Chapter I

THE VOGUE OF SHAKESPEARE IN THE HINDI-SPEAKING AREAS

Shakespeare may have been regarded as an 'enemy to morals' and as 'a creature of the stage' in America and, may not have been introduced into 'Early American School'\(^1\), but, in India, people have always readily responded to his works. Even as early as 1788, we find that attempts were made to put Shakespeare on the stage,\(^2\) and since then there has been a spate of Shakespeare-productions in Bengal. He has been mostly produced in his native English garb. And, in 1883, the first translation of *The Merchant of Venice* into Bengali also appeared with the title of *Bhummati Chittavilas*.\(^3\)

But the actual introduction of Shakespeare into schools and colleges in India began after the able advocacy of English education by Lord Macaulay in 1835 and the vogue was furthered by the establishment of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857. Since then, all educated Indians have been studying Shakespeare. Right from Matriculation to the Master's degree and Research, Shakespeare has found an inalienable place in Indian education.

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At the Matriculation level, the chief aim has been to promote story interest and to provide a knowledge of simplified texts. Accordingly, some very easy passages from his plays for textual study and a play or two rendered into easy English by some Indian writer are mostly prescribed. Students of Intermediate classes are generally examined in a single play, and they are required to make a little more advanced study of the text and to display some capacity to appreciate Shakespeare and his works with special reference to the prescribed play. The aspirants for the Bachelor's degree with English literature as one of the subjects have to read two plays at some universities and three plays at others. They are required to show a closer acquaintance with the text as well as with certain subtler aspects and problems relating to an appreciation of Shakespeare's genius and his times. For B.A. (Honours), the number of plays is increased by one or two or by one and some sonnets. The candidates are also required to know the social and religious background of the age of Shakespeare. For M.A. in English literature, the candidates are required to read four to five plays, and are expected to have read all the plays to answer questions pertaining to the text, the times and a general appreciation of Shakespeare. Sometimes there is a special paper on Shakespeare with a lot of extra reading.
The foregoing is the usual arrangement at the various levels of university education with certain variations here and there. The number of plays at the B.A., B.A. (honours), and M.A. levels is evenly distributed so as to represent all the types, i.e., the tragedy, the comedy and so on. How widespread this direct knowledge of Shakespeare has been in India, is indicated by the testimony of Dr. S.C. Gupta:

"The consequence is that an educated Indian at the finish of his scholastic career, whatever may be his real aptitude for it, has sufficient knowledge of English authors, and if he wants to keep up the acquaintance generally and improve upon it, or if he gets specially interested in a particular author, he naturally goes to the original. Thus Shakespeare for whom anyone knowing the English language and literature would feel the greatest attraction, is widely read in the original and the appreciation that results from such original study is very much like what he meets within his own country and elsewhere his countrymen are settled."¹

We propose now to study this Shakespearean vogue in India, with special reference to the Hindi-speaking regions, and to investigate the factors responsible for this vogue.

Since Captain David Lester Richardson's appointment as Principal of the Hindu College (Calcutta) in 1833, whose

teaching of Shakespeare even Macaulay remembered, and his teaching 'in endless alternation' of Shakespeare's Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, Henry IV, Parts I and II, Taming of the Shrew, and Timon of Athens. Shakespeare's plays have been a source of great interest and pleasure. Besides the students who have read Shakespeare in their courses, there have been innumerable others who have found them interesting. With very few exceptions, there is no modern Hindi author who has not read his plays whether in original or in translation. Bhartendu Harishchandra translated The Merchant of Venice, Jaishanker Prasad read his plays and much of the critical literature on him and wrote something about him, Seth Govind Das adapted into novel form, a number of his plays; Vrindabanlal Verma translated The Tempest in 1908; and Jagdish Chandra Mathur acted in As You Like It, Julius Caesar, and The Merchant of Venice.

1. Priyaranjan Sen, Western Influence in Bengali Literature, p.57
5. Govind Das Abhinandan Grantha, Parishistha, p.972.
These are but a few examples. That Shakespeare is still read, liked and played is evident enough from 'The Little Theatre Group's' presentation of Othello, at the 'Fine Arts Theatre', New Delhi on the 16th of April, 1961, apart from the staging of Shakespeare's plays on the stages of the various universities and colleges from time to time. The players, in this presentation, were all Indians, and, as to the quality of presentation, no tribute could be more glowing than this:

"Tense passions worked up to their highest pitch excited one's sensibility and one participated in the paths of the characters,"2

And, again:

"Tarun Mitra as Iago, Utpal Dutta as Othello, Nilima Das as Desdemona and Saba Sen as Emilia possessed poetic power."3

That Shakespeare has been and is still popular in India specially in the Hindi-speaking areas, is evident from about two hundred translations and adaptations of his plays into Hindi,4 from the reception given to European and Indian theatrical companies staging his plays from time to time,5 and from the inspiration derived from his plays

1. The Hindustan Times, Shakespeare's play Staged, Dated April 17, 1961, p.3
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See Chapter II and III of the present work.
5. See Chapter IV of the present work.
by the Hindi playwrights, poets and writers. Of all the English authors whether playwrights, or poets, or novelists, there is probably no one to match Shakespeare in his popularity in India.

Why has Shakespeare been so popular? The reason is not far to seek. Apart from the fact that Shakespeare's plays and poems have been prescribed for the various examinations in Indian schools, colleges and universities, a fact that we have already examined, the phenomenon may be viewed from the following angles:

A- The popularity of Shakespeare in the Home-country;
B- The Background of the Indian Public;
C- The Affinity between the Elizabethan and the Indian temperaments; and
D- The Specific Reasons for their Preference for Certain Plays.

