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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare is widely accepted as an universal artist. His contribution to English literature, has no equal, for his plays and sonnets are of highest manifestation of artistic creation. He is greatly enjoyed as dramatist all over the world. Whenever and wherever on earth, human beings will speak on the subject of dramatic art, the name of William Shakespeare will be referred with a special mention. No 'time' or 'custom' shall 'wither' his dramatic creations.

Shakespeare's plays have been approached and studied from various points of views and angles. However, comparatively his histories are based on political accounts both of royal England and Romans have been studied less than his imaginative plays. Shakespeare's histories, constitute the major Part of his dramatic creation, for, in all, he wrote thirty six plays out of which fourteen are histories, and seven are based on pseudo history, this statistic amounts to say that Shakespeare was essentially a dramatic of histories. Since, a question, of course, a very significant question arises here that why and especially how, Shakespeare wrote drama based on histories. And it is this paraphypothetical approach would really help us to study Shakespeare's histories from a very significant point of view.

Our general assumptions about Shakespeare's histories are essentially vaguely suggestive. Shakespeare's histories are to be studied from the parahypothetical point of view as mentioned above in the form of, "Why and how", because, there are manyfold reasons which required to be invented hence Shakespeare choose to write plays on specific ranges of histories and these "Whys" provide us the right way to our central point that how Shakespeare fused histories in his dramatic art which as a matter of fact became, the source of our perennial intellectual quest and sentimental passion.

Focusing upon the central point of our study, that how Shakespeare has treated history in his dramatic art, we have to admit with admirations that Shakespeare's histories are but his own self invented creations, mostly inspired by his time and rightly based upon the chosen facts of English and Roman histories. Never have the artist upon the earth shown an unusual artistic
The capacity to fuse history in dramatic art as Shakespeare did. The popularity of Shakespeare's histories rest upon the point that the British and the Romans loved and adored their own histories only after reading Shakespeare's histories. This certainty makes it clear, that Shakespeare has not only fused history in its actual heterogeneous form but pruned it to the degree which could yield the best blend of history and creations.

Shakespeare's inventions of ideas are not less admirable than that of his wonderful imaginations. Since his pure histories, i.e in his fourteen history plays enjoyed a great deal of popularity than that of his pure imaginatives, this aspect of Shakespeare's histories witnesses Shakespeare's unusual genius which we used for the creations of all his histories.

While judging Shakespeare, as a dramatist on histories, we have to consider first that Shakespeare was an independent artist of his age, and his dramatic art was very much inspired by his time, and place where he lived. His personal experience and his ideas, which he had derived from reading histories available at the time had been his only treasure which he faithfully put forth though his dramatic art. And of course, his Political Consciousness, his reverence for the historical past and his judgement as an artist, his ability to sense public interest of his time compelled him to write drama based on history. However above all, his immediate objective in writing plays based on histories was to please the audiences of his age and since it has been rightly said that Shakespeare's interest in history was truly shared by his age. And of course it would not be exaggeration if we say that histories rather willingly chose to take their best recourses through Shakespeare's histories - his dramatic creations as a matter of fact.

Hence, it is on the background, one has to say that the study of Shakespeare's fourteen histories is beneficial, it would gather some very exclusive and significant substance and be a valuable contribution to the criticism on Shakespeare's histories. And hence here, it is planned with definite scope to examine critically Shakespeare's ten plays based on English history and four plays based on Roman history, with the central point of view that how Shakespeare unusually treated history in his dramatic art, and made it an object of perennial interest.

Substantial data for the present study has been collected and has been primarily arranged to plan the structure of the total study- set up, as it is mentioned clearly in the further part of this
synopsis - i.e. The selected range of history plays grouped under two heads that is plays based on English history, and plays based on Roman history. The thematical structure of the histories have been briefly explained and subsequently, objective of this study, its hypothesis, methodology, organization of work and study material has been arranged to meet the objectives of this research work.

In some Shakespeare's 'histories' have great artistic values, their profound historical significance evokes the past with its magnitude and precedence. The ideas and the ideals which the history plays embody have unfailing universal appeal. Since they are but the sources of our perennial interest. The study as mentioned above could be a modest contribution to the art of Shakespearian criticism.

1.1. A Problem undertaken

The problem undertaken by the researcher is from English literature. The topic selected for the study is William Shakespeare, the great English play write. The present work entitles “Treatment of history in Shakespeare’s play”, includes 21 selected plays written and staged by Shakespeare at Globe theatre in England. From the entire contribution of Shakespeare to the English literature, the researcher has selected some major and important plays. Shakespeare has contributed to English Histories. Roman Histories Pseudo histories, tragedies, comedies and sonnets also. he was poet and his play are mainly written in poetic form.

Out of 21 plays selected for the study, ten are taken from English Histories, four are from Roman histories and remaining seven plays are of pseudo histories. The pseudo histories are either tragedies or comedies or romances. The researcher has tried to keep a proper balance while selective the plays. Major emphasis is on English histories and Shakespeare’s study can not be completed without selecting the pseudo histories plays like King Lear, Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello and even winter’s tale. Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus are the milestones in Roman histories and hence major emphasis is also given on Roman histories. Henry IV, V, VI, and VIII. Richard II and III and King John are the seven English King’s on which ten plays are being written. They were the Nation makers; and have contributed much and
hence these plays were also selected.

The main emphasis in this research work is being given on the “treatment of History”. Shakespeare through his history plays, represents national life of England with its period of disaster and collapses. The main theme of all plays in general seems to be patriotisms, but in his history plays in particular, he attempts to aspire the nationalistic spirit of the people of England.

The major stress in this thesis is given on “Treatment of history”. The History of England and Rome during concerned period of time related to each King is available in different historical sources. The chronicles are of much importance, but “Treatment given by Shakespeare to the then histories” is the major task undertaken here by the researcher. Shakespearian style of moulding the history, while writing the plays is researcher’s main task. Without disturbing the major historical events, how Shakespeare has given them dramatic tilting is very interesting to note. Shakespeare as a play write, needs historical facts to be kept intact but for attracting the common masses to the Globe theatre, he has reshuffled those events in the dramatic way. This is peculiar style of the Shakespeare, which the researcher brought into light through this research work.

1.1. B Scope of research

The Shakespeare’s contribution to, the English literature is very vast. His convass is too broad. No single researcher can complete the whole task. Here, in this thesis, the scope of research is very limited but pinpointed. This scope can well be reflected through objectives of the research. It is very interesting to note the real and truthful history of England and Rome. English History can well be traced from 1200 to 1520 A. D., while Roman history can be studied for 300 years i.e. from 1st century B. C. to 2nd century A. D. The original history sources; mainly chronicles are not easily available to the researcher in India, as this study material might readily available in United Kingdom and in European countries. And hence Shakespeare’s plays narrate the real history of both the regions. Shakespeare was an artist, hence he has given artistic treatment to the real histories while bringing them on the stage; conversion of ‘ground history’ into “Staged History” needs a talent and skill; The present researcher’s task is to know that
talent and skill of Shakespeare. The scope is related with tracing author’s skill and talent. It is
the universal truth that Shakespeare was really the best play writer of the world. Nobody will
dare to deny this proposition. Here the attempt is made to evaluate the Shakespeare as a famous
and respectable play write of the world. To give the unusual artistic treatment to the bare
historical facts is the quality of the Shakespeare which nobody will deny. How Shakespeare have
achieved this unusual art of transforming bare facts into plays; Lastly the scope of the researcher
is limited with characterization. Each major and minor character is portrayed on the stage with
definite purpose. Without disturbing the bare historical events, related to a particular character,
how transformation, alteration, and changes were brought in each character is also studied with
great interest. This is in nutshell, the scope of this research.

