

**LAYLA-MAJNU: A
MUSICAL PLAY
IN THREE ACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649356454

Layla-Majnu: A Musical Play in Three Acts by Dhan Gopal Mukerji

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI

**LAYLA-MAJNU: A
MUSICAL PLAY
IN THREE ACTS**

TO THE CALL OF THE FLUTE
OF LIFE,
DANCE THE RIPPLES ON THE
LAKE OF LOVE;
SOULS SEEK THEIR MATES, AS
THE BEE THE LOTUS
TO DRINK THE HONEY OF
BLISS FROM ITS ETERNAL
HEART.



LAYLA-MAJNU

A MUSICAL PLAY
IN THREE ACTS

By
DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY PROFESSOR ARTHUR UPHAM POPE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



PAUL ELDER & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS • SAN FRANCISCO

Copyright, 1926
By PAUL ELDER & COMPANY
SAN FRANCISCO

W. H. O'NEILL
A. J. O'NEILL

To
MRS. FLORENCE STABLER BLACKMAN

PS3525
U3L3
1916
MAIN

332741

Introduction

DESPITE her infinite services to civilization, India remains to the western world something of a mystery. India, the mother of religions, the founder of sciences, with an art both opulent and spiritual, a culture unique and incredibly rich, is still for most of us a romantic fable, without substance and without meaning. To capture something of the flavor of this extraordinary people and to present it with vividness and charm is a worthy and important service — nay, more, is an achievement of art as well, for it seems to be an essential of art, and one of the sources of its power, that it comprehends the inner life of a people, its experiences, faiths, ideals, and gives to them eloquent and moving expression, appealing to sense and emotion as well as to understanding. Such an achievement is Mr. Mukerji's in this exotic little play which might fairly be called "*A Vision of India*." From the fabulously rich treasury of Indian culture, he has refashioned in an original and personal way a characteristic jewel, having the richness, the luster, the strange play of shifting colors that has made India a synonym for romantic magnificence. In addition to this visual splendor Mr. Mukerji has, with many vivid suggestions that kindle the imagination, presented some essential aspects of the many-sided Indian life — emotion, intense but sincere and refined; love, fervid and imaginative; genuine and exalted chivalry; the steady and universal pressure

Introduction

of spiritual aspiration; the soul-transforming power of religion, with its ideal of utter selflessness — all contrasting gratefully with some traits of our western world, with its rather hard directness, with the thinness and frequent crudity of its emotional life, with its religion so often verbal, conventional, impotent. Of course there are profound and heroic features of Indian life that are not here revealed—intellectual subtlety, sublime patience in suffering—but the first allegiance of the artist is to beauty, and he must not jeopardize æsthetic unity for the sake of sociological comprehensiveness.

But Mr. Mukerji has given us more than a scene out of Indian life; he has transmitted something of its æsthetic genius. Not only is there here much of the tone of the great Indian classics, but something of the spirit of them is transmitted in a way that wins the favor and sympathy of the reader of a wholly different cultural background. This is a considerable and none too common achievement, for the æsthetic genius of any people of genuine individuality is sensitive, and is frequently unable to survive in the process of translation. The great classics of a remote culture like India's when overturned into English, are, unless the translator have rare power, apt to seem dull and fantastic. For those of us who are not attracted to these, a capital introduction to them and a fair appreciation of the spirit of the foreign culture may be acquired through literary works written in our own tongue by writers born into the ancient culture, nourished on its traditions, dis-