The Popularity of Shakespeare in the Home-Country:

Goethe, the great German poet, critic and scholar was the first person to discover the subtle beauties in Shakespeare's works. Though Shakespeare had fascinated the play-going public in his own times, yet nobody had taken the lead in admiring his plays in superlative terms until that redoubtable German spoke highly of his poetic and dramatic acumen. Then followed a trail of English

1. See Chapters V, VI, VII, VIII and IX of the present work.
critics like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and others who re-established the glorious tradition of Shakespeare's penmanship, so much so that, in England, Shakespeare became almost an institution by the close of the 19th century. It was perhaps Shakespeare in the remote regions of Macaulay's mind when he made that most disputed statement in 1835, while speaking on the necessity of introducing the English language in India:

"I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." 1

Indeed, the popularity of Shakespeare in his home-country awakened the curiosity of the Indian mind towards his works. The Indians, visiting England, or coming into contact with the English people in India, were attracted towards Shakespeare, first out of curiosity, and then, by a keen desire to know and appreciate the universal appeal of his mighty works. This was also, partly, due to the good Shakespeare-teachers like Captain D.L. Richardson, who taught his plays in such a fascinating style that his students implored him to teach Shakespeare's

plays other than those actually prescribed for them.\textsuperscript{1} By pointing out the beauties of Shakespeare's composition in certain plays, these teachers stimulated the Indian students to look for them for themselves in the other plays.\textsuperscript{2} Thus Shakespeare's popularity in the home-country combined with a good teaching of his plays went a long way towards inculcating a love of Shakespearean literature in the Indian mind.

**The Background of the Indian Public:**

The Indian mind, particularly of the Hindi-speaking areas, has been fully steeped in the tradition of Sanskrit drama which belongs to that division of dramatic composition which has been termed 'romantic' by the Western critics, as opposed to 'classical'. The Sanskrit dramatists like Shakespeare have little regard for the Unities of Time and Place and are equally disdainful of the Unity of Action if it means the singleness of incident, though they have their own elaborate, rules regarding plot construction. This native romantic sensibility of the Indian mind has enabled him to respond well to Shakespeare's romantic art with its corresponding emphasis on individualism. So striking is the resemblance between the two arts that after

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2. Ibid., p.58.
reading Sir Jones's *Shakuntala* or *The Lost Ring*, a translation of Kalidas' play, Schlegel observed:

"The drama of Sakuntala presents, through, its Oriental brilliancy of colouring, so striking a resemblance, upon the whole, that it might be suspected the love of Shakespeare had influenced the translator, if other Orientalists had not borne testimony to the fidelity of his translation". 1

And Dr. H.H. Wilson added to it:

"The Hindu dramatic literature will afford ample evidence to the same effect." 2

Let us explore this 'ample evidence'. Apart from the violation of the so called 'Three Unities' and the partial observation of 'poetic justice' in the Sanskrit masterpieces, one will notice that they are as full of life as Shakespeare's plays. A love affair in Sanskrit drama, as in Shakespearean comedy, culminates in union and ends with the ringing bells of marriage. Love, the noblest and grandest of all human passions in Shakespearean comedy, is the 'Primary Sentiment' in Sanskrit romantic drama. "The halo of romance round Sakuntala, Malati, and Ratnavali is much the same as that surrounding Juliet, Viola, Miranda and others." 3

1. Quoted in *The Theatre of the Hindus*, Preface by Dr. H.H. Wilson, p.3.
2. Ibid.
3. Dr. R.K. Yajnik, *The Indian Theatre*, p.73.
Dr. A.K. Yajnik, in his book *The Indian Theatre*, has fully brought out these similarities between the plays of Sanskrit dramatists like Kalidas, Bhavabhuti and others, and those of Shakespeare, in the treatment of love, in the handling of characters and of comic and tragic situations, in the employment of dramatic irony, pathetic fallacy, and other devices, in the strain of fatalism, in the essentially human appeal of the plays, and in the blend of realism and idealism. This 'parallelism' has been so strongly felt by Dr. H.H. Wilson that he dares to apply the Sanskrit classification of 'sandhis' to *Romeo and Juliet*. He writes:

"The ball at the house of Capulet may be considered the 'mukha' (sandhi): the 'pratimukha' is the interview with Juliet in the garden: the 'garbha' is Juliet's apparent assent to the marriage with Paris: the 'vimarsha' is the despair of Rome, consequent on a contrivance intended to preserve Juliet's faith. The catastrophe needs no elucidation." 2

Dr. Yajnik also discovers it in *Twelfth Night*, *Cymbeline*, and 'indeed most Shakespearean plays'. Rabindranath Tagore has likewise made a comparison between Shakespeare's Miranda and Kalidas's Shakuntala. Dr. S.C. Gupta has explored this similarity in certain other spheres too, i.e., in subject-

3. See *Literary Essays of Rabindranath Tagore*. 
natter; in dramatic form and style, and in the use of certain artistic devices.¹

Dhananjaya, in his Dashrupa, has divided the subject-matter of a drama into two kinds, 'Adhikarik' i.e. principal or material and 'Prasangika' i.e. accessory or subordinate. 'Prasangika' or the subordinate theme is further divided into 'Pataka' i.e. an episode of short duration. The aim of the subordinate subject-matter is to further the main theme. The first sub-division, the episode which runs through the whole of the play, comes quite close to the Shakespearean sub-plot. The examples of it are to be found in the accessory story of the love of Nakaranda and Madayantika in Kalati-Madhava, and in the story of the deposition of King Palaka in Mrichchhkatika or The Toy Cart. The episodic story of short duration is to be found in the planning of a play within the play. We know that the employment of a play within a play to further the action of a drama or to unfold a character is a favourite device with Shakespeare. For instance, the 'Mousetrap' in Hamlet, the interlude of the Nine Worthies in Love's Labour's Lost, the play of Pyramus and Thisbe in A Midsummer Night's Dream are well-known. Such devices were not only used by the

¹ Dr. S.C. Gupta, Shakespeare in India, pp.30-47.
Sanskrit dramatists but were also sanctioned by Sanskrit theorists who termed them 'Garbhankas' or interludes. Such instances in Sanskrit drama are abounding. The third act of Harsha's Priyadarshika, the sixth act of Bhavabhuti's Uttara-Rama-Charita, the 'magic-scene' in Ratnavali—all have such plays within the plays. The play within Priyadarshika resembles the play within Hamlet and is interrupted in the middle like Shakespeare's; and the play within Ratnavali has a close resemblance with the masque in The Tempest. All these further the action of the drama or unfold some character in the Shakespearean way.