1.2 Treatment of History in Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare's history plays can be classified in following order.

A. His plays based on English History.

1. Henry VI part I st, II nd, and III rd.
2. Richard III rd.
4. Richard II nd
5. Henry IV th part I st and II nd.

B. His plays based on Roman History.

1. Julius Caesar
2. Timons of Athens.
3. Anthony and Cleopatra.

C. **Pseudo history**

There seems only passing references of history in following plays which are comedies and tragedies.

1. King Lear
2. Macbeth
3. Cymbeline
4. Hamlet
5. Tempest
6. Othello
7. Winter's tale

1.3 **The Thematic Structure**

The present study is based only on the fourteen pure history plays and even Pseudo history i.e. either comedies or tragedies Shakespeare through his history plays represents national life of England with its period of disaster and collapse. However, the underlying theme of all his plays in general seems to be patriotism, but in history plays in particular, he attempts to aspire the nationalistic spirit of the people of England. Shakespeare is not concern with the moral or spiritual problems of his age, his chief concern is with human action, right or wrong, or through action or inaction, that man achieves success or failure in life.

From more than any other dimension, the thematic structure of Shakespeare's history plays is rather to show kingly weaknesses and kingly strengths. Hence his portraits of kings and Nobles appear to be either men of power or failure — to present how a man may fail and how he may succeed in attaining the practical mastery over the world.
1.4 Review Of Literature

1. David Armitage - Volume 35 issue 03, Cambridge university press - 1992 the article, *The Cromwellian Prote to rate and the language of Empire*, recover some of the classical and constitutional and religious languages of empire in early modern Britain. It has been mentioned the consideration of the period between the end of the 1st Anglio-Dutch war in 1654 and the calling of the protectoral parliament in 1656. It is argued that Machiavellian meditation on imperialism is intended as critique of the expactation of the British republic.

2. Michael Hattaway - 2009 *The book Shakespeare's History Plays* illustrates that the general classification was bound to be difficult given that most of the English histories centre their action or the reign of the Monarch, the narrative ending with his death and so it was inevitable that history plays were to be closely affiliated with tragedy. Therefore we understand that Shakespeare could probably count down a minimum knowledge of historical events in his audience & he repesented these in various ways.

3. Carol Thomas Neely, Cornell University Press - 1987 the article *Broken Nuptials In Shakespeare's Plays* - in this article Neely bring to light Shakespeare's awareness of this contradiction showing how he built it into the structure and texture of his plays. With unmannner clarity and rigorous argument she point out a pervasive disparity between Shakespeare's female characters and the idealization and degradation foisted on them by their lovers, suitors and husband.

4. Charlotte Keys, - 2008 In the article *Shakespeare's existentialism*, Shakespeare's profound ability to perceive and conceptualise the world in existentialist terms are noted in the chapter. Subjective Crises in Shakespeare's plays not only to reveal the intellectually eluminating reciprocity between Shakespeare's drama and existentialism. It is also to develope fresh reading of particular tragic text.

5. Peter Hinton,- 2009 The article, *Comedy of Errors Study Guide* it is a light dramatic work which highly improbable plot situations, exaggerated characters and often Slapstick elements are used for humorous effect, in it also deals a light humorous in which the plot depends upon a skilful exploited situation rather than upon the development of character.
6. Christian Lanciai, 2009- The article *a summary of the Shakespeare's problems*, In it most of the problems deals with the death of Shakespeare, the date 23 April 1616 passed away but unknown to the public for six year. When the younger dramatist Francis Beaumont passed away the same year and he got much honouras, when he was buried Westminster Abey but Shakespeare was buried at Stratford. He remain unknown for six years therefore the literary publication was late for 7 years after his death.

7. David Barnett-1990 The article *Resisting the Revolution: Heiner Muller's Hamlet/Machine at the Deutsches Theaters, Berlin*. Investigate the production conception, its rehearsal and its execution against the backdrop of the fall of the wall. In this article Muller's interpretation put Hamlet Machine beyond the reach of an allegorical reading. *Hamlet* could have merely illustrated with the strategies staging and design were adoptedes for frustration as well.


9. J E Howard, -2013 The book *Shakespeare reproduced* in this book history and ideology described from different position, each makes clear that if the Shakesperean text exist in history and the historical movements arise for determinate historical and political resons and sustaining the appositional events.

10. C. Kahn 2013 In the article, *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds and Women*, This article has been about asking questions on the events of Romam Shakespearean texts and also asking different question about war like movement and the bloodshed of the Shakespearean texts themselves in the context as well as to the range of literary and historical materials from the age.

11. A.T.Vaughan -1993, The book *Shakespear's Calibn; A cultural history*, In this topic history provides the cultural appearence when the study one historical personage or one literary character is indeed a fruitful focus of enquiry. A reader still might wonder why we picked Caliban history. The Tempest unlike many plays has long attracted to analise the intentions of
Shakespeare's age.

12. **A Gurr** - 1996, The book, *The Shakespearean playing companies*, it has been mentioned the comment on the whole bunch of the artistic structure of the dramatic art, there are theatrical companies as to theater history of 16th and 17th century in England.

13. **Lowis Montrose** - 1996, the article, *Shakespeare and the cultural politics of the Elizabethan Theatre* provide us the relationship between William Stracery's account of the Bermuda shipwreck and Shakespeare's, The Tempest required much so as to confer upon them the currency's liquidify from Shakshperian Negotiations.

14. **S J Greenblatt, S Greenblatt: 1988, Shekshperean Negotiations: The Circulation of social energy in Renaissance England**, in this journal the crowd that gathers together in public play space. The Shakesperean theatre depends upon the moral dignity and the death of the culture for which the author wrote is the historical consequence, however author promoter the history with social energy in the age of Renaissance and that one of the center of our literary interest in Shakeshpere are better to investigate.

15. **W Hazlitt** - 1845, in this book, *Characters of Shakespeare's plays*, the author displays the action is biggest to act or omission that is, He himself was the poet what the painter of still life is to the painter of hisory. As usual as we think the contrary is true, and we might cite in proof of this remark not only the present play, but the tragedy of Lear, of Romeo and Juliet, of Macebth, Of Othello, even of Hamlet, and of other plays of less to its comparision.

16. **R.B Pierce** - 1971, *Shakespere's history plays; The family and the state*, in this book the family and the state is seeing Shakespeare's histories as orthodox is no longer itself orthodox, as perhaps it was during first years after John Dover Wilson's. The Fortune of Falstaff and above all.

17. **D.B Hamilton** - 1992, *Shakespeare and the politics of Protestant England*, covers the political plays, English history and criticism. The title of the book is placing of King John before The Comedy of Errors and Twelth night, and also to illustrate, by way of historical play and prior to the political plays.
18. **F.A. Yates** - 2013, in this book, *Shakespeare's last plays*, there are the approaches certainly does not explain Shakespeare nor the last plays; Many episodes suggest of new routes, Hither to more or less suspected into Shakespearean problems through which these problems might eventually be given a new historical dimension in the last plays.

19. **D Bevington** - 1992, in this book, *The complete work of Shakespeare*, Newyork; *Harpercolins the author states about* the historical period and difficulty with the language of Shakespeare's plays. A richly illustrated general introduction offers insight into Shekespeare's England and background is the literary and cultural context in which Shakespeare wrote and produced plays.

