Chapter Three.

RENDERING AND ADAPTATION OF SHAKESPEARE DRAMA INTO BENGALI BY CALCUTTA ELITES.

The staging of Shakespeare was a regular practice with the mid nineteenth century elites of Calcutta. If the first hundred years of Shakespeare presentation remained busy staging original plays, the next hundred years may safely be regarded as a century of Shakespeare imitation. The steady spread of English education, the Hindoo College in 1817, the University of Calcutta in 1857, different education societies in Calcutta, the pedagogic tradition, the social and cultural renaissance, the growing national consciousness, dearth of adequate stage and Bengali drama in the true sense of the word, the unique appeal of Shakespeare plays staged by the English Community in Calcutta and the desire to imitate them in native way might be the reasons for this spurt. By the middle of the century a good number of native elites and amateurs rendered and adapted Shakespearean plays in Bengali for staging them in different theatre houses in Calcutta. The year 1852 is undoubtedly significant as the beginning of the Western impact upon Bengali dramas. Before 1852
Bengali plays were mainly folk-dramas (Yatras) in form based upon religion and mythology. The 'Hasyarnav' in 1822, the 'Kautuk-Sarvasva' in 1828, 'Ratnavali' in 1849 had roots in Sanskrit classics. This translation from the Indian and Western classics into Bengali language has deeply moulded the thoughts and sentiments of the native literary minds and strengthened the cultural background of the native literature. It is historically significant enough that without the zeal and labour in translating Shakespeare and staging them, the Bengali drama could not have vigorously thrived. As early as 1872, the 'NilDarpan' by Sree Dinabandhu Mitra was staged.

A list of mentionable translators of Shakespeare plays into Bengali during the period can be studied for a correct appraisal of the volume of indebtedness to Shakespeare in the very formative stage of native plays in Bengal. The worthmentioning pioneer in this field is Sree Jogesh Chandra Gupta whose 'Kirtibilas' in the year 1852 is an adaptation of the tragedy of 'Hamlet'. 
The writer, well-versed in Aristotle has tried to incorporate into it the tragic sentiments despite the short-comings of the native language and distributed the action of the play into acts and scenes after the style of Shakespeare.

The next mentionable translation, 'Bhanumati Chittavilas' a Bengali rendering of 'The Merchant of Venice' was taken up by Sree Hara Chandra Ghose in the same year. Mr. Ghosh, a noted elite of the day, was, by profession, superintendent of excise at Maldah. The translator's remarkable originality can be traced in his transmitting the Centre of interest from the Merchant (as in the original English play) to the heroine (as suggested in the very title of the translation). The place of action is shifted in between Ujjain and Gujrat, for 'acts' and 'scenery'; the words 'anka' and 'anga' are used and despite the occasional touches of classical Sanskrit dramas, the translator's ingenuity is really charming. There are other deviations from the
original play, i.e. both the parents of Bhanumati are alive and there are two attendants of the heroine (Sulochana and Sushila) instead of one as in the original. The English preface to the translation reads:

"In 1852, I published my vernacular drama of 'The Merchant of Venice' which was written at the suggestion of a European friend of native education ....... But the avidity with which the work was received by the general reader, particularly by some whose curiosity was excited to see 'The Merchant of Venice' in an oriental dress induced a belief that the work has been considered acceptable and that if a similar attempt were made, it might not prove abortive". 56

The preface records the popularity and commercial success of the edition. Perhaps this inspired him to render another play by Shakespeare. This time he translated 'Romeo and Juliet' into 'Charumukha Chittahara'
published in the year 1864. This vernacular edition observed the same formal discipline with slight modifications, here and there, just to fit into the oriental acceptance. The language being simple, elegant and colloquial, the place of action veered round Karnatnagar and Trivancoore in the southern India. The most noticeable point in this rendering is that each scene closes with a couplet in conformity with the stage device in Shakespearean plays.

