INTRODUCTION

It was perhaps with the early English settlers of Calcutta who founded a theatre for their own amusement in Lal Bazar at the North-East Corner of Mission Row long before the battle of Plassey that Shakespeare first made his appearance in India. As this and the other English theatres of subsequent growth were intended exclusively for the amusement of the English; and only the Indians of note were given the privilege of visiting them, the students of the various institutions had to take upon themselves the staging of Shakespeare's plays. But to be popular Shakespeare had to wait till the able advocacy of Lord Macaulay for the English education made him figure on the syllabuses for the various examinations in India.

There is no gainsaying the fact that Shakespeare invaded India in the wake of political annexation of India by the Britishers and his vogue, at the outset, was due mainly to the political supremacy the Britishers had in India. The political factor, no doubt, accounts to a great extent, for the introduction of Shakespeare into India, but Shakespeare's subsequent victory over the mind of India was independent of any political influence; it was entirely owing to the intrinsic merit of his works - a merit which the Indian mind, well steeped in the best of its own ancient classical lore, was not slow to recognize.

2. S.J. Gupta, Shakespeare in India, p.6.
Ever since his introduction into India, Shakespeare has been a source of constant stimulus to the various Indian literatures, and Hindi literature is no exception. Rightly has Professor C.J. Sisson, after going through Dr. S.C. Gupta's pioneer work towards assessing Shakespeare's influence in Indian literatures, observed that:

"His admirable pioneer work makes it all the clearer to me that Indian survey must be carried out in sections and by provinces, and that literary culture must not be allowed to obscure the lessons to be drawn from the practice of the Indian stage." 1

In fact, to understand and appreciate culture - or literature which mirrors culture - it is very essential to take a stock of the forces that have been at work in shaping it. In explaining the growth of Hindi literature we have, of necessity, to reckon with the impact of Shakespeare which has been considerable in the realm of drama. Right from the time of Bhartendu Harishchandra (1850-1885), the leading pioneer of modern Hindi literature, down to our own times, Shakespeare has been read, appreciated, translated and imitated by Hindi writers and has been equally popular with the Hindi reading public. It is interesting to note that from 1879, when the first Hindi translation of a Shakespearean play appeared, to about 1910, when the playwrights other than Shakespeare too came to have a vogue in India, no English play, other than Shakespeare's, was

1. C.J. Sisson, Shakespeare in India, p.6.
translated into Hindi except Addison's Cato. Certain plays from Bengali, it is true, were also translated but they were mostly those which bore the impress of Shakespeare patently or remotely. This constant impact of Shakespeare upon Hindi literature has left some very tangible results which it will be my task here in this thesis to analyse and evaluate.

The subject, the influence of Shakespeare on Indian literature, has long attracted the attention of scholars; and several attempts have been made to assess this influence in the form of critical essays and books. These attempts fall into three broad categories:

1- the works of a general nature tracing English influence on the various literatures of India other than Hindi;

2- the works of a general nature tracing Western or English influence on Hindi literature; and

3- the works outlining the influence of Shakespeare on the various Indian literatures, with scanty and rather casual references to Hindi literature.

In the first category we may mention those works which are studied in comparative literature: The Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature by Syed Abdul Latif, a Ph.D. thesis approved by the London University, Western Influence in Bengali Literature (1932) by Sriyaranjan Sen, and The Indian Theatre (1933) by R.K. Yajnik. The first two works have nothing to do with Hindi literature and the third refers only to the various Hindi adaptations of Shakespeare's plays alongside of the adaptations in other Indian languages made for the stage.
Coming to the second category, we have Dr. V.N. Mishra's English Influence on Hindi Language and Literature, a thesis supplicated for the D.Phil. degree of the Allahabad University in 1950, and Dr. D.K. Lal Srivastava's The Influence of Western Drama on Modern Hindi Drama, another thesis submitted in the same University in 1951. There is also Dr. Shripati Sharma's Hindi Natakon par Pashchatya Prabhava, a thesis presented in the Agra University in 1953. Dr. V.N. Mishra presented his work Western Influence in Hindi Drama for the D.Litt. degree of the Lucknow University in 1958. Wide as the canvas is of all these theses, they have not done full justice to Shakespeare. They mostly deal with the impact of Western drama in general, referring to Shakespeare only as part of a broader current, without fully dwelling upon his influence. These works are more in the nature of general historical surveys than a close examination of the impact that is perceptible in the actual texts of the Indian writers. Moreover, they only provide lists of the various translations of Shakespeare, which too are not exhaustive; they have little to offer in the nature of a critical assessment of these translations nor do they refer at all to the problems involved in the task of translating Shakespeare's plays into Hindi.