It is true in Sanskrit plays a tragic conclusion is never permitted and even deeply tragic incidents, such as death and fight, are strictly prohibited, being unfit for the stage, yet they offer a rich and varied fare, combining the grave and the gay, the tragic and the comic. As such they recall Shakespeare's tragic-comedies in which pathos and comedy are often blended in equal proportions.

There are some devices of a minor nature in Sanskrit drama which strike us as being similar to Shakespearean devices. The first is the use of intoxication on the stage as a humorous device. In Rajshekhar's Karpur-Janjiri the magician, Bhairavananda, enters drunk, singing a rollicking song like Toby Belch and others in Twelfth Night. In
Harsha's Naganard, Shakhar enters heavily drunk and mistakes the fat Vidushak for his sweet-heart to our amusement. This situation is similar to that of Andrew Agucheek or Toby Belch, and Maria in Twelfth Night. In Malvikaagnimitra, two queen Iravati appears tipsy on the stage under the influence of liquor. The second device found in Shakespeare and Sanskrit plays alike, is the use of letters for furthering the action of the play. In Shakespeare, we have Hamlet's love-letter to Ophelia, the love-letters passed between Benedick and Beatrice in Much ADO About Nothing, Macbeth's letter to his wife, and state letters removing Othello from his office. Likewise we find that Shakuntala sends a love-letter to Dushyanta in Kalidas's Shakuntala. Urvashi declares her love for Pururavas on a leaf in Vikramorfvashi and state letters are used in Malvikaagnimitra. The third device, the restoration of the dead to life, is equally present in both Shakespeare and Sanskrit drama. Its best instance is to be found in The Toy Cart where Vasantsena is restored to life in the end. Another device used in both is the contrivance of being visible to the audience but not to the individuals on the stage. The ghost in Hamlet, the ghost of Banquo in Macbeth, Ariel in The Tempest, are the most well-known examples of this device in Shakespeare. In Vikramorfvashi of Kalidas, Urvashi and Chitralekha are invisible to the King.
and Vidushak, and in Uttara-Rama Charita of Bhavabhuti, Sita is invisible to Rama. In both, the effect of this device is much the same.

The sum and substance of all this parallelism between Shakespeare and Sanskrit drama is that the romantic tradition in Sanskrit drama which in many ways is similar to Shakespeare's romantic dramatic art has been largely responsible for the popularity and acceptability of Shakespeare's plays. And we may rightly conclude with Dr. Yajnik:

"Where such remarkable resemblances exist, it is no wonder that Shakespeare should be whole-heartedly welcome on his introduction to the Indian stage." 1

The Affinity between the Elizabethan and the Indian Temperaments:

Another reason why Shakespeare has been so readily acceptable to the Indian audience is the close affinity between the Elizabethan and the Indian temperaments. The Elizabethan age, in the words of Emile Legouis, was the 'Flowering of the Renaissance'. During this period external influences, more particularly of Italy, France and Spain, were at work and English literature developed in their wake.

1. Dr. R.K. Yajnik, The Indian Theatre, p.70.
2. Emile Legouis, A Short History of English Literature, p.80.
"England began to reckon up her written works and blushed to find herself poor compared with France, wretched by the side of Italy, humbled before the superiority of the ancients. Yet, she, the last comer, was proudly determined to rank with the first, spurred forward by a belief - gradually instilled into her by the Renaissance - in the greatness of her letters...

...."¹ Patriotism was the guiding force of the time. Something similar was evidenced in India in the later part of the 19th century. Dr. V.N. Mishra, following Dr. R.K. Yajnik, emphatically asserts that the period corresponded to European Renaissance.² The freedom of the press, the development of a scientific outlook and the resulting diffusion of knowledge together with other social and political forces at work perhaps made the Indians think of their own situation in life and art as being strikingly similar to that of the English in the Elizabethan age. If we turn over the pages of Saraswati (1901) we shall find this spirit emergent again and again. The writers then seemed to be conscious of the shortcomings of their own literature and proudly determined to carve out a place of pride for it. In the works of Shakespeare, they discovered the spirit of Renaissance at its highest. They naturally turned to

¹. Emile Legouis, op. cit., p.80.
². Dr. V.N. Mishra, English Influence on Hindi Literature and Language, p.46.
Shakespeare for inspiration and impetus. As to their liking of Shakespeare's plays, we have the evidence of Norman Marshall who toured India in 1948 with a company of actors, staging Shakespeare's plays in various parts of the country. He says:

"Perhaps rather surprisingly, I found that in India the reaction of the audiences to some aspects of the plays was more Elizabethan than it is in England." 1

This striking observation of Mr Marshall clearly brings into focus the affinities of temperament between Elizabethans and Indians. These affinities spring from the conditions of life - the preoccupations and prejudices, nature and conditions of men, and their beliefs, whims and idiosyncrasies - which are common to both.

To begin with, Elizabethans were 'hero-worshippers'. 2 Theirs was an era of the 'Uncommon Man'. 3 "Ambition was admired and encouraged, instead of being despised as 'the competitive spirit' and discouraged in the interests of mediocrity". 4 Elizabethans took delight in the 'slaughter of the battle-scenes' provided for them by their playwrights. They were proud of their history and the playwrights derived inspiration

2. Ibid., p.100.
3. Ibid., p.92.
4. Ibid., p.92.
The people of this age were fond of gaiety and took much delight in music. Music was a common feature of the life of every class of the society. They were sensitive to beauty which 'devoured their senses whole'. These characteristics are more or less shared by the Indian people. It is owing to their tendency to hero-worship that the great heroic figures in Shakespeare's major plays have had a tremendous appeal for them. Norman Marshall goes to the extent of saying:

"Sitting among the audiences of students at performances of *Hamlet* I had the impression that every member of the audience was identifying himself with the part. For similar reasons *Richard II* is a character for whom the Indian has an especial sympathy,..."  