Then comes Michael Madhusudan Dutta — a devout disciple of Captain D. L. Richardson of the Hindoo College, an ardent admirer of William Shakespeare. He entered into Bengali drama through translation and Shakespeare's indirect impact upon him was considerable. In form and style, in the attainment of the sublime tragic grandeur, in the use of soliloquies and supernatural elements, in the treatment of the inner soul of a character, in the superb combination of the tragic and comic feelings, in the solution of the intense tragic heights, Madhusudan, is, indeed, very close to
Shakespeare. His 'Krishna-Kumari' (Kissen Kumari) in 1861 bears perhaps the unmistakable stamp of the greatest dramatist. In the second act, second scene, Madanika, a female attendant of Bilasbati, the royal spouse appears as a male messenger appointed to foil the attempts of Dhanadas, the villain of the play. This reminds us of Rosalind (As you like it) or Viola (The Twelfth Night) or Portia (The Merchant of Venice). The appearance of the ghost of sati Padmini in the third act, second scene, at a tense tragic moment before Krishna - the princess, reminds us of 'Julius Caesar' and Macbeth'. The lunatic aberrations of Jai-Singha - the King, in the fifth act, second scene, the pathetic declamations on the shocking death of his daughter are very close to those of 'King Lear' in the final act of the play. Balendra Singha appears to be a shadow of the Bastard in 'King John'. Besides, the gradual heightening up of the tragic action, the high-sounding, elevated accents in the storm scene, the guilty conscience of the king and his loyal brother Balendra quite significantly prove the influence of Shakespeare upon Michael Madhusudan. The same impact,
however small, is continued upon his 'Maya-Kanan', in the year 1874. In the third act, first scene, towards the end, the spirit of dead King of Sindhuiesh, appears before the minister just to determine the course of action, much after the style of the spirit of elder Hamlet before his son.

After Michael, the most prominent stalwart in the field of Bengali drama is Dinabandhu Mitra, a promising scholar of the Hindoo College and Calcutta University. He came, saw, and Conquered the wide field of Bengali drama by 'Nil-Darpan' (1860). Of his plays, 'Nabin-Tapaswini (1863) 'Lilavati' (1867) and 'Jamai-Barik' (1872) bear distinct stamps of Shakespeare. He has dialogues and aphorisms. 'Jamai Barik' has the following couplet:

"Of all the blessings on earth the best is a good wife. A bad one is the bitterest course of human life".

His 'Kamale-Kamini' (1873) has the following extract from Macbeth:

Bun : Dismay'd not this our Captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

Sergeant : Yes, as sparrows, eagles; or the hare, the lion. 58
'Lilavati' has three extracts from Shakespeare on the bad effects of wine. His Neeme Dutta in 'Sadhabar Ekadashi' freely quotes from Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden and Pope. Still more interesting is 'Nabin-Tapaswini' where Hondol-Kut-Kutey is an imitation of Sir John Falstaff in 'Merry Wives of Windsor' and the merry wives - Malati and Mallika are distinct shadows of Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page. Besides, there are verbal similarities of words with those of Shakespeare. Act I, Scene IV, 'Nabin-Tapaswini' has a Bengali line, the meaning of which is quite the same as that of

"The Rose, Call it by any name, would smell as sweet".

In 'Sadhabar Ekadasi' the character of Ram-Manikya with his peculiar accents and intonations of East Bengal (now 'Bangladesh') provokes laughter after the style of Dr. Gaius and Hugh Evans in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'. 
His 'Jamai-Barik', a female dominated farce is an imitation of Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew'. Abhoy Kumar, a timid husband is almost a proto-type of Petruchio and Kamini is much like Shakespeare's 'Katharina' in the play.