20. **K. S. Rothwe** - 2004, the article *A history of Shakespeare on screen; a century of film and television gives the idea of the* translation and transformation of a conventional stage set, a first step in the evolution of the Shakespeare movie from the ages shows its dynamics good start. A history of Shakespearean screw Thomous Edison's plan for a " coin operated entertainment machine focurse s the renewal of age.

21. **E Pecher** - 1987, the article *The new historicism and its Discontains; Politicizing Renaissance Drama*, *Publication of modernal language association*. It is a skeptical reference to modern critics who tends to assume that Shakespearean self consciousnes have seen as the rewiting or restructuraltion of a prior historical or ideological petrearcan lyrics, and Shakespeare's histories.

22. **Norwich** - 2001, the book *Shakespeare's Kings; The Great and History of England in the middle ages 1337-1485*, sources are being taken in a sparking, fast - paced narrative, esteemed historisan John Julius Norwich Chronicles are the turbulent events of fourteenth and fifteenth century England that inspires Shakespeare's history plays. It was a time of uncertainty and incessant warfare.

23. **R.H Wells** - 1985, in this book *Taylor & Francis*, *The fortunes of Tilyard and Twentieth century critical debate on Shakespeare's hisorical plays*, the Wells has explained the critical debate made by Tilyard on Shakespeare’s plays based on History.

24. **Henery Elliot Malden and V.P.R Hist.S** - 2006, *The Article Shakespeare as an historian, Cambridge University press*, covers the advantage in dealing with such a subject as well as a
writer labours who ventures to bring forward common sows and modern instances. His serious investigation are of obscure historical fact reviews of the social questions of the part, which have honourably distinguished the last few years of the society’s labours. This is a familiar topic turns a brief treatment of large matter is possible.

25. Roger A. Shiner - 2009, volume/48/issue 02/ Cambridge University press. the article showing, saying and jumping, conveys the authors technical skills as a dramatist what he perceived and praised by Tom Stoppand, his Wit, seriousness, mastery of parody and pasticle, impressive control of dramatic structure and his place of modern drama from these qualities which philosophy and drama are akin.

26. Anmitage - 1896, Volume-10, The article transactions of the Royal Historical society, covers the English and Roman Theatre designs of the historical play. The rational behind production was set out in the programme, The objection in this production has been to find setting and costumes which would be free historical and decorative to clear the story. There are seem to present the places and the characters very simple and basic manner, for the play.D.J. Snider: The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 1877, Shakespeare to certain degree wrote his Historical plays backward. The epoch nearest to its time to his predictions; the blood, fate and swift retribution. So often seen in the wars of the roses fascinated youthful mind of the.

27. R. Poisson; Duke university press 1965, the book, Shakespeare Historical plays, the current emphasis upon the playwrites departures from his resources inorder to invent characters and dramatic scene. In so far as they are made at the expense of the moral or political theme in the source, do something to dispel the idea.


29. R. Chapman in 1950, the book, The wheel of fortune in Shakespeare’s Historical plays. A I ME significances of the Shakespeare’s plays on subject of English History X have received considerable attainment in recent criticism. It is recognized that they have an importance beyond
their place in the cannon of Shakespearean Drama.

30. **I Ribbner**, 1965, the book, *English history play in the age of Shakespeare* is one of the leading books in its field. The English history plays in the age of Shakespeare. He represents the most comprehensive account available in English historical background events.

31. **Irvin Leigh Matus, New York, St Mortins press**, 1991. The article, *Shakespeare, the living record*, denotes the most part an elaborate exercise in barbolatry there is a tour covers the English country side and the metropolis racing the steps which the dramatist may have taken during the life time. There are records of Shakespeare with activities as an actor, playwright and theatrical shareholder in London and in tour, its perished church town hall, in yard, and the lane in the way is visited and seen towards the stories he hold.

32. **Anselm Heinrich-2007**, the article “ *It is Germany where he truly lives*”, Nazi claims on Shakespearean Drama, that the Nazis tried to claim shakespeare as a Germanic playwrite has been well documented that historian have claimed that their success was rather limited. This article attempts a revaluation and shows it is substantial and official efforts realizing it were considerable and assortes that plays Otthello, Antany and Cleopatrs and The Merchant of Venice were sublimed.

33. **Udo O. H Jung-2011**, the article, *the Afterlives of Shakespeare and Mitton on the streets of the English speaking world;* why is Milton more popular as a name of street signs inteuurnationally than Shakespeare provides the enthusiastic testimonies to Shakespeare's greatness.Recently B.B.C’s Radio listeners voted him Man of the Millennium and he ousted dignitaries like Churchill and Newton, the leading role in British history. However it is to be discovered the context of cultural memory studies and attempt to introduce students.


35. **Garry Taylor and Jowett, Oxford clarendon press, 1993**, the article *Shakespeare reshaped 1606-1623* provides the of play such as Measure of Measure, seeking to reverse what they regard as the betrayal of Shakespeare’s own textual intentions by functionaries in the theatre
of the time. It is seen that an exhaustive examination of suspected interpolations in Measure for Measure invite us to imagine the outlines of the action.

36. Andrew Spong, vol-24 Issue 2, 1999 – The article Bad Habits, Bad Quartos and the myth of the origin in the editing of Shakespeare, is the latest contribution to containing debate on the subject of Shakespeare in relation to new conception of historical events and to the developing contribution of performance studies are recommended. There are the interest looks in the challenge of historical materialism of the Elizabethan theatre.

37. Paul Raffield and Gary Datt, Oxford, 2008- The article Shakespeare and Law provides that Shakespeare are of the longest bequests in the entire testament. It is also suggesting that Collins was trusted friend. It so happens that records have survived for consistency court that sat in standford upon Avon during part of Shakespeare’s life in the town. This document popularly known as ‘Bawdy Court’ register.

1.5 Objectives

The present research work incorporates the following objectives

1. To trace the history of England and Rome through Shakespeare's historical plays.

2. To trace Shakespeare's artistic treatment of history through his history plays.

3. To evaluate Shakespeare as a historical play - Write

4. To find out how Shakespeare gives unusual artistic treatment to bare historical facts.

5. To trace Shakespeare's work through plays by giving importance to the characters

1.6. Methodology

To fulfill the objectives as dimensioned above the researcher will study closely Shakespeare's history plays based on English as well Roman history, and for this purpose, the researcher will take a review of concerned historical periods.

The plays which are not purely based on historical themes and facts, but directly or indirectly refer some historical events will also be studied.
This will be a comprehensive study of Shakespeare's major portion of dramatic creation.

1.7 Organization of the work

This research will be organized in following order. There will be total Six Chapters which are as Follows :-

i) Introduction.

ii) A Review of English & Roman History plays

   A) Review of English History from 1200 A.D. to 1550 A.D.

