While viewing the telecast of 'Nine-rasas' in a late night television programme Hamlet, King Lear, Cordelia, Othello, Portia, Rosalind, Juliet, Falstaff, and a host of others in the galaxy appeared in succession before mind's eye as agents evoking various rasas. This unique presentation whetted the interest of the viewer in Bharata's Natyasastra, an encyclopaedia of performing arts, which postulates the 'Rasa theory'. Its translation into English by Manomohan Ghosh in 1950 opened new vistas in the world of aesthetics. The desire to cross-study the master-works of Shakespeare, to explore these 'rasas' in the light of the Indian dramaturgy as contained in the Natyasastra grew even stronger when the explorer happened to read about the presentation of Sudraka's Mrchakatika or The Little Clay Cart in western countries.

Some brows may go up on hearing about the idea of cross-studying and establishment of inter-relationship between the Natyasastra and works of Shakespeare as the two coming from different cultures and civilizations. Though Shakespeare belongs to the West, and Natyasastra to the East, in their origin and exposition, centuries removed in time space and civilization, yet the fact remains that Natyasastra and Shakespeare, both easily transgress frail artificial boundaries and contain a universal human appeal. Hence
If one moves forward with the acceptance of the view that all human life is a unified whole expressing through the medium of emotions and sentiments, and that all knowledge is one, meant for humanity at large, the duality of the East and the West ends, and one finds it tempting to probe into the works of Shakespeare in the light of the canons of Indian dramaturgy contained in the Natvasastra.

The Natvasastra contains directives for the playwright in the light of which he strives to effect the uncommon sensory delight. Freshness and vibrant magical appeal of Shakespeare's works till date impels a cross-study of the two to explore the viability of such a study. His creative field is too vast to be abridged into a single treatise, especially because of the extant nature of Natvasastra; it is, therefore, well-nigh impossible to apply the dramaturgy in totality to study the Shakespearean dramatic art in one stride. This dissertation, therefore, is confined to the study of aesthetics mainly, applying on the major works of Shakespeare the essential constituent of drama i.e., 'rasa' as laid down by Bharata in his Natvasastra. This study of the works in the new light, it is hoped, will add a new dimension to the existing art and criticism.