Chapter V

SHAKESPEARE AND THE PLAYWRIGHTS OF THE BHARTE NDU AGE

Bhartendu Harishchandra:

Before Bhartendu Harishchandra (1850-1885), the central figure of the period under review, there was no drama proper in Hindi in the modern sense of the term. Of course, there were plays like Pranchand's Ramayana Mahanatak (1610), Hariyarama's Hanuman Natak (1632), Banarsidas Jain's Samavasar Natak (1636), Newaj's Shakuntala (1690), Lachhiram's Karanbharan Natak (1657), Somnath Mathur's Madhava Vinod (1752), Dhonkal Mishra's Shakuntala (1799), Udaya's Ramakunakara Natak (before 1840), etc., and the 'Ramalilas' and 'Rasalilas'; but they were poor adaptations from Sanskrit and were highly deficient in dramatic elements. These earlier plays are not important since they did not influence the drama of the Bhartendu period. Even from Imanat's Indrasabha (1853), Maharaj Vishwanath's Anand Raghunandan (19th century, before Bhartendu), and Girdhar Das's Nabhush (1857) which have greater dramatic element in them, no great impetus was received.

The age of Bhartendu, as we have already seen in the first chapter, was an age of literary renaissance. All kinds of artificial barriers were being broken. All forms of tradition and convention were giving way to modernity. And
this new spirit of the age had its natural repercussions in literature. The literary public felt a sort of aversion towards too much rigidity and artificiality of the classical Sanskrit rules. In the field of poetry and prose, the tradition of 'Ritikal' was given up. Drama also felt the impress of this new force. And deep-rooted though it was in the Sanskrit tradition, it felt the necessity for a change of outlook. This change was an outcome of the contact with English culture and English literature of which Shakespeare's works were the key-stone. The influence of Shakespeare had three sources:

(1) Through the spread of English education and the study of Shakespeare's plays; 1

(2) Through the original, translated and adapted plays of Bengali which bore the impress of Shakespeare's plays; 2 and

(3) Through translations and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays and their presentation upon the stage.

Bhartendu played the leading role in assimilating Shakespeare into Hindi drama. His study of English made him realize the futility of strictly adhering to the rigid rules laid down in Sanskrit dramatic theory. In his treatise on

1. नीन (शिक्षित समाज सिल्पावृत्तता नेत्र नाटककार शेक्सपियर की नाट्यकला के पृवि अधिक आकृष्ठ था।
   Dr. V.N. Shukla, Bhartendu ka Natya Sahitya, p.48.
2. "His (Bhartendu's) journey to Bengal in 1865 proved very fruitful in this connection, as he came in contact with Bengali drama, growing under the English influence." 
   Dr. V.N. Mishra, English Influence in Hindi Literature and Language, p.300.
drama named Natak he dwelt upon the superficiality and  
obsolateness of these rules thus:  

अब नाटकादि दृष्टकाल्य में अस्वभाविक धामी परिपेयणक काव्य  
सहदय सम्य मन्हली को नितान्त असुंचिम बिचार है इसलिये स्वामाविकी  
रवेना ही हस काल के सम्यगण की हृदयगाढि है इसहै जब आलमिक  
विश्वाय का भाषय करके नाटकदि दृश्य काव्य प्रयाण करना  उत्थत  
नयी है। अब नाटक में कही आशी प्रमाणित नाट्यालंकार कही प्रकृति  
कही विलोम कहीं हंसकृत कहीं पंचाणिव वा रैहै ही अन्य विश्वाय  
की कौई आवश्यकता नहीं रही। दस्तक नाटक की मातिं हिन्दी  
नाटक में हस्तक का अनुस्मार करना व जिसी नाटकीय में हस्तक का  
रसक दृष्ट हिन्दी नाटक सिन्दा व्यर्थ है कारण प्रवाहिन तत्परण  
उल्ल फल होता है और यल व्यर्थ होता है।  

And:  

विश्व समय में जैसे यहदय जन्तु गृहण कर्ति और देशीय राजनीति का  
प्रवाह विश्व रूप में बनता रहे। उस समय में उक्त सहदयसम्य के  
अन्य काल की वृंदी और धामाविक गीति प्रभृति इन दोनों  
विश्वायः की समरीन धमालोवना करके नाटकादि दृष्टकाल्य  
प्रयाण करना योग्य है।  