Furthermore, Elizabethan literature was essentially rhetorical. People believed in the dictum, 'There is nothing new under the sun', and the writers tried to make the old seem new by means of rhetoric. They valued specially the rhetoric of public-speaking, the oration and the declamation. It was due to this interest in rhetoric that Shakespeare introduced formal orations into *Julius Caesar* and many set speeches before battles into the history plays. Like Elizabethans, Indians love rhetoric and delight in impressive speeches. Norman Marshall bears witness to this fact in the

following words:

"They are a nation of speech-makers. Never have I listened to so many speeches or have to make so many speeches myself as during that Indian tour. This passion for rhetoric makes the Indian an ideal audience for the orations of Antony and Brutus in Julius Caesar. 'I played this scene without the usual crowd of supers, asking the audience to imagine themselves that they were the Roman citizens who had crowded into the Forum to hear the funeral orations. The actors spoke the speeches directly to the audience, who responded to the rhetoric so excitedly that the effect of the scene was far greater than I have ever known it to be when the actors have spoken the speeches to a well-drilled band of supers.' 1

Shakespeare offers his readers the best of rhetoric. It is so naturally employed by him as almost to escape notice. It has been so refined, except in his earlier work, by practice and experience that no creaking of the machine is felt or, to use Polixenes's words in The Winter's Tale, 'the art itself is nature'. Only the sensible mind can judge its presence there and this sensibility is a characteristic of the Indian mind. G.H. Hain, in his book Modern English Literature, has also dwelt upon this aspect of the Indian temperament. 2

With rhetoric goes the art of reasoning, logic

and disputation. The Elizabethans were very fond of it. It was so popular in that age that the people who were conservative were disgusted with the simplification of it by Ramus and had developed a sort of aversion to the world of 'logic-choppers'. Shakespeare realized the comic possibilities of the situation. Hamlet, disgusted with the logic of the Grave-Digger, says:

"The age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe." 2

Let us see the logic of this play:

First Clown. It must be 'se offendendo'; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act has three branches; it is, to act, to do and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Second Clown. Nay, but hear you goodman delver.
First Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nil he, he goes; mark you that? but if the water come to him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

rolonius has his own logic, which is couched in a pendentive style:

"Your noble son is mad: mad call I it; for, to define true madness, what is't but to be nothing else but mad?" 4

1. Hardin Craig, op. cit., p.150.
3. Ibid., 9-21.
4. Ibid., Act II, scene 11, 92-4.
And, again:

"Mad let us grant him then; now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect
Or rather say, the cause of this defect
For this effect defective cones by cause
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend." 1

The, there is the delightful example of disputation in the
passage in which Falstaff denies the charge of cowardice
labelled against him by Prince Hal:

"Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules;
but beware instinct; the lion will not touch
the true prince. Instinct is a great matter,
I was a coward on instinct. I shall think
the better of myself and thee during my life; I
for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince." 2

Besides these, there are many more examples of brilliant
rhetoric in Shakespeare. Having a rhetorical vein in their
blood, the Indians enjoy reading such things. Their own
reading of the disputation in the Upanishadas has habituated
them to welcome them. They have enjoyed Shakespeare's
judicious use of logic, reasoning and disputation in his plays.

Elizabethan view of human nature and cosmology also
has a great appeal to the Indian mind. Today we know that
fire is a chemical activity, air a mixture of elements, water

1. Ibid., 100-105.
3. Tattiriya Upanishada, Bhraguvali. Vatsyayana has also
   included reasoning among the sixty four
   arts to be imparted to the boys between
   five and sixteen.
a compound of two common elements (Hydrogen and Oxygen-H$_2$O) and earth a mixture of elements and compound but the Elizabethans did not. To them, man was formed of the four elements - fire, air, water, and earth - and was tempered by their mixture. The theory of human nature being as a compound of these four elements in varying proportions has been the basis of human psychology in Shakespearean drama. 'Every variation was subsumed under commixture and every clash was accounted for as warfare between these four aboriginal forces'. 1 Man was subjected to the rare harmonies of these four elements and their never-ending discords. Shakespeare's characters frequently refer to this view of human nature in his plays. To mention just a few:

"Does not our life consist of the four elements?"

"I am fire and air; my other elements I give to baser life." 3

It was by 'overgrowth of some complexion', says Hamlet, that man 'in the general censure take corruption'. 4 Even when nature had done her best to mix the elements within Brutus, he was yet deceived by his friends, and beaten to the pit by enemies. Iago is sure of his capacity to destroy Desdemona,

1. Hardim Craig, op. cit., p.78.

His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed within him that Nature might stand And say to all the world, 'This was the Man!'
because 'she's framed as fruitful As the free elements'.\(^1\) This use of the 'Humour' theory in Shakespeare has been of great interest to the Indian readers who have been fed and nurtured on the theory of the five elements, to which reference is made by Tulsidas, in his *Ramayana* thus:

"Of five elements is this mean body composed, water, earth, fire, air, ether, all subtly disposed."  

Thus, the four-element theory of Elizabethans, reflected in Shakespeare, comes very near to the Indian five-element theory regarding the composition of the human body. Indians have naturally been able to appreciate Shakespeare's use of the 'Humour' theory in his plays.

Elizabethans were also keenly interested in the study of astrology as the functional aspect of astronomy which figured on the syllabuses of their universities. All learned men emphasized its importance as a subject of study. Sir Phillip Sidney who was himself well versed in it strongly recommended a study of its rudiments to his brother. Dr. John Dee, the famous astrologer of the time recorded two visits by Sidney to him, one of which was made immediately before Sidney went out on an expedition. Sidney obviously,

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4. Ibid., p.34.
as it was customary for most men, was anxious to know the prospects of his journey with the help of astrology. Then, there are many 'intended allusions' to horoscopes and 'soothsayers' in *Arcadia*. The following sonnet XXVI from Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* is relevant in this connection:

"Though duskie wits doe scorne astrologie,
And fooles can thinke those lampes of purest-light,
Whose number wales greatness eternitie,
Promising wondrous wonders to invite,
To have for no cause birth-right in the skye.
But for the spangle the blake weeces of Night,
Or some brave within that Chamber hie,
They shold still daunce to please a gazer's sight.
For me I nature every deale doe know,
And know great causes, great effects procure,
And know those bodies high, reign on the low.
And if these rules did fall, proofe makes me sure,
Who oft bewales my after following case,
By only those two stares in Stellas face."