A glorious tradition of history plays in Bengal started with Jyotirindranath Tagore. Most of his plays are upon the heroism of the ancient Kings with stories well-knit, description lively, characters well-sketched and the language simple and idiomatic. His translation of 'Julius Caesar' in Bengali is a commendable work. His 'Punar-Vasanta' (formerly 'Man-bhanga') an opera is closely based upon the theme of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' made up of songs and hilarities. Jyotirindranath himself had set the compositions to melodious songs. His prime literary endeavour was spent in rendering and adapting sometimes from the British dramatists, sometimes from the Greek classics and the French Moliere who was his ideal. His 'Puru-Vikram', 'Sorojini' and 'Ashrumati'
distinctly bear the western influence. Of the three, 'Ashrumati' based upon Todd's 'Annals of Rajasthan' has strong influences of 'Othello'. In the play 'Ashrumati', daughter of Pratap Singha, a hindoo by religion has fallen in love with a Muslim young, Selim, having a striking similarity of the 'Desdemona-Othello' love episode. Besides, Selim - a wavering soul between jealousy and faith has almost like 'Othello' attempted murder of his beloved ashrumati and afterwards deeply repented. 'Puruvikram' and 'Sarojini' are constructed after the formal discipline of classical dramas of Sophocles and Euripides. 'Sarojini' or Chitor-Akraman' is an adaptation of Euripides' - 'Iphigenia in Aulis'. Besides, he specialized in rendering French and Spanish short stories in Bengali. And this, no doubt, greatly strengthened the native language and literature.

The most outstanding dramatic genius in the late Nineteenth century after Jyotirindranath is Giris Chandra Ghosh. Enriched with vast Shakespearean scholarship, many
of his plays bear prominent traces of Shakespeare's art and technique. This is quite evident from his own words:

"The great poet Shakespeare is my ideal. I have closely followed in his footsteps."
characteristic 'Gairish' style much after the dramatic blank verse has made the native language responsive to the varieties of dramatic sentiments. As regards the material for his plays Giris Chandra freely utilized the available history, mythology and the epics quite in the manner of Shakespeare's use of Plutarch or Cinthio or Holinshed or Boccaccio. His characterization has close semblance with Shakespeare protagonists. The clowns 'Batul', 'Akal', 'Bidushak', 'Kanchuki', 'Purnaram Bhat' and 'Karim Chacha' are modelled on Shakespeare's. That Falstaff was his great favourite is evident in his Barunchand, Jambubhoy or Bireswar. Leela in 'Anand Raho' and Lady Macbeth; Jana (in 'jana') and queen Margaret; Lutfa in 'Sirajuddoulla' and Lady Parcy (to name only a few of the vast number of his character sketches) have close and mutual similarities. His great creation 'Prafulla' has striking traces of the western influence in respect of characterization and the treatment of tragic elements to the effect of a sublime tragedy. His translation of 'Macbeth' is not only superb but also peerless, as yet. Strange indeed, how meticulously Giris could reproduce the original sense and sound through his native
tongue especially the colloquy of the witches:

1st Witch: When shall we three meet again, 
            In thunder, lightning or in rain?

2nd Witch: When the hurlyburly's done, 
            When the battle's lost and won. 65

In the translation of Girish:

Or, in another place of the same play:

'A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap
And she munched and munched and munched: 67
In Girls Ghosh translation:

Or, 'Macbeth' in Act Five, Scene three, lines forty onwards entreating the doctor to heal up his wife:

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas' 
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Rage out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
which weighs upon the heart?

Let us see how very wonderfully Giris has overcome the barrier of a foreign language:

The text is a translation of the famous soliloquy from Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' into Bengali, emphasizing the effort to connect with the original text despite the challenges posed by a foreign language.
Translating the inimitable language of Shakespeare is a stupendous task but how very creditably has Girls tried to perform even that. Sometimes, his rendering is no less worthy than his master's. In this connection, the translations of 'Macbeth' — One by Sri Haralal Roy and the other by Sri Nanimohan Bandyopadhyay into Bengali 'Rudrapal' and 'Rudrasen' respectively — prove to be a poor shadow beside the version of Girls. It is further learnt that Prof. C.H. Tawny, the then Principal of Presidency College once entered his class with two copies of 'Macbeth' — one English edition and the other Bengali version of Girls. He recommended the native students to read both the editions, side by side. Not only the influence of 'Macbeth' but also that of 'Antony and Cleopatra' can be discerned in 'Satnam' and 'Vishad'. Besides, his introduction of female characters appearing in male attires is distinctly an Elizabethan device. The introduction of ghost determining the critical cross points of
tense dramatic action takes after the great tragedies like 'Hamlet', 'Julius Caesar' and 'Macbeth'. Though he borrowed materials from the great Elizabethan genius, the style is his own and the total output has become distinctly native and original.