The passages quoted above show Bhartendu's dislike for the  
stereotyped classical Sanskrit rules e.g. the observance of  
'Ashih', 'Prakari', 'Vilobhan', 'Samhet', 'Five Sandhis', and  
such others propounded by Bharat Muni in his Natyashastra  
which do not suit the modern taste and his aspiration and liking  
for 'Swabhaviki Rachna', a natural composition. According to  
him, a play cannot be natural and realistic unless it holds the  
'mirror up to nature'. This conception of the nature and  
function of dramatic art, clearly recalls the following lines

1. Brijratnadas (editor), Bhartendu Natakavali, Part II,  
Parishishtha, Natak, pp.374-75.  
2. Ibid., p.373.
in *Hamlet*:

"... The purpose of playing, whose end,- both at first and now, was and is, to hold, as it were, the mirror up'to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and the body of the time, his form and pressure. ..."  

It seems that to formulate his own theory of dramatic rules, Bhartendu retained what was relevant in Sanskrit classical theory to the modern situation and borrowed what the thought to be equally so in English theory. Thus, while discussing the types of plays, he includes all those taken from Sanskrit and includes 'tragedy' from English drama, as he understood it to be:

बियोगात्मक जिसी क्षा अन्त में नायिका व नायक के परण वा और जिसी बापदगटना पर समाप्त है।  

Let us now come to the dramatic practice of Bhartendu. In all he wrote eighteen plays, which may be put into three classes: (1) Translated plays; (2) Adapted plays; and (3) Original plays. His translated plays include *Pakhand Vidamban* (1872), *Dhananjaya Vijaya* (1873), *Mudrarakshas* (1874-5), *Ratnavali* (1868) from Sanskrit; *Karpurmanjari* (1876) from Prakrit; and *Durlabh-Bandhu* (1882) from Shakespeare's English play *The Merchant of Venice*. His adapted plays are, *Satya Harishchandra* (1875) from Sanskrit and *Vidya Sunder* (1868), and

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Bharat Janini (1877) from Bengali. His nine original plays are, Vediki Hinsa Hinsa Na Bhavati (1873), Vishasya Vishamoshdham (1876), Andher Nagri (1881), Bharat Durdasha (1876), Nil Devi (1880), Prem Yogini (1875), Chandravali (1876), Sati Pratap (1884), and Pravas (1868). Of all these plays, we have not to consider the first five as they are mere translations from Sanskrit and Prakrit, and bear no trace of the influence of Shakespeare; Durlabh Bandhu, we have already discussed under translations in Chapter II; Sati Pratap was not wholly written by Bhartendu; and Pravas could not be completed by him and is not available now. The rest, we shall discuss one by one.

When we consider Vidya Sunder, which Bhartendu adapted from Bengali taking for his theme from Ram Prasad Sen, Bharat Chandra Ray Gunakar and Yatindranath Thakur, we feel that Bhartendu has begun to imbibe the English influence. The play has no 'Prastavana', 'Nandi', 'Sutradhar', 'Vishkambhak', and 'Bharatvakya' like the Sanskrit plays. The author calls it 'Natak', though it has only three acts whereas according to Sanskrit dramaturgy, it ought to have five to ten acts. The play is also divided into acts and scenes called 'Anka' and 'Garbhanka'. On the whole it breathes out the spirit of a Shakespearean play. Shripati Sharma goes to the extent of
Satya Harishchandra, though based on two Sanskrit plays, Kshemeshwar's Chand Kaushik and Ram Chandra's Satya Harishchandra, shows his loosening grip of Sanskrit dramaturgy. Unlike its models, it has only four acts. The delineation of the psychology behind the characters like Harishchandra, Shaivya, Vishwamitra and Rohitashwa in a realistic and forceful manner indicates the western influence. The play is full of suspense and mental conflict like Shakespeare's plays. How reminiscent of Hamlet's famous 'To be or not to be' soliloquy is the following soliloquy of Harishchandra:

"I am divided between what to do and what to not do. My mind is full of doubts."

1. Dr. Shripati Sharma, Hindi Natak par Pashchatya Prabha, p.60.
2. Dr. Shripati Sharma, Hindi Natak par Pashchatya Prabha, p.60.
Both are tormented within by the pressure of their circumstances and think of putting an end to this corporal frame. Then, in the last act, the scene of the burning ghat is described as vividly and touchingly as in the tragedies of Shakespeare. The dark night, the loneliness of the place, the ferocity of rain, ghosts and spirits, corpses, jackals - all combine to produce a scene of terror to give a hint of the impending tragedy.