It is a well-established fact that there was a social exercise of the astrological art. Hardin Craig, in his book *The Enchanted Glass*, has given a long list of the books dealing with the subject written during the Elizabethan period but these books were used by cheat and charlatan astrologers of the time who lived in narrow and dark lanes, and practised black magic to cheat the 'foolish poor'. 'They interfered in politics, lent their falsity to the causes of slander and prostitution'. There were thus two different groups of

1. Hardin Craig, *op. cit.*., p.34.
4. Ibid., pp.41-42.
astrologers - the honest, learned and sincere astrologers of the time and the dishonest, ignorant and pretentious cheats. The different attitudes of both towards astrology are freely reflected in the literature of the time. Now, this habit of the Elizabethans is quite congenial to the Indians who too would like their actions to be guided by astrology from birth till death. Like Elizabethans, Indian people too believe in stars or 'grahas'. Before going on a journey, or starting any new work or performing some rites, an Indian would go to an astrologer and consult the position of the stars and seek advice as to the method of appeasing the unfavourable stars. Then, in India too there are two types of astrologers - the well-informed and honest, and the ignorant and cheat.

Shakespeare, in his works, represents both types of astrology that prevailed in the Elizabethan age. Let us take up the better sort first. In Romeo and Juliet, we find the 'pair of star-crossed lovers' and the 'yoke of inauspicious

1. Vatsyayana, in his book Kama Sutra, has included 'astronomy and astrology' among the fourteen sciences to be learnt by the young students. The belief is clear from the recent 'Ashtagrahi Yoga' which baffled the whole world. The Sanskrit works like Panchatantra, Hitopdesha, Kathasaritsagar, Dashkumarcharita, Baital-Pachisi, Simhasan-Battis, etc., which were translated into Hindi during the Indian Renaissance, are studied with such references to astrological beliefs and calculations etc.
stars'. Helena of Shakespeare knows that 'the fated sky gives us free scope'. Shakespeare believes with Cassius that:

"The fault, dear Brutus, in not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." 3

Hamlet regards 'nature's livery, or fortune's star' as the 'stamp of one defect'. In the twenty-sixth sonnet, Shakespeare speaks:

"Till whatsoever star that guides my moving, Points on me graciously with fair aspect," 5

And, Prospero says:

"by my prescience I find my zenith doth depend upon A most auspicious star, whose influence If I now court not but omit, my fortunes Will ever after droop." 6

And, the other type is referred to in the speech of Edmund:

"This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune - we make guilty of our own disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves and treacherers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liers and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster-man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star." 7

1. W. Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, Prologue, 6.
These references to astrology have a ready appeal to the average Indian reader or play-goer.

Related to this regard for astrology is the belief in spirits, ghosts, demons and witches. References to demonology and witchcraft abound in Elizabethan literature. For the Elizabethans, the universe was inhabited by spirits both good and bad which were the controlling agents in all human activities. They strongly believed in ghosts and witches. Shakespeare also introduced ghosts, witches, and spirits into his plays. Indian people have always believed in these superhuman agencies and still believe in them, even when all such barriers are being broken down by science. The Indian village people still go to the 'Bhagats' and 'Sayanas' to be relieved of these forces of darkness.

Furthermore, the Elizabethans believed with Agrippa that souls by their power of fascination may repair dying bodies with other inferior souls. It was known as the doctrine of induction or transfusion of soul of which there are plenty of traces in the literature of the period viz., in the story of Agape in the Faerie Queen, Book III.

2. See Hamlet and Julius Caesar.
3. See Macbeth.
Shakespeare also provides many examples of the value of weakened physical powers in increasing the insight of the soul. The Ghost of Hamlet's father in the play speaks of Queen Gertrude:

"but, look, amazement on thy mother sits: O, step between her and her fighting soul: Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works: Speak to her Hamlet." 1

This doctrine and its popularity are also evidenced in Richard II, when the old and dying Gaunt says of Richard II:

"he thinks I am a prophet new inspired and thus expiring do foretell of him." 2

Is not this doctrine quite akin to one of the Indian 'Sidhis' called 'Parkay Pravesh', according to which a soul may enter the dead body of another person and may enliven it? Jagadguru Shankaracharya adopted and utilized this 'sidhi' in order to have a complete first-hand knowledge of sex so that he could satisfactorily answer the questions asked by the wife of Kandan Kishra, Bharati, in a polemical discussion. 3

Hardin Craig is of the opinion that the Elizabethans 'were bent on the achievement of the practical'. On one hand, they realized the value of contemplative life and, on the other, they understood the relationship between thought and action. 4

The tragedy of Prospero in the earlier part of his life, his banishment etc., takes place due to this 'inherent flaw' in his character, to his exclusive devotion to the study of magic - to his divorcing action from thought. The Christian faith has taught the Elizabethans the 'supremacy of the passive virtues' but they hardly accepted this idea in toto. They also heeded the call to action. If Shakespeare, in Troilus and Cressida, makes Ulysses say:

"They tax our policy, and call it cowardice; Count wisdom as no member of the war; Forestall prescience, and esteem no act But that of hand: the still and mental parts, That do contrive how many hands shall strike When fitness calls them on, and know by measure Of their observant toil the enemies' weight, - Why this hath not a finger's dignity: They call this bed-work, mappery, closet-war, So that the ram that batters down the wall, For the great swing and rudeness of his poise, They place before his hand that made the engine, Or those that with the fitness of their souls By reason guide his execution." 1

he also puts the following words into his mouth:

"Take the instant way; For honour travels in a strait so narrow Where one but goes abreast: keep, then, the path; For emulation hath a thousand sons That one by one pursue: if you give way, Or hedge aside from the direct forthright, Like to an enter'd tide they all rush by And leave you hindmost;" 2

And, if we compare this attitude of the Elizabethan Shakespeare to that of Indian, we find much similarity. For the contemplative aspect, we need not go into cumbrous details. It is a fact

2. Ibid., Act III, scene iii, 153-160.
agreed to by almost all that India has been and is a nation of great thinkers and philosophers. But, what is more, these thinkers did not ignore the practical side. They combined 'Jnanyoga' with 'Yamayoga'. This is the main philosophy of the Gita. While Krishna could teach such a high philosophy of the Gita, he was also able to encounter his enemies and frustrate their hopes. Tilak also emphasized this aspect in his commentary on the Gita. Indian literature is replete with the deeds of such men who were at once men of thought and men of action. Janaka, Parashuram, Bhishma are a few examples to conjure with. That is why Indians find more sense in Ophelia's lament on the madness of Hamlet:

"O, what a noble mind is here ov'rthrown
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye,
tongue sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite, down."

