

IMPACT OF SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIAN CONTEXT

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Received : 05.10.2020

Revised : 04.11.2020

Accepted : 05.12.2020

ABSTRACT:

Shakespeare's theatre's influence began and grew predominantly in cities or settlements created by English merchants and British rulers, or where their commercial, industrial, or administrative centers were based. That is why this theatre received so much more support and encouragement in emerging towns like Calcutta, Bombay, and, to a lesser extent, Madras, than in other parts of the country. In this article, impact of Shakespeare's theatre with special reference to Indian context has been discussed.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Theatre, Cities, India.

INTRODUCTION:

The spread and consolidation of English control, theatre spread to nearly every section of the country; but it did not begin in all places at the same time, nor did it grow to the same amount everywhere. As a result, whatever accomplishments it has, they are at various degrees in different languages and regions of the country. It became most active, prosperous, and popular in Bengali and Marathi, through the beginning and subsequent development languages were significantly different."

The impact of Shakespeare's theatre on Bengal is as follows:

Calcutta, the first primary seat of the East India Company and afterwards the capital of the British rulers, was credited with the emergence and virtually complete expansion of the contemporary theatre in Bengali. The Bengalis' major traditional theatre, the Jatra, may have appeared primitive and backward to them, and because there was no tradition of Sanskrit play, they were naturally drawn to and overwhelmed by the originality, force, and efficacy of western drama and theatre. Clearly, the acting style of this new theatre had little in common with the methods or approaches of the country's classical or traditional performing styles. Although some Indian actors may have employed or found fit for their work some of the methods and devices of their own ancient theatre, its main inspiration and model of style and technique came from the western theatre and its great players. In any case, the allure of this new theatre, particularly that of the actors and their unique and appealing performances, drew a large audience from the middle class and educated sections of Calcutta, if not all of Bengal, to the point where a passion for theatre became a distinguishing feature of an educated

Bengali.

Another noteworthy element of this theatre is its sound system. Because of its unique nature, and partly due to the impact of English dramatic literature, particularly Shakespeare, the written text and playwright gained cultural significance in this new theatrical activity through English education. Bengali poets and prose writers have been fascinated to playwriting since the beginning. Dramatists such as Michael Madhu Sudan Dutt, Deenbandhu Mitra, Girish Chandra Ghosh, D.L. Roy, Kshirod Prasad Vidyavinod, RabindraNath Tagore, Manmath Ray, Sachin Sengupta, and others wrote hundreds of plays for this new stage between the middle of the 19th century and the end of the fourth decade of the 10th century.

These plays' stories are based on Indian mythological episodes, folk tales, historical events, and modern societal conditions, while they occasionally include stories or echoes of popular Muslim or western legends or tales. The form of these plays, however, is similar to Shakespeare's or, later, naturalistic plays. They seek to depict an individual's fight with his surroundings, social conditions, other people, or his own thoughts, and the characters are conceived or developed in the same way that western plays are. The artistic achievement of these plays is often insignificant, and they are little more than stageable melodramas, with a few exceptions. They don't have a profound or observant investigation of human character's fundamental contradictions, nor do they have an explosive irony of events. Not only do they lack intellectual insight, but they are also lacking in dramatic form innovation and innovative unique structure.

Shakespeare's influence on Marathi playwriting and performance:

It was only natural that the Marathi theatre, like all other forms of art and literature, would be affected by its Western equivalent. When scholarly individuals translated Shakespeare's plays one after another around the turn of the century, the few influences became apparent. At the time, a number of these translations resulted in successful performances. To this day, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar's Hamlet and Govind Ballal Deval's stage version of Mahadevshastri Kolhatkar's Othello are still being performed. The majority of the other translations, on the other hand, were bookish and focused on the literary side rather than the dramatic. The argument is that these Shakespearian translations established the groundwork for the 'prose' style of Marathi play. A dramatist like Deval went a step further and gave us translations of other European plays in his plays Durga and Sanshay Kallol, the latter of which was a Moliereque comedy of marital misunderstanding. The better translators paid special attention to adapting the original to the needs of our own country and culture.