Bharat Janini is an opera; Vediki Hinsa Hinsa Na Bhavati, Vishasya Vishamoshdham and Andher Nagri give expression to the decadent tendencies that had crept into the life of feudal lords; Prem Yogini depicts the social evils found in the city of Kashi; Bharat Durdasha expresses patriotic sentiment; and Chandravali expresses love for Krishna. They all bear some mark of western influence in the novel and realistic treatment of the subject-matter, but no definite influence of Shakespeare can be traced in them. Bharat Durdasha ends tragically: Bharat Bhagya is shown as committing suicide at the end which is against Sanskrit dramatic rules and shows Bhartendu's indebtedness to English drama. It also avoids the observance of 'Nandi' and 'Sutradhar' while its all-pervasive gloomy atmosphere makes it completely Western in spirit.

Nil Devi has been styled a 'tragedy' by the author himself. The play shows the end of the hero and the heroine. This is not a tragic ending in the real sense of the term.
according to English dramatic rules but it is as the author understood it to be. Nevertheless, we find some traits of Shakespearean tragedy in it, as will be apparent from an analysis of the plot. King Surya Deva, the hero, is captured and killed deceitfully by Amir Abdul Shareef, the villain. To take revenge of her husband's death Nil Devi, disguised as a singing girl, goes to the camp of Abdul Shareef and kills him. In the end she burns herself with the corpse of her husband. Thus, the hero and the heroine are of high estate and their doom proceeds from exceptional calamity. To be a tragedy in the Shakespearean sense, it only lacks an 'inherent flaw' in the character of the hero, which partly may be said to be the artlessness of the hero. There is conflict between good and evil in which good is temporarily subdued by evil. Evil, is at last exterminated but causes at the same time much waste of good. Some sense of pity and fear is also aroused at the death of Surya Deva who is a king, but fear is mostly in the nature of dismay. The climax and the catastrophe are well marked in the play.

The very first scene of the play opens with the song of three fairies which resemble the chorus in English drama. The song points to some future action. Dr. V.K. Shukla writes:

2. Dr. V.K. Shukla, Bhartendu ka Natya Sahitya, p.103.
These 'three fairies' remind us of the 'three witches' in *Macbeth*.

In the seventh scene, while Surya Deva is lying unconscious in a cage, the song of the invisible god is like the ghost-scene in *Hamlet*. Like the ghost in *Hamlet*, the song serves to whet the almost blunted purpose of Surya Deva. It reminds him to rise and to decide his future course of action. We may again quote Dr. V.K. Shukla for the support of our statement:

Dr. D.K. Lal Srivastava regards the humorous dialogue between Pagal and Miyan as a device to relieve the tension and also to suggest a 'contract showing that life is a mixture of joy and sorrow' like the 'grave-diggers' scene in *Hamlet*. And Dr. Shripati Sharma regards the fourth scene as resembling the 'porter scene' in *Macbeth* and the 'grave-diggers scene' in *Hamlet*. He writes:

1. Dr. V.K. Shukla, *op. cit.*, p.103.
3. Dr. Shripati Sharma, *op. cit.*, p.60.
The play avoids the observance of 'Nandi', 'Sutradhar' and 'Bharatvakya' and has plenty of external conflict, bloodshed and murder. Against the spirit of Sanskrit dramatic theory, scenes of fighting, drinking, fainting and killing have been presented on the stage. According to Sanskrit rules, the principal aim of a drama is to evoke a particular sentiment (Rasa). But in 'Nil Devi' the dramatist ignores this tradition and awakens suspense, and curiosity, by highlighting conflict. Giving a final analysis of the play, Dr. Shripati Sharma writes:

To put briefly, Bhartendu bears out the influences of Shakespeare in respect of his concept of tragedy, in the handling of both external and internal conflict, in the psychological portrayal of characters, in the realistic treatment of subject-matter, in the deft employment of the supernatural, in providing comic-relief, and in the evocation of pity and fear.

SHRINIVAS DAS:

Lala Shrinivas Das (1851-87), the greatest contemporary.