   B) A Review of Roman History from 1st century B.C. to 2nd century A.D.

iii) Shakespeare's English Historical plays.

iv) Shakespeare's Roman Historical plays.

v) Shakespeare's other plays (Pseudo history).

vi) Summary & Conclusion

The chapterwise, topicwise and subtopicwise organization of the entire research work is being discussed in detail as below :- Chapter I entitles ‘introduction’, in which Names of the twentyone plays of Shakespeare are being listed. These plays are subdivided into 3 groups i.e. his English historical plays which are ten in number, four Roman Historical plays and remaining seven are pseudohistorical and they are either tragedies or comedies. In the subtopic of thematic structure broad themes of the plays are being discussed. Shakespeare has attempted to inspire the nationalistic spirit of the English people. Shakespeare’s main base while writing the plays is to discuss human action, right or wrong or through action or inaction how the man achieves success or failure in one’s life. The play writer has portrayed the behavior of kings, nobles and even of common citizens. In the subtopic of Review of literature, 37 Author’s Contribution on Shakespear’s work has been reviewed. Right from W. Hazlitt’s work of 1845 upto the recent work of the year 2013 of J. E. Howard and C Kahn has been narrated in this subtopic. The other major Authors whose work has reviewed mainly are David Armitage, Neely, Keys, Peter Hinton, A. T. Vaughan, A Gurr, R. B. Pierce, D. B. Hamilton, Rotwe and above all the master mind on
shakespear’s contribution F. A. Yates (2013), Shakespeare’s last plays has been discussed in detail. In the whole research work, F. A. Yates contribution became the inspiring source for the researcher to complete this thesis. For any research work, objectives are being decided in the beginning. Likewise, here 5 major objectives were decided and researcher has reached successfully to complete his predetermined objectives. The subtopic of this chapter i.e. methodology speaks about the various methods by which the researcher reached to his goal. Here researcher has considered different historical events and historical periods and groups of periods narrated by Shakespeare in his twenty one plays. The use of study material is the last subtopic of this chapter in which the references are being given of Holinshed’s chronicles, Daniels history and the most important is Plutarch’s contribution to the Roman history.

Chapter II entitles ‘A review of English and Roman history’. Here the researcher has subdivided this chapter into two subheads and they are i) A review of English history from 1200 A. D. to 1520 A.D. in which subtopics are Periods and Dates, Types of histories, Royal History of England, The Growth of English Drama and Shakespeare’s dramatic Art. The second subpart of this chapter includes review of Roman history from 1st century B.C. to 2 A. D. and Roman’s impact on Britain and how Shakespeare has given the treatment to Roman history.

In the beginning of this chapter different definitions of ‘History’ are being discussed. “Histories are written in the life blood of real civilization” (Trevelyan, 1955). The historical significance as varied to time and place best be stewed into different vessels like political science, philosophy and art, make them flourish and prosper taking myriad sharps and filaments.

For any historical statements periods and Dates are badly needed. Histories are either religious (Biblical) and Secular, Civil and Royal and even sociological too. Royal histories which are major sources of Shakespeare’s plays are being read with great interest as they deal with war and valour, revenge and rebel crown and throne.

The Royal history of England in fact was become a source of perennial interest to Shakespeare which witnessed the glories of Royal England from Henry II of 1154 to 1603 when queen of England, the Elizabeth ruled. In the subtopic of Growth of English Drama, the running review is being taken from folk Dances, seasonal festivals upto the English drama of fifteenth
The real English Drama with its complete form appears first in England during 14th and 15th century. The notable English play writers were John Lily, Robert Greene, Thomas Kyd, Christopher Morlowe and many more. The 16th century England witnessed the prosperous reign of Queen Elizabeth and the brilliant star who loomed over the Carmine horizon of England and He was WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. He with his magic touch made the English Drama a divine art. His greatness lies in the fact that whenever drama is being performed in the Globe theatre, the people of England bow before him and pay him tribute for his dramatic genius. In the world’s literature, he has his own position and unique contribution as a ‘literary genre’. No Dramatist on the earth, even today has enjoyed the everlasting popularity as Shakespeare has. He has referred the chronicles of historians like Hall, Holinshed and John Stow and given his own treatment to convert the real history into plays forms. The alteration and modifications made are of his own but he has not moulded the real history and kept it as it is. Of course, he wrote historical plays for stage and not for the readers of any age, because “The taste of pudding is not in its recipe, it is rather in the eating of pudding”. In this part, the detailed study of Shakespeare’s modifications and variations in different plays of history of England is made one by one from 1H6 to Henry VIII.

In the 2nd half of this chapter, the review of Roman history from 1st century B. C. to 2nd century A. D. (of 300 years) has been taken. The history of Rome city is being discussed in detail. The Julius Caesars life sketch has been discussed in detail. The Caesar who has defeated Pompey at Pharsahis in Greece is discussed, lastly when Brutus came to strike his blow, Caeser uttered “U too, my, son” (you too, “Brutus”). In this part the account is taken from Augustus of 1 A.D. to 2 A.D. when there was development in the government and law in Rome. There was a great impact of Rome on Britain. “The Romans gave glory to Briton and not Briton to the Romans”. There was a great impact of Roman culture on English culture. England has been Romanized. While writing four major plays on Roman histories (Julius Caesar, Timon of Athens, Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus), Shakespeare has extracted the history from Plutarch’s and Sir Thomas North’s contribution and given his own treatment. At the end of this chapter, Roman plays are being compared with English plays on the line of Shakespearian treatment.
Chapter III entitles “Shakespeare’s English Historical plays” and in this chapter, ten plays are being studied and they are 1H6, 2H6, 3H6, Richard III, King John, Richard II, 1H4, 2H4, Henry V and Henry VIII. The organization of this chapter and succeeding two chapters (i.e. chapter IV and V) is the same. Each play is discussed in the subtopic with introduction in which the name of the play, period of its writing and time of its stage, the major sources used by Shakespeare and his treatment is discussed in length. The names of the characters and story of the play in nutshell in being given. The major characters and notable events are being discussed and at the end of each subtopic (i.e. at the end of each play), the conclusion is being given in which how Shakespeare has given his own treatment to bring the history of that play on stage is being discussed at length.

In subtopic, **Henry VI**th **part I** (1590), the Talbot’s heroism, Iron Lady of France– Joan La Pucelle, The Margaret Suffolk episode, Loss of France and Ruin of England and the Hero of the play that is King Henry VI – A Pawn on the chess board is being discussed. The theme of the play is the loss of France and the ruin of England and outbreak of civil wars between the roses. The drama 1H6 ends in the downfall of England. This play is often described as Talbot’s play, Talbot is a leader of English Army; Shakespeare picturised Talbot as a symbol of Goodness. Shakespeare has introduced a lady character in the drama with courage and daring having heavenly blessings. She is Joan La Pucelle, often described as Joan of Arc, the daughter of a shepherded. Shakespeare has made her entry in this play in a very dramatic way. The English French conflict lastly results in the marriage of Margaret and King Henry VI, but in this marriage, the real hero is Suffolk. Suffolk wants to control England through Margaret thinking that Margaret will accept him as her lover. In reality, the this part of drama ends with the Suffolk’s statements “Margaret shall how be queen and rule the king, but I will rule both her, the king and realm. This is one of the best historical plays based on English History.

The second part of the **King Henry VI** th play has been prepared by Shakespeare in the year 1590-91. Actually, there is criticism on the writing of this part. It is accepted that Greene Marlowe’s ‘contention’ is the source of this play. The play bills exhibited in London street in 1595 gives such evidence…. “The fifth part of the contention betwixt the two famous Houtes of York and Lancaster… One of the important feature of this play is the depth and skill of Author’s
depicting political manoeuvring. More Acts of Trachery and deceit are found in this play. In this play the character of Gloucester as , real protector of King is being displayed. Plantagenet’s aggression and ambition, Margaret’s villianity and Warwick’s diplomacy is thoroughly studied. In this play, Gloucester’s qualities are personal and symbolic. At first, he seems to be the real protector of Civil law but then he is vicarious victim of the same. Gloucester was tried before the king but unfortunately he was murdered, and his murder was a political butchery. Jack Cade’s character in this part is of a rebellion leader. Jack Cade enters in England with giving ridiculous premises to the English people. “These shall be no money, all shall eat and drink on my score”- Cade was crooked and over ambitious and lastly killed by a gardener of Kent. The another important character is Richard, the Duke of York who is described as ambitious aggressor. He was willing to obtain the throne of England as his right. Of course, lastly York wins the battle and the Clifford was died. Earl of Warwick was a great noble rebel. Shakespeare pictured Warwick exactly as that of king maker. Warwick always back York. Earl of Warwick was militarily powerful and was a perfect diplomat. In sum, Shakespeare through 2H6 has really acted as Dramatic Historian. This play is the classical example of battle, History of England during Henry sixth regime. The last part of Henry VI has been written by Shakespeare as a separate play which is named as third part of Henry the Sixth.