Giris Chandra was called, during his life time, the Garrick of Bengal but he was even more than that, despite the alliterative similarity of the two names. David Garrick was, no doubt, a great actor but as a dramatist he falls far short of Giris. Indeed, Giris is unique as a playwright and actor.

Dwijendralal Roy is, undoubtedly, the next outstanding dramatic genius. His devotion to the English literature, minute reading of Shakespeare and Shelley, study in England, witnessing the dramatic performance on the European stages by different actors and actresses, and, above all, his own creative ingenuity are greatly responsible for this. In loftiness and grandeur of style and diction,
in the superb treatment of theme and situation, in the
variety and range of characterization, in giving expression
to the intensity of emotion and dramatic sentiment, D. L.
Roy (1863-1915), a supreme artist reveals his spontaneous
admiration for Shakespeare. His glowing tribute to
Shakespeare at the sight of the burial ground of the Bard
of Avon in England is admirable.

(Sleep, O Sublime poet, your name shall not remain unheard
of there where English is known ....... Far away, an inhabitant
on the bank of the Ganges, the dark-skinned Son of India will
hug you and heartily bow down to you as the dear brother of
Kalidas, the great son of Minerva (Saraswati) and as the
(great) poet of the world).
The above encomium is an instance of D.L.R's profound reverence for Shakespeare.

'Tarabai' (1903), his maiden experiment on the form of historical drama is written in a new style of blank verse but at the request of his contemporary senior poet Nabin Chandra Sen, he gave up this verse form in his later plays. The play 'Tarabai' is based on the episode of 'Prithviraj' and Tarabai'. The most attractive point in it is the episode of Surjamal, the brother and chief Commander of Raymal, the king of Mewar and Tamosa, his wife. Surjamal being inspired by the forecast of Charonee - a character in the play, was infuriated into an uncompromising aspirant to the royal throne of Mewar. His wife Tamosa's constant instigation has intensified his aspiration. And, this is very close to the theme of 'Macbeth'. Eventhough, 'Tarabai' as a play and Surjamal and Tamosa as character-sketches fall far short of any comparison with 'Macbeth'. But this marks the beginning of impact of Shakespeare, upon Dwijendralal, the dramatist. 'Shajahan' (1909) is decidedly the best of the historical plays by D. L. Roy. Dedicated to the memory of Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, it is based
upon the decadent phase of the Mughul dynasty. Here, he has for the first time, pitted the tragedy of an individual against the political history of a vast country, and the two are at a critical conflict with each other. Despite the differences, 'Shajahan' is 'a tragedy of suffering' like 'King Lear'. The character of captived Shajahan is a wonderful manifestation of Lear in madness. The scenic background, the choice and selection of the highly elevated diction, the sharp inner conflict in the infirm, aged and betrayed father recovering sanity in the last scene, the symbolic cosmic convulsion all proclaim a close similarity with 'King Lear' in the 'Heath scene' in Act III of the Shakespearean play. - In Act 2 Scene II, Shajahan's terrible outburst in his obsessional wrath and determination to avenge the filial ingratitude is recorded in the following lines:

"..."
In Act 3, Scene II of 'King Lear', in a part of the 'Heath' Lear standing on the verge of madness bursts forth in blind anger and terrible curses, not less violent than that of Shajahan:

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout

Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the Cocks!

You sulph'rous and thought executing fires,

Vaunt-couriers of Oak-cleaving thunderbolts,

Singe my whitehead! And thou, all-shaking thunder,

strike flat the thick rotundity O' th' World?

Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once

that makes ingrateful man!
The same intonation is heard in the fifth act, third scene of
'Shajahan':

In 'King Lear' Act 3, Scene 11, the same fierce outburst of Lear is heard once again:

Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire, spout, rain!