1. Shripati Sharma, op. cit., p.60.
of Bhartendu Harishchandra and the most important name for our present study, was a businessman of Delhi but, somehow, he could also find time to pursue his literary interests. He was well-versed in Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit and English languages and literatures. The study of his works shows that he had made a thorough study of Shakespeare. This fact is borne but by the prefaces of his works too.

Shrinivas Das wrote four original plays and one novel. They are Prahlad Charita (1888), Tapta Samwaran (1877), Sanyogita Swayamvara (1886), Randhir aur Prem Mohini (1877), and the novel Pariksha Guru (1882). Prahlad Charita is his first original composition, though it could not be published earlier than his death in 1888. The first two compositions are important neither as plays nor as repositories of any external influence, since they are based on Sanskrit dramaturgy. The novel Pariksha Guru has some references to Shakespeare. The two characters Shambhu Dayal and Brij Kishore allude to him. Shambhu Dayal refers to lines 184-89 of The Merchant of Venice in Act IV, scene 1, and presents a Hindi version of Portia's speech.\(^2\)

Shakespeare's influence is quite potent in the play Randhir aur Prem Mohini, which resembles Romeo and Juliet in

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2. Dr. S.K. Lal (editor), Shrinivas Granthavali, Pariksha Guru, p.166.
several respects. Acharya Ramchandra Shukla wrote that the very title of the play Randhir aur Prem Mohini recalls Romeo and Juliet. The main outline of the story, with minor variations here and there to give it an Indian setting, is quite similar: the hostility between two kings, the love between the son of one and the daughter of the other, their tragic end, the final reconciliation between the two kings and the erection of the statues of the lover and the beloved. The story of the play runs thus: The King of Surat and the King of Patan are hostile to each other. Prem Mohini is the beautiful daughter of the King of Surat, and Randhir, the son of the King of Patan, run-away from home and living as a commoner in Surat. The two fall in love and when the time for Prem Mohini’s Swayamvara comes, her preference for Randhir leads to a bloody battle in which Prem Mohini’s brother, Ripudaman, is slain while trying to help save his friend Randhir. Randhir himself emerges a hero, but he receives too many wounds to survive. He somehow staggers to the palace and dies there in the lap of his beloved. Prem Mohini stabs herself and falls by the side of her lover. At that moment Randhir’s father arrives looking for his run-away son. What follows is a lot of wailing followed by reconciliation of the kings and the order to erect statues of the two lovers.

The characters of *Randhir aur Prem Mohini* are closely modelled on *Romeo and Juliet*. They have deep love for each other and die for the sake of love. The courage and bravery of Randhir, the snow-like purity and piety of Prem Mohini's love, the intensity of passion and ferment of emotion in their love, are the qualities which remind us of Romeo and Juliet.

The play is the first tragedy in Hindi drama. The tragic conception of the play has also been inspired by Shakespeare's tragic idea. The play is preeminently the story of the hero and the heroine, persons of high degree - a prince and a princess - meeting their death owing to an unexpected exceptional calamity. The tragedy proceeds from the inherent flaw in the character of Randhir. He has all good qualities but his obduracy brings about his doom. This flaw is present from the very beginning. Due to this flaw he leaves the kingdom of his father, and is bent upon punishing innocent Chaubeji without investigating for the real culprit and, towards the end, implicates himself in a battle single-handed with the King od Surat and his supporters.

*Randhir aur Prem Mohini* is also a tragedy of 'fate' and 'chance' or 'accident' i.e. the outward circumstances like *'Romeo and Juliet'*'. In Shakespeare's play, it is quite an accident that Romeo never gets the Friar's message about the potion and that Juliet does not awake a minute earlier from
her long sleep. Similarly, in *Randhir aur Prem Mohini*, the letter of Randhir's father and Randhir's father himself arrive a bit too late. If he had come earlier, the two lovers would have escaped the doom.

There are some echoes of the 'balcony-scene' of the English play in the Act III, scene iv, of *Randhir aur Prem Mohini*. As in the English play, the meeting of Randhir and Prem Mohini has been arranged in an orchard. After seeing Prem Mohini from a distance, Randhir says:

> इस गुफा इस पृथ्वी भूमि में ये प्रकाष्ण कैसा हो रहा है। पूर्वोत्तर का समय तो अंधेरे नहीं है पर पूर्वोत्तर का समय न होता तो कौतुक की कृत्य कहाँ है धुनाई देती कहाँ है मिलने को रूप बदल कर दूर्यों तो यहाँ नहीं चले जाये।

These lines seem to have been inspired by the following lines spoken by Romeo:

> "But, soft, what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun Arise, fair sun, ....."