The third part of the drama, King Henry Sixth, whose authorship as per critics, is not of Shakeapeare. The original writer is Greene Marlowe and his “True Tragedy of Richard” is the mirror image of 3H6. The play bill circulated in London street in 1595 gives support to this statement. The three parts of H6 are perfectly serially linked and having perfect continuation. The whole subject of 3H6 is focused around- 1) Death of good king 2) true tragedie of Richard, the Duke of York 3) Ambitious queen Margarette and 4) Richard III as Senecan, villain and avenger.

King Henry’s helpless is observed throughout the play. King is frustrated by his kingship and wish to be free from his life. He is surrounded by mistrust and treason. Lastly, he becomes hermit but lastly stabbed. He lastly utters “ O, God, forgive my sins and pardon thee. The war between two roses brings the end of Richard Plantagenet who is a Duke of York. Queen Margarette arranges the “Mock Coronation ceremony of paper crown” on the head of the York.
Here, there are two possibilities “Death or Crown.” In this part, Queen Margarete, as portrayed by Shakespeare, is the Ambitious mother of Prince Edward who is the son of Henry Sixth. She is even painted as perfect diplomat. She is more clever in diplomacy but lastly sent back to France. Richard III, as portrayed by the author is a senecan villain as avenger and instigator of most bloody deeds. He has secret mission to ascend the throne of England. Richard is totally cruel. His cruelty is observed when he kills the prince. Richard becomes a sympathetic brother of the Clarence in the scene of dying Edward. Thus Richard is perfectly an actor who was changing his colours like chamelion. Lastly, Richard was succeeded in achieving the crown. In this part, Shakespeare has perfectly described the war between roses. Tragedy and death of bad villain i. e. York of Richard and Tragedy and death of good king, Henry Sixth, The two opposite events and characters are lucidly displayed through English History in this drama and hence 3H6 has been included in the tragedy category of Shakespeare’s whole work. With these 3 parts, the life and death of Henry Sixth is perfectly described by this great Author of England.

Shakespeare’s English Historical play, Richard III was published in 1597 with the title “The tragedy of Richard the third, with into the landing of Erl Richmond and the Battle at Bosworth field. Shakespeare has accepted this drama as a tragedy of crucked king with Royal sins, murder of brother Clarence and Richard III nephews. This is the whole cause of kings detested life and ultimately most deserved death at the hand of Earl of Richmond at the Battlefield of Bosworth. As quoted by Shakespear, this drama is the historical tragedy. Here tragedy meets with History and vice versa. To understand this play, one has to distinguish tragedy from history and the fundamental distinction between these two geners are private virtues and public virtues. Tragedy deals with an ethical elements while History deals with political elements. The killing of the little prince in the tower is itself the private sin which can only be avenged by the God. King Richard was a cold blooded murderer. He is designated by Shakespeare as a Royal Criminal. He has not hesitated in murdering Edward, Clarence two young princes and Lady Anne.

Shakespeare, through this play has put forward one universal Moral principle and that is ‘Wages of sin is death’. Reward for sin is only death and nothing else. For Richard’s highest sins, the highest punishment God has bestowed on him is death. In hand to hand combat,
Richmond kills Richard. Shakespeare portrayed the passion of ambition that caused Richard to sin and passion of fear that the same time punished him for his sins and forced him to wade still further in blood. In this drama, the meanings of perjury and murder are being explained. Both are the moral sins which Richard has committed. Actually both are crimes of varying degrees. ‘Despair and Die’ verses ‘live and flourish’ are the two messages given by the writer through this play. Richmond receives the blessings as ‘live and flourish’ while cruel Richard gets the curses as ‘Despair and die’. Eight ghosts enters in tents of Richard and Richmond on the battlefield In the night and gives the messages. The Good always recive blessings while evil always get curses. Despair and die versus lives and flourish analogy is the valuable contribution pf Shakespeare to this drama. Lastly Richard asks for a horse and he was ready to give his whole kingdom to that person who will spare him the horse. Here horse is a symbol of being alive. He puts his whole kingdom at stake in returns of horse. Thus Richard III is one of the best tragedical history not only of England’s king but of whole England.

Shakespeare’s famous play king John is based on the troublesome reign of king John of England (from Holinshed) and Kynge John (John Bale). This play was written in 1591. The play opens with the claim made by France King to king John that Arthur is the real successor after John’s father’s death. Arthur’s claim is perfect and John is a usurper. The play ends with Bastard’s prophesies that England will be the independent Sovereign state, safe in our hands! “This England never did, nor never shall, lie at the proud foot of a conqueror… come the three corners of the worlds in arms and we shall shock them… if England to itself do rest but true.”

Shakespears treatment to the English History can well be studied through various characters. Arthurs – the blinding scene is a memorable creation of the writer. There is also a clash between actual illegitimacy and legal legitimacy. Shakespeare painted King John as man, greedy of power and reptile in craft for selfish ends of striking murder. To other side, he is at the head of England and being head, he is to be supported not for his own sake but for country’s. Arthur was the son of King John’s elder brother. He was captured at the age of 15, and was sentenced to remove his eyes. The blinding scene of a lovable boy has been pitiably painted in this drama. And the dialogues between Arthur and the Hubert who brings rope and hot iron roads is very touching to everybody’s mind. “Do not blind me, I will sit as quite as a lamb”.
Lastly, Hubart decides not to hurt him but in the attempt of escape from the walls of the castle, Arthur falls on the stones below and dies. This blinding scene is a memorable creation of the Shakespeare and one has to read in the original language by every sensitive reader of the work. In this play, Shakespeare has put forward a legal question about interpretation of will and legal legitimacy and actual illegitimacy. Bastards character is nothing but a legal clash between actual illegitimacy and legal legitimacy. The difference between testament and will is discussed though it is having similar meanings in the present law references. This drama is a perfect combination of historical facts and ideas. The message given by the Arthur that England will be the Sovereign independent state and no other country in this world can move its independence. It is true still today and hence King John play became very much popular in England in those days.

Historical drama, the Richard II, is a delicious mixture of facts and faction, reality and invention. Richard II cannot be dated perfectly but its first show was arranged on 7th Feb, 1601. The material of the drama is taken almost entirely from Raphael Holinshed’s Chronicle with some additional hints from Stowe. This play is a perfect reflection of the patriotism as during writer’s life span, there was nationalism and patriotism in England. In this play, any English King is not the hero but whole England herself is the real hero. All the characters of this play, show loving devotion to their country and total welfare of England. The King, the Nobles and even the Commoners love their country. The nationalism is well reflected through the characters of Richard II, the king, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, Henry Bolinbroke, Duke of Hereford and even thorough common man like Gardener.

When king Richard came back to England, he saluted the country in the sense of patriotism. He stood upon his kingdom with weeping tears. “I weep for joy to stand upon my kingdom once again. Dear Earth, I do Salute thee with my hand”. His love for his country is more sentimental.