Elizabethan literature is full of denunciations of the court-life and full of praises for the life of the shepherd or the simple rustic. Shakespeare too adopts this attitude in at least two of his plays viz., A Midsummer Night's Dream and As You Like It, on the theme of this simple life.

1. B.G. Tilak, Gita Rahasya.
3. Hardin Craig, op.cit., p.87.
These plays have attracted Indian readers because the theme of simple pastoral life is also very dear to them. It reminds them of the early life of Lord Krishna tending the cows with the cowherds and performing the 'Rasa' with the 'gopis'. The Forest of Arden strikes them as the forest of Vrindaban. They take the shepherds and shepherdesses of Shakespeare, as the cowherds and 'gopis' of Sur Sagar.

Whether a woman should marry the person of her own choice or allow her parents to dispose of her hand to another was an ever-disputed issue in the Elizabethan age. Shakespeare has enough to say on this issue. The question is taken up in Othello, where Desdemona marries against her father's wish; in The Merchant of Venice, where Jessica elopes with her choice, a Christian, against her father's wishes; and in Romeo and Juliet, where Juliet loves and gets married secretly to Romeo who belongs to the opposite camp. Now, this has interested an Indian reader because it has much kinship with the many issues relating to women which were coming into prominence towards the middle of the nineteenth century viz., the problem of Sati - of forced burning of women after the death of their husbands; the problem of marrying the minor girls; and, of course, the problem of the marriage of girls against their wishes. Bred in the wake of such issues, the reader naturally found Shakespeare interesting with many allusions to them in his plays.

Specific Reasons for the Preference for Certain Plays:

In all, there are about two hundred translations and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays into Hindi. Take whatever basis we may, whether the mere number of versions or the relative popularity of these plays, we shall arrive at the following order of preference:

1. The Merchant of Venice.
2. The Comedy of Errors.
3. Romeo and Juliet.
4. Othello.
5. Hamlet.
6. King Lear.
7. Macbeth.
8. The Tempest.
9. As You Like It.
10. Twelfth Night.
11. The Taming of the Shrew.
13. Cymbeline.
15. Much Ado About Nothing.
16. Measure for Measure.
17. The Winter's Tale.
18. Julius Caesar.
19. The Timon of Athens.

Each of these plays has been translated or adapted four times or more. Of the remaining 18 plays, the 10 historical plays have been, more or less, neglected and the other eight comedies and tragedies do not appeal to the Indian mind.

The reasons for the neglect as suggested by Mr. Shahani, seem to be quite proper. They do not appeal to Indians because

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1. See Appendix. I.
2. "The plays that do not seem to find favour with the translators and adapters are the Chronicle and Roman plays generally."
   -- R.C. Shahani, Shakespeare Through Eastern Eyes, p.95.
they cannot be Indianised easily because they are full of 'noise and fury', 'bombast and blood-shed'; because they are 'alien to the Indian spirit', being 'too exclusively national' and having too much of local interest - they are full of Jew-hatred, Pope-hatred and France-hatred; and finally because, they lack the light and sweetness which is found in the great tragedies.

Among the plays that have had a great vogue in the Hindi region, *The Merchant of Venice* heads the list because, Shylock, with all his 'Craft and naivete', is like the money-lender of the North-West Frontier Provinces and his outwitting by a woman (Portia) in disguise, is particularly enjoyable and also because there is a persistent romantic

1. Ibid., pp.101-2.
2. "I doubt if there is another country where reaction of the audience to *The Merchant of Venice* could be more Elizabethan than it is in India."
4. "So audiences have no sympathy for Shylock. Whenever we played *The Merchant of Venice*, there was invariably a roar of applause at the turning point of the trial scene when Shylock advances with drawn knife towards Antonio to claim his pound of flesh and Portia holds him with:

   "Tary a little; there is something else;
   This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
   The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh'.
   Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh
   But, in the cutting of it, if thou doest shed
   One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
   Are by the laws of Venice, confiscate
   Unto the state of Venice."
element in the play. This last quality has a special appeal to Indians, because as Dr. Scott has rightly pointed out, "Indians find the key-note of the play in Nerissa's phrase 'rightly love'." There is, however, one more curious reason for its popularity. Some Indians have a kind of sympathy for Shylock for he is hated by Antonio (Christian) and others simply because he happens to be a Jew. They, being the wiser for the tyranny of the Britishers under whose rule they have suffered, identify themselves with Shylock as a victim of the Christians and the following words strike them particularly as an expression of their own feelings towards the Britishers. We have only to substitute the words 'Native' for 'Jew'; and 'Colonist' for 'Christian' to bring out its impact upon their minds:

"I am a Native. Hath not a Native eyes? Hath not a Native hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions, fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Colonist is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

2. Dr. A. Scott (editor), The Merchant of Venice, introduction.
3. J. Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, III, i, 63-72.
Moreover, an Indian squizes philosophical subtleties out of the following lines:

"look, how the floor of heaven
is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
but in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed Cherubims:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

And, the lines given below satisfy his ethical sense:

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed:
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
It is an attitude to God Himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice....."2

The Comedy of Errors 'reflects the Indians' sense of mystification. They like the situations and accidents of play. There is an under-current of love in it and the farcical incidents arising out of mistaken identity have their parallels in current popular stories in India.

Romeo and Juliet presents the piety and purity of love most dear to the India. There is an intensity of passion which 'exercises a witchery over the Indian mind'. The bright,
beautiful and brilliant love of a youthful couple who come to
grief, is the theme of which the Eastern people are never
tired. The ferment of emotion and the passionate recklessness
of the characters of the play are well appreciated by the
Indians. More than a graceful lyrical tragedy of young love,
it is a play of violent delights and violent griefs. The
purity of Juliet is not of snow but of fire which appeals to
us most. Mr. Normal Marshall has disclosed another bewitching
aspect of the play. It is its gentle humour and evocation of
sympathetic laughter. Particularly in the balcony scene,
Indians find occasion for 'honest and lusty laughs'.
Mr. Marshall has given various instances from his own experience.  
The theme of the play too, being very much similar to
Dhavabhuti's Kalati-Madhava, must have contributed towards its
popularity a great deal.