The next scene of the same act (III, iv) also bears the impress of the 'balcony-scene' (II, ii) and of Act II, scene v of *Romeo and Juliet*. The following line spoken by Randhir:

> अब कुछ मेरे मन की भूख बेवे की भी तो उपाय करो।

echoes the following words of Romeo:

> "O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?"

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The fifth scene of the third act of Romeo and Juliet opens in 'Juliet's Chamber' where 'Enter Romeo and Juliet' and like this the fifth scene of the third act of Randhir aur Prem Mohini has also been arranged in Prem Mohini's palace - रणधीर तथा प्रेम मोहिनी का पहला स्थान बना हुआ है। जहाँ ( रणधीर ने प्रेम मोहिनी की कथा पर लोक पर कही है। )। When Randhir wants to take leave of Prem Mohini at the break of day, she wants to detain him and the following dialogue ensues:

रणधीर : रणधीर की तरफ देखकर - है भ्राता देखकर भ्राता का जल्द हो गया। दीपक की ज्योति मुंह पहुँच गई उसके पास ती शीघ्र हो गई। पत्नी ढूँढ़ रही हैं और कमल के बिंब से पत्ते हैं। जब तक की बूढ़ी मौलिकों की लहर के समान ठहरती रही। अब तुम भ्राता हो लो वों भी जाकर रविवार करूँ।

प्रेम मोहिनी : प्रेम मोहिनी की भ्राता का जल्द हो नहीं हुआ। आपके वेत हैं दीपक की ज्योति मुंह पहुँच गई और धूपमीठी की शीघ्रता है मौलिक ढूँढ़ हो गई। पत्नी नहीं ढूँढ़रही। रात्रि के कारण मौलिक ढूंढ़ बुरूँ हैं। क्योंकि कमल के पत्ते पर जोस की बूढ़ी नहीं ठहरती। मेरे मौलिकों पर आँधुँ बाह आये हैं।

This quite resembles the situation in Romeo and Juliet. Juliet wants to detain Romeo by similar arguments:

Juliet. Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierce'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Romeo. It was the lark the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Juliet. Yon light is not day—light, I know it, 1
   It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
   To be to this night a torch bearer,
   And light thee on thy way to Mantua:  1
   Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

In Act II, scene ii, when Romeo prepares to depart,
Juliet again calls him back and the following conversation
proceeds:

Juliet. Romeo,
   Romeo. My dear,
Juliet. At what o'clock to-morrow
   Shall I send to thee?
Romeo. At the hour of nine.
Juliet. I will not fail; 'tis twenty years till then.
   I have forgot why I did call thee back,
Romeo. Let me stand here till thou remember it.
Juliet. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
   Remembering how I love thy company.
Romeo. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
   Forgetting any other home but this. 2

This situation is utilized thus in Randhir sur Prem Mohini:

राजनीति : पुकारकर (खल्लखल के -) प्राणानाय ढरे ज्वान एक ओह ढरे मुख को आपनी मोहिनी मूर्ति मन पर कर एक बार देखने दो।

राजनीति : (राजनीति की तरफ देखकर -) हस्त विष्णु मुख को अपनी जीवन फूल के निरंतर का कुछ इत्तिहास मिलेगा। ढरकर ख्याति हस्ते तो प्रेम के गाढ़ और भूलती है जब मुख के जाने दौ।
   (बाहे लगा)

राजनीति : (पुकारकर -) प्राणवल्लभ ढरे कुछ दौर और ढरे मुख को एक बाल आपसे कहनी है।

राजनीति : आपने रात के आने का समय निरक्ष कर लिया।

राजनीति : वह तो पहिले ही ही बूका। 3

2. Ibid., II, ii, 167-75.
Towards the close of the second scene of the second act of Romeo and Juliet, a fine conceit is expressed:

Juliet. 'Tis almost morning: I would have thee gone; And yet no further than a wanton's bird, Who lets it hop a little from her hand, Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves, And with a silk thread plucks it back again, So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Romeo. I would I were thy bird. 1