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster is also having the spring of patriotism. England herself speaks through the mouth of Gaunt. King is God’s deputy. Gaunt’s dying speech and advice to king Richard is a masterpiece which contains every sense of patriotism and every cause producing it. “England is the precious stone installed in the Silver Sea”. Shakespeare has
beautifully painted the glorious history and beautiful Geography of England through the mouthpiece of Gaunt. Thus Shakeapeare was really the great historian and Geographer of England of those days.

Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk expressed his love for English language, his mother tongue, the English tongue and he regrets that he would never been able to pronounce it . Shakespear’s love towards English as a mother tongue is a remarkable example for those people who hate their mother tongue and run after foreign languages.

Henry Bolingbroke is the son of John of Gaunt, He is the Duke of Hereford. He is a true Englishman . He is a true lover of his country . Against all his other ambitions, his love and lust towards England ranks top. His patriotism is more practical and not sentimental or emotional as that of Richard . His feelings are silent and speechless. He is as patriotic as his father, John of Gaunt. The soil of England is a sacred ground full of sweet soil. The soil is as sweet as of Honey and Sugar. My England is my mother and nurse . I am true Englishman, born Englishman.

Shakespeare has painted the historical and political picture of the then England in the very poetic way for which we have to salute him.

King Henry IV is an epic drama and the creation of dramatic epic is the noblest achievement of Shakespeare’s genius. The play as a whole, both part I and II embodies national ideas and ideals. It dramatizes, the contemporary Tudor view of History. The 1H4 might have been written in the year 1596. In quarto might have published in 1598. For thus drama, the writer found his materials from Holinshed’s Chronicle which he followed totally with errors also. For comic scenes, he draw hints from an old play. Historical and comic scenes alternate without apparent connection and the presence of Falstaff, an offspring of the dramatic imagination amidst the figures of national to tradition is a puzzling problem.

The first part of King Henry IV thus presents the revolt of Hotspur against the king which ends with his defeat and death in the battle of Shrewsbury. This part embodies Elizabethan conception of History. The King is supposed to be God’s Deputy on Earth and usurpation of his crown, amounts to sin. The life of Henry IV is a world of violence, bloodshed and disorder.
Sir John Falstaff is a man of witty and cause of will. His bulk, his actions, lies, wit, his behavior produce all the humour in this play. He dominates the comic plot so much that we really forget the other characters. Shakespeare’s own audience adored him and the queen herself is said to have asked Shakespeare to write a play showing Falstaff in love. He was very fat. “He is that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak bag of guts, that roasted Manistee ox with pudding in his belley.

Hotspur i.e. Henry Percy is the son of Earl of Northamburland. Hotspur’s anger and rage are uncontrollable and he expends enormous energy, which he could have used to advantage in battle. He is the bad example of statesmanship and he makes no pretention of being a stateman.

The basis of 1H4 is in history. The author has treated history imaginary and creatively. He has condensed some events and modified some facts in order to give greater intensity and effectiveness. Again, Shakespeare has probed into the political philosophy. The references to the religion are Superficial. In the whole range of English literature, Sir John Falstaff’s character is most popular, while Hotspur is the man of impulsive rashness. He is straightforward and bold and rough. He is the Hero of the feudal stage. In sum, 1H4 is the unique creation of the Shakespeare.

The second Part of the Henry IV (2H4) is in continuation with 1H4. Both the parts of the play have the same theme viz. the revolt of the barons against king. Hotspur dies at end of 1H4, still rebellions are alive and hence king Henry becomes again active and he sends his army against rebellions dividing the same into two groups. Till King’s reign was troubled with prolonged civil war, his peace of mind and physical health was disturbed, Anxiety and overwork ruin his health. He suffered by insomnia and lastly died. The play ends with Henry V as the new King and with this, new era in English History has started.

Life in writer’s historical plays is not a mystery but a known fact and the forces beyond man’s control. Life in them is a known fact. There is a direct relationship of cause and effect between man’s character and his success or failure in life. Certain qualities are needed for success, their absence lends to failure and their presence to the achievement of desired end.
As a Historical play, this presents hostility and fight between two groups of rebels and the royaltyest. Rebels are disunited and this is the main cause of their defeat. Rebel’s are selfish and insincere and incapacitate to understand the other side of the real motive. King’s supporter’s are superior to rebels, both in arms and in the employment of guide. The Kings own qualities coupled with the ability and faithfulness of his allies lead ultimately to his success.

Humour in Shakespeare’s play is featured by universal sympathy, infinite tolerance and unique catholicity. Variety is important feature of Humour. This humour ranges from sheer buffoonery, meant to please the groundlings, to the subjects and most refined wit. It ranges from dogberrry and verges on one side to the fool in king Lear on the other side. Force, satire, wit and irony all are found in Shakespeare’s humour. The variety is found for example dialogue between pistol and chief justice in Act I Scene II and in Act II Scene IV. The Humour is also found on the battlefield Scene in Act IV Scene III. In this play, the serious and comic scenes have common characters.

The character of King Henry IV in this part is portrayed of his late years of his lifespan. King was troubled by Civil war and rebellions aggression and due to tension at last, king dies and a new era of peace and power draws with the accession of Prince Henry on the Royal seat of England. In sum, both the parts of H4 play are the real historical plays written by William Shakeapeare.

The Author’s Henry Vth is a poetic drama of History of Battle between France and England. Author’s main aim is to describe the tale of a glorious hour in the History of England of a great battle won against gigantic odds by the heroism of the people and of a great war leader. This play consists of more than 37 characters, but notable are 12 in number. King Henry V of England, claims Kingship of France as per succession and declares war against France and begins preparation. Soldiers and Common people with full patriotism advances towards France and the Battle of Agincourt starts and treaty was signed. King Henry woos princes Katherine whom according to the treaty, he is to marry. The French queen Isabel pronounces a blessing upon Royal wedding. The whole play is focused around king Henry’s heroism.
King Henry V\textsuperscript{th} play is totally a poetic historical drama. A poetic presentation is displayed in prologue and in chorus. Here chorus gives account of connecting events, describes changes of scene and makes general and descriptive remarks over person, scenes and events. In this play, Shakespeare has portrayed Henry as a Hero. Henry V is really a man of action, scholar, statesman, politician and philosopher and above all, he is a leader of man and a soldier. Henry is ambitious and brave and bold. He takes quick decisions. He constantly surprises his enemies by The rapidity of his advances.

The legal claims of England over France territory have been thoroughly discussed in this play; There a debate over salic law and succession. The claim of English King on the throne of France had become a national matter. The national feeling was that France is a part of British regime. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the whole Church supported king and even money was given by the church in support to claim on France. The people of England sold their pastures and buy the weapons to fight against France and Henry marched on August 9, 1415 towards Harfleur.

The drama is full of patriotism of English people; who were loyal to the king and nation. Our love of her honour in the past, Our faith in her as the refuge of our children and of liberty in the future love, affections and loyalty towards their motherland has given them victory in the battle of Agincourt. It is not the quantity but the quality which always gives the success and victory is the important message given in this play by Shakespeare.

Henry VIII\textsuperscript{th} is the Shakespears last history play which starts from king John (1199) and ends with Henry VIII (1613) and rises up to recent times for queen Elizabeth. This drama though written in joint authorship of Mr. John Fletcher and William Shakespeare was the product of 1613 and its first show was arranged in Globe theatre on 29-06-1613, the day on which, while the play was on stage, the whole Globe theatre was burned due to canon’s fire. No doubt the famous history of life and death of Henry VIII has many sources of Holinshed’s Chronicle of England. Shakespeare possibly collaborated in the composition of the two noble kinsmen. He touched the political and religious issue of the then England. Henry VIII is the straight history play with the novelty of its political and social atmosphere.
There is a tragedy of Good woman Katherine, fall of wolsey and a birth of Elizabeth, the unspotted Lily, Cardinal Wolsey (Butcher’s son) is the archbishop of York. Wolsey is crafty, ambitious and arrogant. While Queen Katherine is the wife of king Henry, afterwards divorced and lastly died requesting husband to make her cremation by him. In this play, in the beginning, Katherine is presented happy and virtuous, confident of the Kings attention, free spoken and very much alive, but lastly she falls, being a daughter of Spain king, she demands Pope’s order.