According to Mr. A.G. Shahani Othello' is much

1. "I cannot remember ever hearing laughter in the English
teatre during the balcony-scene in Romeo and Juliet,
and at first sight it was disconcerting to find the
audience receive some lines with considerable merriment.
But when night after night laughs came on exactly the
same lines I realized that the audience was reacting
very much as Shakespeare intended they should. English
audiences listen to this scene far too reverently. They
are too solemnly conscious of the fact that this is one
of the famous 'poetic scenes' of Shakespeare. Yet the
scene is full of young fresh gaiety as well as romance."
popular in India, first because, Othello is an Oriental figure, secondly, because, his heroic demeanour awakens a ready response in the Indian mind, and lastly, because there is the love interest in the play. But more than any of these reasons, the play presents the sanctity of a wife - a thing, I believe, much dearer to Indians than to the English. That is why, an English Professor, while teaching Othello to B.A. students in Bombay University, called Shakespeare 'a Hindu' and Desdemona 'a typical Indian wife'. The play is also liked for 'the gradual unfolding of character, the various currents and cross-currents of human lives produced by clashing events, the very faithful pictures of the lights and shadows of our existence -", and for its intricate and ingenious plot. Then, in the following lines an Indian seeks ethical doctrines and

2. Ibid., p.52.
4. "For instance, there is no surprise for us in Othello's death yet it is one of the greatest moments of sheer theatre in the whole of Shakespeare. The audience is given no hint of Othello's intentions until the moment he suddenly plunges into his heart on the line 'I took by the throat the circumcised dog and smote him thus'. At nearly every performance of this scene in India there was a gasp of horrified surprise from the audience."

ascetical attitudes:

"I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it. Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ;" 1

And:

"o, now/ever
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content,
Farewell the plumed troop and the big wars
That make ambition virtue, o, farewell,
Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner and all quality,
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war." 2

An Indian loves and has passionate liking for the great heroic figures in the major plays of Shakespeare because he respects the characters built upon a grand epic scale. But a great figure such as Hamlet makes a more intensely personal appeal to him than to an Englishman. "Hamlet, in his indecision," says Mr. Shahani, "and verbosity, is hardly different in some ways from the typical procrastinating Indian". Then again, he quotes a compatriot as saying:

1. J. Shakespeare, Othello, Ill, iii, 322-25.
2. Ibid., Ill, iii, 348-355.
3. "I doubt if many members of an English audience ever identify themselves with Hamlet, but a young Indian has a strong streak of melancholy in his character and indulges in self analysis to a far greater extent than the Englishman. Sitting among the audience of students at performances of Hamlet I had the impression that every member of the audience was identifying himself with the part."

4. Ibid., p.100.

"What are we Indians, but pale Hamlets, sick with too much thinking and chattering?" What irresistibly draws an Indian towards Hamlet is Hamlet's 'spiritual dissolution'. Hamlet, the questioner, the sceptic, afraid of himself, doomed long before we meet him, is found true to life, and is admired by all the Indians whether cultured or uncultured. Persons like Ranaee, Telang and Chandravarkar and others of the same metal were impressed by the theistic ideas as adumbrated in the following lines:

"To be, or not to be: that is the question: 
Whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer-
To sleep; perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub; 
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, 
When we have stuffed off this mortal coil; 
Must give us pause:"

And:

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends, 
Rough-hew them how we will."

Ethical doctrine is suspected in the following passage:

"That skull: a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder. It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now O'erreaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?"

1. Ibid., p.107.
2. K.G. Shahani, op.cit., p.77.
3. W. Shakespeare, Hamlet, iii, 1, 56-7 and 64-8.
4. Ibid., V, ii, 10-11.
5. Ibid., V, i, 81-86.
And the following lines are suggestive of philosophical niceties:

"Look here, upon this picture, and on this, the counterfeit presentment of two brothers. See what a grace was seated on this brow;

\[ \text{X X X X X} \]

This was your husband. Look you now, what follows: here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear, Elastin, his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?"

There is yet another reason why Hamlet has been so popular. The fate of Hamlet's mother satisfies the Indians' sense of justice and propriety.

King Lear is placed by the side of Hamlet, and Othello because of its universal theme. Many a fond old father has been a prey to the ingratitude of his children. The theme of the play also reminds Indians of one of their own folk-tales according to which a certain king married his six daughters to princes and gave them some portions of his kingdom in dowry because they had professed false love, and married his seventh, the youngest daughter to a wood-cutter without any dowry because she had not professed her love in big, high-sounding words. When asked by the king, the six daughters said that their fate was linked with the king. But the seventh daughter affirmed that she had an independent fate. Afterwards, the six daughters came to woe but the

seventh became prosperous and the king had to admit the independence of an individual's fate. That is why Indians almost revere the fidelity of Cordelia towards her father. The rich tradition of such folk-tales also impels the Indians to accept the tragic conclusions of the play. But at the same time, the reverses of fortune and the madness of Lear are said to approximate to an ascetic ideal. The fate that overtakes Lear may not satisfy the Indian philosophical outlook, but the sadness of his lot has a deep appeal. "To a lover", says Mr. Shahani, "of Malidas, or Kabir, or Tagore, such musical poetry is highly acceptable", as the following:

"We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage;
Then thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask thee forgiveness; so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies; and hear poor rogues
Talk of court-news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon's the mystery of things,
as if we were God's spies; and will wear out
In a wall'd prison, racks and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by the moon." 2

Macbeth is a story of the defeat of ambition and the victory of good over evil. The theme is most liked in India because of its inherent idealistic note. Mr. Shahani

has, however, something to say against the play:

"Macbeth never seems to have appeared on the Gujarati or Marathi stage, and I am not aware that it has been translated into these vernaculars. Lady Macbeth is utterly unacceptable to an Indian audience. Whether or not such a character can be found in real life, it should at least be barred from the stage. Here the Indian tendency to idealization makes itself felt. Then, again, the witches are ineffective and repugnant to Indian taste, despite their apparatus and magic incantation. Further, the killing of the guest, is altogether abhorrent to the Indian conscience. Such an abuse of hospitality is unheard of." 1