The playwright of Randhir aur Prem Mohini weaves a fine symbol out of this conceit. Prem Mohini describes a dream to Champa and Malati in which she has seen a beautiful white swan. The swan symbolises Randhir, her lover. But the swan disappears which symbolically means that she has to lose her lover in life. And thus she has to keep languishing and lamenting for him in the end. The dramatist has spun a full scene out of the hint taken from the English play. 2

Then, in the last scene of the last act of the Hindi play, Randhir, being wounded in the battle and withering fast, is lying in the lap of Prem Mohini. Prem Mohini sprinkles rose-water and Randhir opens his eyes. On this occasion Malati, a friend of Prem Mohini, says:

These words are merely a Hindi rendering of the words spoken by

3. Ibid., V, i, p.133.
Romeo in a slightly different context in answer to Juliet's fear for him from her kinsmen:

Juliet. If they do see thee they will murder thee.
Romeo. Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet, And I am proof against their enmity. 1

There is also an echo of the Winter's Tale in the Hindi play. In the English play, King Polixenec 2 does not consider Perdita to be a fit match for his son Florizel as she is the daughter of a shepherd. At this Perdita says:

for once or twice
I was about to speak and tell him plainly,
The self-same sun that shines upon his court
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
Looks on alike. 2

Similar words in a similar situation are uttered by Randhir, Prem Mohini's father, knowing him to be only a commoner, rebukes him for claiming himself a Kshatriya of the status of the king himself. At this Randhir speaks like Perdita:

१ शेष है कि आपके उंगे उंगे पहाड़ पर सूर्य की बुध पड़ती है तीस ही हमारी माँफ मटरी में भी सूर्य बहावाने प्रकाश करते हैं। जैसे आपके क्ज़ुड़ा महान पर धनपार घटा बल बरसता है जैसे हमारी गरीब माफिकी की भी अपनी अप्प्पर दवा है मुझे नहीं रखी। 3

Thus, Randhir aur Prem Mohini bears out Shakespeare's influence in respect of (1) the theme; (2) the conception of

tragedy; (3) the characterisation based on inner and outer conflict; (4) the provision for scenes prohibited in Sanskrit dramaturgy viz. battle, death, fainting etc; and (5) the death of the hero which is never permitted by Indian classical rules. Then, there are a good many echoes from Romeo and Juliet and The Winter's Tale.

Sanyogita Swayamvara (1885), though written quite in conformity with Sanskrit dramatic rules and having 'Prastavaka', 'Nandi', 'Sutra', and 'Bharatvaka' shows clear signs of the influence of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice on the last two acts and has some echoes from Romeo and Juliet. The way in which the erotic sentiment has been given expression to and the argument of scenes in which Prithviraj has been shown embracing Sanyogita and Sanyogita lying in the lap of Prithviraj, not permitted by the Sanskrit theorists, reflect Shakespeare's impact on the play.

The playwright portrays Sanyogita, on the model of Portia, who saves her lover in the guise of a man. There is much similarity between the scene in which Sanyogita elopes with Prithviraj from her father Jaichand's palace and the elopement-scene in The Merchant of Venice in which Jessica, the daughter of Shylock, runs away from her father's house.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
with her lover Lorenzo. The ring-episode has also been taken from The Merchant of Venice, though employed in a different way.

The meeting of Sanyogita and Prithviraj in II, ii, of the play through a 'Jharokha' (small balcony) resembles the meeting of Romeo and Juliet in the balcony-scene in Shakespeare's play. The parting of the two lovers in the same scene also bears some resemblance with Romeo and Juliet's parting in II, ii, of the English play. The following dialogue is worthy of note in this connection:

प्रथीराजः (फिर कर -) प्यारी तुम्हारी है वहाँ है निकलना क्या कहकर देखो मे हिम्नत करके दो घाँ ख्यात लो परन्तु फिर जहाँ का तहाँ आ जाता हैं। हाय मेरी दिना हस समय धार्य बूतंदर की ही ही रही हैं।

संयोगिताः दूर दूर दूर तरंग मुक्त को अपनी मोहिनी मृति लो एक बार और देख लेने दूर।

RADHAKRISHNA DAS:

Radhakrishna Das (1865-1907), stands foremost among the contemporaries of Bhartendu. He was a cousin of Bhartendu, and was well-acquainted with his technique of dramatic composition. He had read Shakespeare's plays and even put them into Hindi.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. p.53.
4. Ibid.,
prose narrative form. Mr. Das wrote Dukhini Bala (1880), Dharmalap (1885), Padmavati (1882), Maharana Pratap Singh (1897), and completed Bhartendu's Sati-Pratap.