............................... then let fall

Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,

A poor, infirm, weak and despis'd old man.

But yet I call you servile ministers,

That will with two pernicious daughters join

Your high engender'd battles against a head

So old and white as this.
The scene of 'Shajahan's madness is really tragic and rarely artistic in the history of Bengali tragic drama. Shajahan's madness is surprisingly Lear's 'reason in madness'. Both Lear and Shajahan even in madness, feign to be the lords over their respective kingdoms, holding the court, hearing the trial and giving verdicts. In 'Shajahan' Act 5, Sec. iii:

Lear also behaves the same way in Act 3 scene vi:

Lear  I'll see their trial first, Bring in their evidence ....... Thou robed man of justice, take thy place ; .........................

* * * * * * You are O'th' commission, Sit you too.

Dildar, a court-jester in 'Shajahan' is almost a prototype of the Fool in 'King Lear'. Like Fool he also tries to
warn Shajahan against Morad and Aurangjeb and like him Dildar plays a comic role and is combination of wit and idiocy. In 'Shajahan' the royal clown is a jester, a Courtier, a critic and sometimes 'an idealized spectator' but in the death scene of Dara he has come out of his comic cloak and become quite serious. Lear's Fool, on the other hand, has maintained a superb uniformity throughout his role. Herein lies the superiority of the Fool over Dildar.

In 'Nurjahan', another historical play, (1908), the Central character Nurjahan is a lusty lady; ambitious and revengeful. She is severely torn within by the conflict for which she herself is mainly responsible. Closely she takes after Medea, Hedda, Lady Macbeth and mainly Clytemenestra of Euripides, (not of Sophocles). Also, it appears that in the tragic scheme of the play, Dwijendralal has been considerably influenced by Shakespeare. Laila resembles Hamlet. She has revolted against her mother's second marriage with her father's murderer and most rudely condemned her. The play 'Nurjahan' is really a beautiful attempt by D.L.Roy in grafting the Shakespearean technique of tragedies with
the help of the native language and literature. In situational and thematic considerations, in the development of plot and character-sketches, in structural patterns, in the treatment of grandeur and elemental passion, D.L. Roy takes constant recourse to Shakespeare.

Another extraordinary literary personality of the mid-nineteenth century, Rabindranath was acquainted with the western literature especially with Shakespeare, in his early teens. In 'Jivan-Smriti' Rabindranath has recorded:
in any way, compel me to the school routine, he gave up the idea and planned a new device. He began teaching me. Kumar-Samvab' in Bengali. Besides that, he would give me lessons in 'Macbeth' in Bengali and confine me into my room until I rendered it into Bengali metre. Thus the translation of the entire play was completed).

The monthly Journal 'Bharati' bears evidence to the wonderful rendering of Macbeth'.
The following are the original lines from 'Macbeth':

Thunder and Lightning. Enter three witches.

1. Witch. When shall we three meet again?
   In thunder, lightning or in rain?

2. Witch When the hurly-burly's done,

3. Witch That will be ere the set of sun.

II Witch Where the place?

2. Witch Upon the heath.

3. Witch There to meet with Macbeth.

1. Witch I come Graymalkin!

2. Witch Paddock calls.

3. Witch Anon!
All. Pair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Rabindranath's 'Raja 'O' Rani (1889) is a five act play in blank verse lines based mainly upon the theme of love. Self-centred love is mean and cruel. It hastens the ruin of the lovers and all concerned. On the contrary, it has to be attained through sacrifice, through decentralization of self for the well being of many. Reckless lust is never noble or ideal. This truth happens to be the cardinal point in the poetic drama. King Vikramdev is a hen-pecked and self-centred husband, engrossed in selfish love of his wife Sumita even at the cost of his royal duties:

An echo of the similar sentiments as those of Vikramdev is heard in 'Antony and Cleopatra' with more emphasis and lyric grandeur:
"Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
of the rang'd empire fall ! Here is my
space, kingdoms are clay" : 75