Shakespeare had a significantly greater influence on early twentieth-century playwrights like Shripad Krishna Kolhatkar and Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar. Kolhatkar attempted to write an early Shakespearian comedy that, while not representative of the bard's play at its best, has a wit and fantasy richness that can appeal to the audience. The element of early Shakespeare that Kolhatkar wanted to transplant into the Marathi theatre was a sophisticated plot with two parallel strands of happenings running through it, heroes, heroines, and even man-servants in pairs, and a variety of startling twists. There was also a plethora of songs, all of which were

in keeping with the Marathi theatre's long tradition.

Khadilkar's impersonation, on the other hand, was more subtle and original. He was deeply influenced by Shakespeare's tragedies, and plays like *Sawai Madhavravacha Mrittyu* and *Bhaubandaki* - both based on different periods of the Peshwa regime in the history of the Marathas - show clear signs of being influenced by the characterization of Hamlet and Iago, as well as *Macbeth*, *Lady Macbeth*, and even *Richard II* - show clear signs of being influenced by the characterization of Hamlet and Iago and Macbeth. *Sawai Madhavravacha Mrittyu's* Villain is very much in the mould of Iago, but he stands out as a self-contained and artistically valid portrayal. The Peshwa Raghobadada and his wife Anadibai in *Bhaubandaki* are very close to Macbeth and his lady, having committed the murder of their own nephew. In the play, there is also a 'mirror' moment that recalls a similar scene in Shakespeare's *Richard II*.

Gadkari, too, was impacted by Shakespeare in his own manner. The narrative architecture and characterization of *Othello* are strikingly similar when compared to the plot construction and characterization of his most successful social drama, *Ekach Pyala*, which is about the ills of drink. Sudhakar, the hero, and his wife Sindhu have traits that are similar to *Othello* and *Desdemona*. Taliram, the villain, and his wife Geeta are modelled after Iago and *Emilia*. Ramlal has a Cassio-like appearance. However, the resemblance ends here, and we move on to Gadkari's own pyrotechnical show of amazing creativity, both in dialogue and character development. The important to remember is that *Othello* was on Gadkari's mind when he created this social tragedy, which is set in a completely different social environment and features a major protagonist with a human weakness.

Shakespeare's theatre has a connection to Gujarati drama:

Because of the enthusiasm and initiative of the region's most influential, prosperous, and enterprising community, the Parsis, who had readily accepted western education and culture, the impact of the western theatre was greater and more pervasive from the start in another language of the western region, Gujarati. The Parsis not only established several industries and trades in conjunction with English traders, but they also established professional western-style theatre companies that performed plays in Gujarati. Their major focus was Bombay, but their work had an impact over the entire Gujarati-speaking region, as Bombay was the main hub for newly developing businessmen, traders, and other western-educated Gujaratis.

Because of a direct or indirect commercial orientation, melodrama, spectacle, and exaggeration dominated the Parsi as well as the broader Gujarati theatre from the start. But even here, a number of great performers rose to the fore, enthralling audiences with their abilities. The plays written for this theatre were largely based on Shakespearean models, and their plots were mostly based on Muslim and Indian romantic tales, with some mythological and historical occurrences thrown in for good measure. Plays addressing social problems were written much later. However, unlike Shakespeare's plays, most of them had melodrama or sensation caused by a clash of settings and characters, but they lacked the master's deep insight into or comprehension of human mind and behaviour, as well as his lyrical quality. As

a result, while these plays drew crowds when they were presented, they were unimportant in terms of creativity or art.

Conclusion:

The world has never before had a much drama as today. Radio, films, television and video inundated us with the drama.

“It was first in Helsinki and then in Vienna at the 9th world congress of the international theatre. In June 1961 the president Arvi Kivimaa proposed on behalf of the Finnish centre of the international theatre institute that a World Theatre Day be instituted. Since 1962, each 27th March (date of Opening of the 1962' theatre of Nations' seasons in Paris) World Theatre Day has been celebrated in many and varied ways by the now almost 100 ITI National Centers throughout the world and other members of the world theatre community”.

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