The first of these dramatic compositions is a tragedy and deals with child-marriage. The second, Dharmalap, is only a dialogue between persons following different religions. Of Sati-Pratap, only first four scenes were written by Bhartendu and the rest by Radhakrishna Das. The sixth scene of this play bears out Shakespeare's influence in the treatment of the erotic sentiment and in the presentation of kissing and embracing on the stage. The other two plays, Maharani Padmavati and Maharana Pratap Singh, are historical and seem to have been inspired by Shakespeare's historical plays.

Maharani Padmavati, like Bhartendu's Nil Devi, is a historical tragedy. It deals with the famous story of Padmavati and Ratnasen of Chittore. But Maharana Pratap Singh is more successful as a historical play and may be regarded as the first of its kind in Hindi dramatic literature. Its characters speak like the characters of Shakespeare's historical plays, though they have not been individualised in that manner. The play presents scenes of violence on the stage and depicts

1. Cymbeline (Saraswati, January, 1900)
   Pericles (Saraswati, March and April, 1900)
   Athenswasi Timon (Saraswati, February, 1900)
external and inner conflict like Shakespeare's plays. The scene in which Pratap is moved by the plight of his starving children and is consequently tossed by an inner conflict reminds of the 'To be or not to be' scene of Hamlet.

Dr. Shripati Sharma is of the view that:

So far we have discussed Bhartendu Harishchandra, Shrinivas Dasm and Radhakrishna Das. The three playwrights were pioneers in their own fields:

(1) Bhartendu imbibed the influence of Shakespeare's in general, but particularly in the field of Romantic Comedy.

(2) Shrinivas Das took the conception of the Shakespearean tragedy and other impressions of a tragic love-story.

(3) Radhakrishna Das modelled his historical play Maharana Pratap Singh on the pattern of Shakespeare's historical plays.

The other dramatists, more or less, followed in the foot-steps of these three, and derived Shakespeare's impress partly at first-hand and partly through them. Let us make a review of these playwrights.

1. Dr. Shripati Sharma, Hindi Natakon par Pashchatya Prabhava, p.70.
Bhartendu's *Vidya-Sunder*, patently bearing the influence of Shakespeare's romantic plays, served as a model for the other playwright of his period. Vindhyeshwari Prasad Tripathi's *Mithilesh Kumari* (1888), Khangbahadur Mall's *Rati-Kusumavudh* (1885), Bajar Prasad's *Melati Basant* (1899), Amansingh Gotia and Pandit Jageshwar Dayal's *Madan Manjari* (1884), Shaligram Vaishya's *Madhavanal Kamkandala* (before 1888), Kishorilal Goswami's *Mayank Manjari* (1891), Khilavanlal's *Prem Sunder* (1892), and Brij Jivan Das's *Prem Swarup Natak* (1897), all have the same romantic tinge, the same element of curiosity, the same division into acts and scenes, the same technique of disguise and the same handling of love with kissing, embracing and fainting on seeing a beautiful damsel.

In most of these plays, the hero and the heroine belong to the opposite camps and heroine's father opposes their love and wants to marry the heroine to some other person as in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The first meeting of the lover and the beloved is always arranged outside the house, in some orchard or such other place: it is a flower garden (*Pushpodyan*) in *Mayank Manjari*, a hunting-grove (*Akhet*) in *Rati Kusumavudh*, a garden (*Upavana*) in *Mithilesh Kumari* and so on. In *Mithilesh Kumari*, like the 'balcony-scene' in *Romeo and Juliet*, the second meeting of Ketaki and Madhava has been arranged in the evening in the balcony of Ketaki (*Ketaki ki Atari*) and the whole of the
night passes in a tete-a-tete. Towards the morning, Ketaki says:

अर्थात यह तो प्रभात है गया बहर आज सूर्य की क्या उतारती है किस तास वैग अभी रथ को चलाया।

In Mayank Manjari, the lover and the beloved, Mayank Manjari and Virendra, meet but are separated on the arrival of the heroine's mother, as in Romeo and Juliet. Like the friar in the English play, there is Jabali Rishi, helping the two. In Madan Manjari Natak, the ring-episode of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice is employed in the seventh act. The heroine Manjari goes to the hero in the guise of a singing-girl and procures her own ring, given to the hero formerly, as a reward. She wants to tease the hero by demanding the ring on his coming home, but the whole secret is disclosed to the hero by the court-jester or Vidushak.