Among the works analysing the influence of Shakespeare on various Indian literatures, we may mention Shakespeare in India (1924) by Dr. S.C. Gupta, a thesis approved for the Ph.D.
degree of the University of London, which deals with the translations and adaptations of Shakespeare in as many as ten different Indian languages including Hindi, as well as an article entitled Cymbeline in a Hindoo Playhouse by H. Littledale, published in Macmillan's Magazine in May, 1880. Considering the broad scope of the subject that Dr. Gupta has ambitiously chosen for his study, it is hardly surprising that he has mentioned only four Hindi translations and three adaptations in his 'Appendix I' and has little to state about them in the body of his thesis. His stress throughout has been on Bengali. Besides, there are two articles: La Revolte de L'Inde Contre Shakespear by Emile Legouis, published in Revue Anglo-Americaine (February, 1925) and Shakespeare in India by A.J. Minney, published in Empire Review (May, 1925) which also speak of the translations and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays into Indian languages. Mr. C.J. Sisson, in his monograph Shakespeare in India, originally a lecture delivered to the Shakespeare Association, at King's College, London, in November, 1924, and published in 1926, confines himself only to a consideration of the popular adaptations of Shakespeare's plays on the Bombay Parsi stage. Mr. R.G. Shahani's work, Shakespeare Through Eastern Eyes (1932) is in a different vein altogether; it is more concerned with an exposition of the average Indian's attitude to Shakespeare than with a critical analysis of Shakespeare's influence as such.
Evidently then, the subject has not been investigated systematically and with any degree of thoroughness. The present work is, therefore, intended to fill up this lacuna; its purpose is to measure up the debt which the literary renaissance in Hindi literature owes to the influence of Shakespeare.

In investigating such a subject, there is always the danger, I admit, of one's being swayed by the over-enthusiasm to trace an influence even where it does not exist or where it is not so apparent, and thus to undermine the originality of an artist. I have strongly guarded myself, as far as possible, against this tendency. My constant endeavour, in this work, has been to allow neither enthusiasm to over-estimate the impact nor prejudice to under-rate it. And, where I have not been able to locate the influence of Shakespeare, I have kept myself satisfied with simply citing parallels.

The first chapter of the present work studies the place of Shakespeare as part of the English studies in India since the very advent of English education i.e. from about 1835 onwards, and also analyses the various factors that were responsible for Shakespeare's vogue in India with special reference to the Hindi-speaking areas. Chapter II and III examine the various Shakespearean translations and adaptations in Hindi with particular reference to the canons of translation involved. Chapter IV deals with the problems of staging Shakespeare's plays, in original as well as in translation, in the Hindi-speaking regions.
and brings out the impact of these plays on the Hindi stage. This chapter also takes into account the contributions of those playwrights who wrote primarily for the stage and whose plays, despite their success on the stage and despite their historical value, have, strictly speaking, little literary significance; these writers were mostly connected with the Parsi stage or its various off-shoots, i.e. like Agha Hashra, Karain Prasad 'Betab'; Madhey Shyam Katlavachak and others.

Following the traditional method of classifying modern Hindi drama into three distinct stages: the age of Bhartendu (1867-1904); the age of Prasad (1905-1935); and Post-Prasad drama (1933 onwards), I have devoted Chapters V, VI, VII and VIII to an analysis of the impact of Shakespeare on various Hindi dramatists right from Bhartendu Harishchandra down to the moderns. Chapter IX charts out the impact of Shakespeare on Hindi poetry, the short story and the novel and also takes into account the biographical and critical writings in Hindi on Shakespeare. The concluding chapter sums up Shakespeare's impact on Hindi literature indicating its significance in the development of the latter.