The entire credit goes to Mr. John Fletcher for writing the Act V Scene V entitled” Cranmmer’s prophecy, Anne’s is coronation and birth and Baptism of newly born child. The whole scene (V/V)is in the poetic form and one cannot ignore this dramatic Literature which every literature lover must read. Wilson Knight calls the whole scene as Spiritual music, while R. A. Foake calls it is the splendid procession in the play. “ Sun never sets on English Empire.” Queen Elizabeth, the phoenix, the virgin, unspotted Lily having the virtues of peace, plenty love, truth and terror” wherever the bright Sun of heaven shall shine, ‘His (England) honour and the greatness of his name shall be. Mr. John Fletcher requires all heavenly blessings for blessing the queen Elizabeth thereupon fantastic prophecy through the voice of Cranmmer. The masterpiece of the play, Henry VIII lies in this writing of Mr. John Fletcher. The prophecy of Cranmmer became true and same daughter became the queen Elizabeth in whose kingship, England become Sovereign over the land and Sea of the world. The Art, Literature, poetry, wealth flourish in her regime and England totally prosper. Thus, Henry VIII is the masterpiece in Shakespeare’s series of dramas.

Chapter IV entitles “Shakespeare’s Roman Historical plays and in this chapter four plays are being studied and they are: Julius Caesar, Timon of Athens, Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus. On the Elizabethan stage, the play ‘Julius Caesar’ is an admirable example of author’s faculty of transforming Roman History into drama, prose into poetry without changing the value of the story. This play was not published during Author’s lifetime but in 1623. Plutarch’s writing is the major source of the play. The central idea of the play is based on 1) It is political play and 2) It is the tragedy of character. Here, there is decay of republicanism in Rome and the rise of caesarism. The another idea of the drama is “Good cannot come out of Evil”. Brutus is noble, wise, valiant and honest but he made shipwreck of his life by great error. He
committed crime to prevent as he thought, a greater crime and by so doing, he brought upon himself and his country greater evils than those he had sought to avert.

The famous character of Brutus is world know by his deeds and Caesar said “Eu Tu Brute” and then fall Caesar. When the dearest friend becomes culprit, this phrase is universally used even today. Another character in this play is of Antony. He was presumed to be the sportsman who turned into statesman. Antony was a man of great ability but of little fixity of purpose. He was resourceful and could yield to circumstances. Antony’s great funeral speech is one of the finest specimens of eloquence to be found in English language. “Bloody treason flourished over us” is the known statement of Antony in this play. Antony by his speech could turn the audience to his side and citizens said “Most noble Caesar! We’ll revenge his death; we’ll burn his body in the holy place and with the brands fire, the traitors houses.

The title of the play has received a major criticism; because Caesar appeared only in the first half of the play. It is said that “This play has no Hero at all, and if there are heroes, they are more than one, the show of Caesar is observed Completely from the beginning to the end of the play. In sum, Julius Caesar is one of the best Roman Historical play ever written by Shakespeare. For this, at least, we have to salute the writer for his best artistic work.

The Timon of Athens is another Roman play written by Shakespeare in the year 1607. There is a disputed critics about the authorship of Shakespeare for Timon of Athens. This play may be conveniently included in the Plutarch Series of plays. The story of this play is very simple. Rich man of Athens, the Timon, spends his wealth and even everything on his friends and then becomes insolvent. In spite of repeated warnings by his manager, Flavius, he overlooks and lastly became poor, then he realizes that friends were there in the events of happiness and not in sorrows, nobody helps Timon and lastly he dies in his poverty on the sea shore. The proverb is ‘A friend in need is a friend indeed and Timon is exception to it. No friend helps him and he dies in misery.

Timon’s views of friendship are rather unnatural and unpractical. He was ready to deal his whole kingdom to his friends. He was never sending the man with empty hands who comes
to him with some monetary demand. All friends are my brothers and they are the real partners in my fortune.

When his wealth has lost, his breath has gone. Steward warned Timon about his income and expenditure, but Timon did not listen to him and more trusted on his untrusted friends. Lastly, to teach the last lesson to his friends, Timon arranges a dinner in such a way as to convince them that they should help him. He serves only Luke warm water and smoke and thus drives out all his friends, but now, he is totally bankrupt and decided to go in caves in the sea shore. Timon expresses his frustration with the words “Sick of the false world”. Timon calls selfish world as ‘false world’ and he does not wish to love such selfish world and wish to die. And he constructs his over graveyard on the sea shore. The Timon’s everlasting mansion-Graves the men’s work. His death is the last beautiful mansion ever he constructed. He, in sheer frustration, lastly utters that what man lastly gets? His own death – every man’s last gain is his own death. Death is the valuable gift of everyman and beautiful graves are his best architects and construction. It is perfectly the universal truth that death and the only death is the last gift every man gets from the God. Shakespeare has put this universal truth through the mouth of Timons

This play did not get much popularity. This tragedy is not circumstantial but brought by the Hero himself, because of his unwisenedess and foolish thinking and hence Timon of Athens is most ordinary play, ever written by Shakespeare.

The Antony and Cleopatra, the world famous love story is of the year 1607 Antony and Cleopatra seem such great lovers, that they are inseparably destined for each other, but each is at the same time, the most dangerous mate to each other. No one could have accomplished him better than each did for other. Possibly this fact may have existed in history at any rate, Shakespeare has made the most of it and emphasized their mutually destructive powers to the utmost.

Take out love from any literature and it is sure to fall to pieces. Even since the dawn of poetry, love has been its dominant theme. It was love that made the composition of Kalidas, Meghdoot possible at all. It is love that makes the world go around. In this play. A woman who is neither chaste nor even beautiful ruins a valiant soldier who is one of those that rule a big
empire makes him false to his responsibilities and at last, hires him into a clumsy death, with kingdom crashing into wars over her worthlessness.

Shakespeare’s greatest achievement is the creation of the character of Cleopatra and perhaps even Shakespeare has no more marvelous creation that she, or one in which the nature that inspires and the genius that reveals are so fused in the ideal truth. Campbell described Shakespeare’s Cleopatra as – “He paints her as if the gypsy herself had cast her spell over him and given her own witchcraft to his pencil. Cleopatra is the incarnate poetry of life without duty, glorified by beauty and grace, of impulse without principle ennobled by culture and intellect. Cleopatra as described by Antony “The serpent of the old Nile”. Cleopatra never grows old, even cynical Enobarbus proclaims: “Age cannot wither her”, Even when she has taken poison and because of which she had died, her beauty even after her death is so charming that she may again kill some other Antony. “Age cannot wither her nor custom stale. Her infinite variety: other woman cloy, The appetites they feed but she makes hungry where she most satisfies, For vilest things, became themselves in her, that the holy priests, bless her when she is riggish.

Gothe was critic of Germany and deeply interested in Shakespeare’s literature and poetry. His remark provides a deep insight into the character and nature of this play. He said that in this play, it is proclaimed with thousand tongues that self indulgence and achievements are incompatible. Antony’s philosophy might be “It is better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all”.