Keshava Ram Bhatta also wrote two plays, Sajjad Sambul (1877), based on the Bengali play Sharat aur Sarojini and Shamshad Sausan (1880), based on another Bengali play Surendra Vinodini. They have the same story of love and meeting told in Shakespearean romantic style. Both of them end happily in the ringing bells of marriage of all the couples like Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. Dr. V.N. Mishra believes that the character of Sajjad is partly based and modelled on the character of Valentine in The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

1. Dr. V.N. Mishra, Western Influence in Hindi Drama, p. 86.
Inspired by the success of *Randhir aur Prem Mohini*, the first Hindi tragedy, many plays came to be written after 1877. Bhartendu wrote *Nil Devi* and *Bharat Durdasha*, and Radhakrishna Das wrote *Dukhini Bala* and *Maharanii Padmavati*, which we have already discussed. Radhacharan Goswami's *Chandravali* (1889) is also a historical tragedy.

Shaligram Vaishya's *Lavanyavati Sudarshan* (1890), Jawaharlal Vaidya's *Kamalmohini Bhanwarsingh* (1896), and Balmukund Pandey's *Gangotri* (1897), are all love-tragedies and have clear traces of Shakespeare's impact. They all have the same lines of plot: two lovers belonging to two noble hostile families - the father of the heroine opposing them - being star-crossed meet a tragic ending, with much of external and internal conflict, and scenes of fighting, fainting and killing. Like Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the last act of these plays is always a plethora of deaths. The love-story has the same romantic vein as is found in *Romeo and Juliet*. Juliet wants to detain Romeo and asks him to stay pretending that she has to say something to him. A similar device is employed in *Lavanyavati Sudershan* with the difference that no -t the heroine but the hero asks the heroine to stay:

_शुद्धिन : प्यारी ऊठा जाओ सो जीत नहीं घर जाए रह गईं।_

Next we pass on to the historical plays. In this domain also, Bhartendu broke fresh ground by writing his

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historical tragedy, *Nil Devi* in 1880. His example was followed in Radhakrish Das's *Maharani Padmavati* (1882), Bajinath's *Veer Bama* (1883), Kashinath Khattri's *Sindhu Desh ki Rajkumariyan* (1884), *Gunnor ki Rani* (1884), and *Loveja ka Swapna* (1884), Balkunthanath Duggal's *Shri Harsha* (1884), Shrinivas Das's *Sanyogita Swayamvara* (1885), Radhakhan Goswami's *Sati Chandravali* (1889), and *Amaarsingh Rathore* (1895), Baldeo Prasad Mishra's *Mirabai* (1890), Shaligram's *Puru Vikram* (1895), and Ram Naresh Sharma's *Singhal Vijai* (1896). We have already traced Shakespeare's influence in *Nil Devi, Padmavati, Sanyogita Swayamvara, Sati Chandravali*, and other plays, more or less, show the same traits. But, as we have already seen, the real historical masterpiece modelled on Shakespeare's historical plays came from the pen of Radhakrishna Das. *Maharana Pratap Singh* (1897) is the real historical drama in Hindi which set an example for others. Balkrishna Bhatta translated Michael Madhusudan Dutta's Bengali historical plays *Padmavati* (1878) and *Sharmistha* (1880) and Ramkrishna Varma translated Michael's *Krishna Kumari*. These plays are based on and influenced by Shakespeare's tragedies.¹ This translation work gave some experience to Balkrishna and he wrote *Chandra Sen* which bears Shakespeare's influence, derived second-hand from Michael

¹ Priyaranjan Sen, *Western Influence in Bengali Literature*, pp.140-94.
Madhusudan Dutt's plays.

The main trends of Shakespeare's impact on Hindi drama of the Bhartendu-Age must have become quite clear. The period was a period of experiment. Bhartendu made experiments in Sanskrit style as well as Shakespearean style and endeavoured to synthesise the two styles of drama.