THEATRE AND DRAMA

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### Abstract

India, an ancient country known for her variety of climates, customs, languages and literature, has a long and glorious dramatic tradition of her own. It is, of course, difficult to trace the origin of the Indian theatre and determine the exact date of its commencement. Though there are controversies in this regard among scholars, we may guess that the classical Sanskrit Drama probably originated from the folk theatre of the country as a sophisticated form and, in course of time, both went on borrowing from each other and developed. Whatever the original of the classical drama, the existence of Bharata's "Natyasastra", a treatise on dramaturgy, which is said to belong to the third century A.D. is a clear proof of the existence of drama in a developed form in at least five or six centuries preceding it and the art of drama was given the status of veda. The great author prescribes not only the stage worthy things which are both entertaining and didactic, but also the qualifications for the audience.

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