The intense love-episode of Ila and Kumar has a
close semblance with that of 'Romeo and Juliet'. Reboti
is a faint shadow of Lady Macbeth, inspiring her husband
Chandrasen to plot against Kumar in order to possess the
throne of Kashmir by foul means. 'Chitrangada' has an
episodic similarity with Shakespeare's romantic comedy,
'A Mid-summer Night's Dream'. Madan (Cupid) and Vasanta
(Spring) have from background, greatly dominated over the
heroes and heroines in 'Chitrangada' as in the Shakespearean
comedy wherein the fairies, - good and mischievous, create
a 'willing suspension of disbelief' for the time being.
His 'Gorary Galad' (Defect at the Root) or ( 'Sesh-Raksha'
a colourful farce is a veritable 'Comedy of Errors' by
Shakespeare, based upon the mistakes of Nemai in identifying
Indumati and Vice verse. And quite in the style of
Shakespearean comedy the ultimate solution has been attained
through great mirth and comic hilarity. The 'Chira-Kumar Sabha' is another farce which shadows Romantic comedy, 'Love's Labours Lost'. Chandramadhab Babu, a college lecturer is the president and his three close associates: Sris, Bipin and Purna, the members in the council of celibates have taken a vow of confirmed celibacy. Similarly Ferdinand, The King of Navarre and his three close associates: Berowne, Ingaville and Dumain have promised bachelorhood for three years and not to see the face of a woman, nor to allow any woman within a mile of his court. Sallababu, a young widow of Aukshoy in the farce in the guise of a youngman, Abalakanto by name, has taken membership of the council. The princess of France and her three lady attendants: Rosaline, Maria and Katherine met the King of Navarre and his lord attendants, in male-guise after the style of Portia or viola or Rosalind. In both 'Chira-Kumar Sabha' and 'Love's Labours Lost' the ultimate 'Lusis' (solution) is attained through promise of friendship and marriage.

In the primary stage of his dramatic career (The Jorasanko Stage), Rabindranath was considerably influenced by Shakespeare. The introductory note to 'Malini' bears
evidence to his profound respect for the great Bard of Avon:

(Shakespeare is always ideal for our plays. The manifold variety, vastness and the cross-currents of action captivate our mind from the very beginning).

'Malini' has been composed all through in the blank verse style of Shakespeare. The conversations of the hungry and oppressed subjects of Jalandhar in the second scene of 'Raja 'O' Rani' are almost similar in spirit to those of 'Coriolanus'. Rabindranath's comedies abound in parallelism and sub-plots which are the two salient characteristics in Shakespeare comedies. Soliloquies after Shakespearean style also assume a vital part in Rabindranath's plays. But the impact of the sublime tragic sentiments in Shakespearean tragedies upon Rabindranath's tragic plays is perhaps the greatest.
Shakespeare's tragic heroes have magnificently fought against all adversities, borne the brunts of all severities but never surrendered to the hostile and conflicting forces and ultimately courted heroic death. These conflict, confrontation and catastrophe are the vital contribution of a Shakespearean tragedy. Bengali tragic drama 'Krishna Kumari' (Madhusudan Dutt) 'Prafulla' (Giris Chandra Ghosh), 'Sahajahan' and 'Nurjahan' (D.L.Roy), 'Raja - 'O' - Rani' (Rabindranath Tagore) and many tragedies bear considerable impact of Shakespeare, in this respect. Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Dinabandhu Mitra, Jyotirindranath Tagore, Giris Chandra Ghosh, Dwijendra Lal Roy, Kshirod Prasad Vidya-Vinod, Rabindranath Tagore and many other playwrights and poets were attracted by the profound inner conflict of the tragic heroes and heroines of a Shakespeare play and this is reflected in their respective plays.