But these remarks are too hasty and sweeping. In real life, there is no dearth of such characters. Every day papers bristle column after column with such incidents. Even sisters and mothers conspire to take away the lives of their brothers and sons for money and property. There are hundreds of such cases pending in law-courts. Then, Indian folklore is full of such stories in which some witch or some evil spirit conspires against human race. It is true, a guest is almost a god to an Indian and he would even stake his own life to save him, but cases are not wanting when people have butchered them mercilessly for their own petty profit. The fact is that Mr. Shahani's remarks do not apply, at least, to Hindi literature*. There are more than ten translations and adaptations of the play and very recently

its Hindi version was staged in Delhi. The play has been popular also because it offers us observations of a philosophical nature. The following lines, for example, have a special appeal:

"There's nothing serious in morality: all is cut toys; renown and grace is dead; the wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is felt this vault to brag of." 2

And:

"Tomorrow, and tomorrow and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
In the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle. Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage And then is heard no more; it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing." 3

The Tempest is dear to an Indian reader as it has a heroine who is almost the prototype of Shakuntala. 4

Rabindranath Tagore and Chhunnulal Dwivedi have brought out this comparison beautifully. There is the same aloofness

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1. Harivanshrai Bachchan's translation of Macbeth was staged by 'Hindi Shakespeare Manch' on 18th, 19th and 20th of December, 1958, in the 'Fine Arts Theatre', New Delhi and was praised by Prime Late Prime Minister Nehru, the great actor Prithviraj Kapoor and so many others.
2. J.R. Bachchan, Macbeth (Hindi), Praveshika, pp.8-9.
3. Ibid., V, v, 19-20.
4. See Literary Essays of Rabindranath Tagore.
from the world of mere commonplace; there is the same idyllic atmosphere; and there is the same benign influence of fairies. The play is also beyond the confines of tragedy and comedy and so it is esteemed in India as the greatest of Shakespeare's works. The following lines recall the philosophy of Vaidanta which takes this world to be an illusion or 'Maya':

"We are such stuff, As dreams are made on; and our little life Is rounded with a sleep." 1

"And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, And like the insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind." 2

There is one more basis for its liking. It is the figure of Caliban. Indians, having been subject to the tyranny of British rule till lately, detect some similarity between their own condition and that of Caliban who is likewise exploited by Prospero. They are inclined to view Caliban's character sympathetically.

As You Like It is appealing to an Indian because of its love interest and its pensive philosophy. The reverses of fortune in the play and the retirement of the Duke into the woods are said to approximate to an ascetic ideal.

2. Ibid., IV, 1, 151-56.
"The character of the hermit-like Duke is indeed reminiscent of Vikramaditya and several other Indian sage-kings."  

The love interest whose path 'never did run smooth', the creation of a character like Viola who 'never told her love!', and the tragic-comic character of the play are some of the merits for which an Indian likes the play Twelfth Night. The resemblance between Viola and Sebastian is interesting because an Indian loves mystification and relishes the dramatic irony, the disguises, the situations growing out of mistaken identity. The corrective purpose behind the Malvolio-incident also gives them satisfaction. They appreciate the beauty of such lines as the following:

"She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief." 2

The conception of a pining, self-immolating beloved appeals to us specially because it approximates to the Indian ideal of womanhood.

The Taming of the Shrew is a story of a bad-tempered lady not wanting in Indian homes. The ending of the play is quite in accordance with the traditional

Indian point of view. And the following lines are quite pleasing to an Indian as they approximate to his prejudices:

"Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
They heath, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for they maintenance commits his body
To painful labour both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks, and true obedience;
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince
Even such a woman oweth her husband;
And when she's forward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel,
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?—" 1

Is this not an ideal expected of an Indian wife? Are these not the instructions given to their daughters by the Indian mothers when they are married?

Pericles is liked by an Indian reader because of its strangeness, novelty and idealistic tendency. It also satisfies his sense of justice and propriety. The solving of riddles is a favourite pastime in India.

Cymbeline is prized for its idealistic qualities which are embodied in the marvellous figure of Imogen who is 'whiter than the sheets' and 'chaste as unsunned snow'. Her great constancy is of high value to an Indian. Mr. M.U. Malkani

wrote that but for the creation of Imogen, "Shakespeare had no business to write his Cymbeline." This union of all the best of feminine virtues in Imogen is most pleasing.

"Ophelia is thought a mere puppet; Desdemona over-loyal; Cordelia impulsively quixotic; Lady Macbeth ruthless and pitiless; Miranda a pretty child; Portia a trifle masculine; but Imogen is as sweet and brave as she is chaste. Her personality greatly attracts the Indian, who classes her with Sita and Radha and Draupadi." The story of the two princes Guilderius and Arviragus forms a parallel to the story of Lava and Kusha in bhavabhuti's Uttara-Rama-Charita and this fact partly accounts for its appeal to the Indian scholars.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a fascinating romance of the world of fairies to attract the Indians. An Indian likes to live in a world of dreams and that dreaminess is present in the play. Much Ado About Nothing also appeals on account of its keen romantic interest.

Measure for Measure is liked for its veiled idealism.

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An Indian smells ethical doctrines in the following passages:

0, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant." 1

And:

"No ceremony that to great ones' longs
Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The Marshall's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one half so good a grace
As mercy does." 2

The character of Isabella approximates to the Indian ideal of not stooping to the mean desire of Angelo. The fate of Angelo also satisfies the Indian sense of justice. The pastoral atmosphere and the shepherd and shepherdesses in Winter's Tale are most pleasing to us often recalling the events of Lord Krishna's early life. The rhetoric of Antony's speech makes Julius Caesar lovable to an Indian. And, though we miss the 'light and sweetness of the great tragedies', The Timon of Athens presents the figure of Timon for whom an Indian has some sympathy. To an Indian, the attitude of Timon may be unintelligible and his impotent fury unconvincing, yet there is such a pathos about his person that he feels attracted.

2. Ibid., 59-63.