

Shakespeare, to develop the inherent comical elements in the tragedy. Consequently, in both adaptations, Roderigo is caricatured to an extreme degree. Such a farcical interlude for pleasing the spectators is certainly better than the usual mode of coarse buffoonery witnessed on the Urdu stage.

The earlier production, in which the famous actor Jahangir Khambhata acted Othello with conspicuous success, "was inspired by the tremendous enthusiasm aroused in the playgoers by *Cymbeline* (*Zulmē-nāravā*)", as is stated in the preface to the "opera-book". The manager says that "English and Gujarati reviews have joined in a chorus of praise". After paying a glowing tribute to "the greatest of poets", he states that "the acting of *Othello* is extremely difficult". Then he deplures "the tendency in the audience to demand some extra farcical absurdity"; but he will not encourage such "hybrid taste". Instead, he will only permit the rich fool Roderigo to be exploited to the fullest.

The later Urdu adaptation was also produced with success by the son of the celebrated Kavasji Khatau. In order to preserve the original local colour of Venice and Cyprus, the management spent large sums on painted curtains and costumes, although Moslem names were given to the characters speaking Urdu. The main line of argument is fairly well preserved, with some few striking modifications. The play opens in a garden, where the prime minister of the Venetian state, Brabantio, is entertaining the General Othello (Shēr-Dil). After dance and music, at the request of Desdemona (Zarnigār), the veteran commander narrates his exploits. She directly falls in love with him. They hold a sweet discourse in song. The next scene discovers Roderigo, mad for Desdemona, extorting money from his unwilling parents. In the third scene, Othello helps Desdemona to elope with him by means of a rope-ladder (a hint from *Much Ado About Nothing*). The next scene is Shakespeare's I. i. Here Iago, a lord of Venice, swindles the fool of his money. In the course of Act I, Iago's sole motive of revenge is

stated to be Othello's illicit amours with Emilia. The last scene, I. vii, is Shakespeare's I. iii.

Act II opens on a 'river-bank of Cyprus', where Othello arrives with his bride. The General exhibits the head of the arch-enemy. Universal rejoicings follow. Later on, in II. v, Roderigo's 'hotel-keeper' assaults him for his follies and amorous professions. The conviction of Othello is complete at the end of this act. In the last, Act III, with full Moslem pomp and ceremony, Roderigo, completely befooled, goes in a procession to marry his beloved. In the later scuffle he is wounded by Iago and then removed to a lunatic asylum, where the next scene opens. Roderigo's father comes in time to rescue his maltreated profligate son. The final scene, which is on the Shakespearean model, is distinguished by the death of Iago on the stage.

The Bengali adapter of 1875 is perfectly conscious of his difficult task, and, in a profound spirit of reverence, compares himself to "a dwarf trying to catch the moon". It is a faithful rendering almost line by line, Othello being a dark Maratha adventurer in Bengal. Instead of the Turkish invasion, the Moghul army's attack is substituted. With only occasional blank verse, the general medium of expression is prose. In the place of 'the willow', a sensitive plant growing on the banks of the Yamunā is mentioned. On the whole the rendering is too close to appeal to a wide class of audience.

The later Bengali version, which ran only for a limited period at the "Star Theatre" in Calcutta, was acted by a good cast, Palita playing as Othello, Apareshbabu as Iago, and Tarasundari as Desdemona. As the title *Othello* indicates, it was a close translation of the original, and consequently failed to catch the imagination of the people. Other Bengali translations and adaptations of this tragedy are not known to have been produced by any professional company.

The partial Gujarati adaptation follows more the Urdu method of production than either the Marathi or the Bengali model. Nevertheless it is a fact that the play named after