Besides these great stalwarts of Bengali literature mentioned already, there are other names ranging from the year 1867 in the field of translation and adaptation of
Shakespeare drama. Satyendranath, an elder brother of Rabindranath rendered 'Cymbeline' into 'Sushila-Bir singha' and Chandrakanti Ghosh, his contemporary, rendered next year, the same play under the title name of 'Kusum-Kumari'. Radhamadhab Kar, a noted Bengali elite of the time rendered 'Romeo and Juliet' into 'Basanta-Kumari' in the year 1890. 'The Comedy of Errors' was translated into 'Bhranti-Vilas' by no less an elite than Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. Vidyasagar's profound reverence for Shakespeare is evident in the following lines:

(It is not the whole truth that he (Shakespeare) was the greatest poet of England, but no poet, born as yet, in the world is comparable with him).
Benimadhab Ghosh, a less noted elite of the day, translated the same comedy of Shakespeare into Bengali 'Bhram-Kautuk' in the year 1873. Haralal Roy translated 'Macbeth' into 'Rudrapal and Pramatha nath Basu took 'Hamlet' to shape it into Bengali 'Amar-Singha' in the next year. Taraknath Mukhopadhyay translated 'Macbeth' in the year 1875 and Pyarilal Mukhopadhyay stated the comedy 'The Merchant of Venice' into 'Surolata' in the year 1877. Jogendranath Das Ghosh in 1878 wrote 'Ajoy Singha 'O' Vilasbati' in imitation of 'Romeo and Juliet'.

The great poet of the century, Hemchandra Banyopadhyay made a verse rendering of 'The Tempest' into 'Nalini-Vasanta' in 1879 and 'Romeo and Juliet' into 'Romeo-Juliet' in the year 1895. Charuchandra Mukhopadhyay translated 'The Tempest' into 'Prakriti' in the year 1880. Nilratan Mukhopadhyay, an elite of the day brought out a translation of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' under the title of 'Sharat-Shasi' in the year 1883. Tarini Charan Paul and Nagendranath
Basil rendered 'Othello' into 'Bhimsingha' and 'Macbeth' into 'Kamavira' respectively in the year 1885. Lolitmohan Adhikari and Chandiprasad Ghosh translated 'Hamlet' in the same name in the years 1892 and 1894 respectively. Nagendranath Chowdhury, an elite of a contemporary cultural society, rendered 'Hamlet' into 'Hariraj' in the year 1896 and Ananda Prasad Basu translated 'As you like it' into 'Ananga-Rangili' in 1897. Debendra Nath Basu, an elite of the Bengal Theatrical society rendered 'Othello' into Bengali with considerable success. This should be admitted that though all the renderings and adaptations were not commendable, while some of these were nothing but inartistic translation of the original, the overwhelming number of the rendering and adaptation justifies the profound Shakespeare admiration of the day. Kshirod Prasad Vidyavinod did not translate or adapt any Shakespeare play, the impact of Shakespeare upon him is mentionable, save very insignificant thematic similarities, here and there, with two or three
plays of Shakespeare. 'Bedoura' a romantic lyric play by Kshirodprasad is based upon an Arabian tale of marriage entanglement of a prince with the vow of confirmed celibacy and the China princess. The humorous development in the play has slender similarities with 'Love's Labours Lost'. His 'Raksha-Ramani' another romantic play is based upon the story of Sarvani and Saileswar. Sarvani, a damsel like Miranda in the 'Tempest' has never seen any young man before she was smitten with love and romance for the first time for Saileswar who lost his way while hunting deer in a forest, reached the hermitage and discovered his beloved in Sarvani. These similarities, however, are very faint and insignificant.

From the above survey one fact is established and that is the tremendous popularity and adoration of Shakespeare with the mid-nineteenth century Bengali playwrights and most of these rendered editions were staged by the noted contemporary actors and actresses. It is Shakespeare alone who greatly
inspired the fancy and imagination of the native elites
and decisively shaped the formative stage of their creative
mind, despite the insurmountable limitations of the native
language, literature, taste and culture. Moreover, these
renderings and adaptations of Shakespeare plays have greatly
advanced the native dramatic technique, particularly, the
treatment of the sublimity of the tragic feelings and
sentiments hitherto unknown. Though the 'fine frenzy'
in a Shakespeare play is occasionally absent in the native
compositions, Shakespeare, still was their noble ideal, an
eternal fountain of joy and a vast domain for experimenta-
tion and a permanent model for all times.