

## Abstract No 59

# Modern Trends in Sanskrit - Sanskrit theatre in Maharashtra

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Drama as a form of literature is lively as compared to other forms of literature, because a play that is written has a possibility of its presentation on stage unlike other forms of literature. Three elements are required for the presentation of a play. First is a team of performers. Second element is an organizing body to provide with an avenue for the presentation and third element is spectators. This paper aims to identify these elements of modern Sanskrit theatre in Maharashtra, a state of India. The term modern here is understood as dramas modern in terms of theme, form, literary style and style of presentation as well. Sanskrit theatre is active in Maharashtra even today mainly because of various theatre competitions and movements. The most important contribution is by Government of Maharashtra. Government of Maharashtra is the only state in India and perhaps in world that organizes a competition especially for Sanskrit plays and therefore it becomes a notable activity. Year 2017 - 18 was the fifty seventh year of this event. Fergusson College, an autonomous university also organizes an intercollegiate drama competition since last twenty years. University of Mumbai organizes drama competition every year under Youth Festival - an event to showcase the talent in collegiate youngsters. Today, we find three streams flowing parallel to each other on Sanskrit stage. First stream is edited concise versions of classical Sanskrit plays. Another stream is plays translated from other languages or based on the literature in other languages. Third and most important stream is newly written plays in Sanskrit. The paper analyses the element of modernity in these plays. The performers of modern Sanskrit plays can also be divided into three categories. There are groups of people volunteering to popularize Sanskrit. Secondly, there are some professional troops. Moreover, there are some troops who find this activity as an experiment on stage and consider doing Sanskrit play challenging for various reasons. This paper throws light on these challenges from the perspective of the writer, director and performers. There are constraints on the number of connoisseurs of Sanskrit plays. The paper suggests ideas that could be implemented in dramatic circles and academic circles to increase the viewership. A plan of action with respect to these suggestions shall strengthen the new wave of Sanskrit theatre.

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