One of the best contribution to the Roman Histories by Shakespeare is his play- Antony and Cleopatra. This love story have received the best response from young generation from all corners of the world. We have to salute Shakespeare for such an immemorable work.

The Roman Historical play, Coriolanus was not published during Shakespeare’s lifetime. The text of the play is difficult, containing many errors and has undergone many amendments. The source of Coriolanus is Sir Thomas North’s Translation of Plutarch lives. Coriolanus, as hero of the play, is an ideal of self centered power. He is the victim of inordinate pride, which causes the ruin of his life, The play opens with a strife between patricians and the plebeians at Rome. Then Coriolanus proves his worth as a great soldier in the fight against volsces. He is a
patrician and as such, is justify superior to common people. Such is his contention. The plebeians are’ a common cry of curs’ whose breath Coriolanus hates.

In this play, there is a clash between rich and poor, ruler and ruled, have and have-nots, nobles and commons, aristocrats and democrates, patricians and plebeians. The common people of the Rome think about rateable distribution of wealth which is concentrated in the hands of nobles, the patricians.’”Hunger broke stonewalls, A tale of rebel against belley “ – Gods sent not corn for the rich men only and the common citizens announced the revolt against Senators.

Coriolanus, no doubt is the hero of the play, but we must know his mother first. Volumnia, ‘the life of Rome’ typifies all that was best and noblest in the Roman Matron during the heroic period of Rome’s History. She is a woman of the kind to which a nation owes more than to its armies, who possessing lofty ideal of patriotism, a towering spirit and perennial flow of energy, will, if she beget a family, creates heroes. Volumnia, the great hearted mother, the patrician lady implies the devotion to his son rather than to her dead husband has kept her from forming new ties. Volumnia, has one dire feeling and that is devotion to her country. This is the first and last and noblest thing in her. She wishes him to serve the motherland. It is the main spring of her patrician partisanship. She honestly believes that the nobles alone are fit to steer Rome to safety and honour.

The scene in which (V/III) Volumnia, the mother diplomatically persuades her son to withdraw his army of volsces from the gates of Rome is a masterpiece written by Shakespeare in this play. Mother’s unselfish devotion to her country’s Sovereignty is perfectly picturised. Mothers diplomacy- “Be blest for making up this peace” is the masterpiece scene of this play.

The play, Coriolanus is having a story of delicious and lovable bond between mother and son, still the play is not popular as the other great tragedies of the author. Besides, Hero and mother, other characters are not impressive. In spite of some lacunas, the play depicts the Roman History as it is and hence if somebody willing to study Roman History in poetic way, he has to read Shakespeare’s real historical Roman play, the Coriolanus.

Chapter V entitles ‘Shakespeare’s other plays (Psuedo History) consists of seven plays and they are king Lear, Macbeth, Cymbeline, Hamlet, Tempest, Othello and Winter’s Tale.
**King Lear** is unique among the tragedies of Shakespeare. His tragedy is ‘the apotheosis of the human spirit and this play is not exception to it. Amongst the major sources of this play, Shakespeare has chosen Holinshed’s chronicles and old play entitled “King Lear and his three daughters”, while storm scenes and Lear’s madness are his own creations. Shakespeare has transformed crude melodrama into stirring and moving tragedy, one of the greatest tragedies of the world. Goneril, Regan and Cordelia are King’s three daughters. Due to Cordelia’s straightforwardness, King gets hurt and makes her deprived of his property. Later Goneril and Regan refuses to maintain the father. King Lear dies in tragedy.

The Cordelia’s love and affection towards father, Kent’s honesty, braveness and loyalty, fool’s loving nature and Edgar’s goodness and filial loyalty is well reflected in this play.

There is trio of madness (Trinity of madness) in this play. King Lear, Edgar and fool are three mad persons, each mad is pretending to be mad in his own way. Madness of each is different in nature, purpose and in degrees from each other. All the three serve to intensify the tragic of gloom and pathos, not only of the stupendous storm scenes but of whole play.

In this play, the King is the unfortunate and helpless father who wear rags or bear bags. Father that wear rags, do make their children blind but father that bear bags shall see their children kind. When the parents are poverty sticken, their children ignore them but when they carry bags (of gold), they find their children kind to them. “Wear rags or bear bags,” the perfect rhythm used by the Shakespeare. The tendency of children towards parents is shown here. When father becomes poor, children hate him, they ignore him. The same father, when he is rich, children treat him kindly. Goneril and Regan did not treat their father when he is in misery. Regan is too cruel towards King. Lear Lastly King Lear gets calmness and peace when he enters in the cave, and a great prayer gives him energy.

King Lear, sitting on the wheel of fire, comes out with tragic end. The drama is unique in the Shakespears tragedies. The love, affection and care towards children is seen nicely through king’s behavior but his daughters are not ideal, as they are, the representatives of new young generation.
Macbeth is probably the best known Shakespear’s tragedies. Universally, it represents the spectacle of representative man and woman embarking on the sea of sins and error and encountering a shipwreck not only as individuals, but as husband and wife. Macbeth is thus a tragedy of the marriage relation as well as of the state. The first guilt of Macbeth and the Lady, ultimately separates them and they perish as individuals, each alone. Macbeth is a drama with the theme “Crime does not pay.” The major and perhaps the early source of Macbeth, is Raphael Holinshed’s chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland (1577). The whole play is full of witchcraft, supernatural prophecy, suspense, magic blood, treachery and horror dances of three witch sisters. In this, two characters are prominent 1) Macbeth who qualifies both as Hero and villain and 2) Lady Macbeth, the wife, who has greatest ambition, Supremecy of will, cruelty and paucity of intellect. She has a strange kind of fascination of character. Her death is sudden and self inflicted. Only in death, could she find relief and rest.

Macbeth is the tragedy of ambition. Ambition is the prime motive force which prompts Macbeth and lady Macbeth to bring about the central deed. Macbeth is the personification of over ambition. It is a selfish ambition for his passion to own what is rightfully not his, While lady Macbeth is a symbol of selfless Ambition. Her ambition is more dreadful, more forceful for it is the creation of love and misplaced sacrifice.

Role of supernatural prophecies is superb and horrible part of this play. The supernatural adds much to the horror and dread of the play. Witches are the images of evils. Their dreadful rituals of black magic in the dark caverns are repulsive. All main scenes are occurring at night. Duncan is murdered at 2° clock in night, while Banquo was also murdered in the late night.

The reversal of moral values in another feature. Here ‘fair is foul’ and ‘foul is fair’. Here, there a battle between light and dark, Good and evil, fair and foul, fortunate and unfortunate, Auspicious and inauspicious, Right and wrong, lucky and unlucky and so on.

The sleep walking scene of Lady Macbeth in deep asleep in the midnight with lighted candle in her hand is best peace of Horror Show – ‘but, damned spot – one, two’. She rubs her hands to wipe off the blood stains is realy horrorsome. For this atleast, one has to see this play on the stage.
The tragedy became world popular and the play has received the great acceptance on all drama stages of the world.

In the Dramatic romance series, Shakespeare has first written “Cymbeline” in 1609. The sources which writer has gathered were many. Holinshed’s chronicles, folk tales, French stories etc were mainly used. Major scenes with Iachimo are taken from French stories. Herford has described Cymbeline as a political history, Novalistic romance and fairly love are interwoven in the motley fabric of the play.

Shakespeare is the pioneer of the Romantic drama. In Greek Sense, the romantic drama can neither the tragedy nor comedy’. Author has beautifully mingled both tragic and comic elements together. Like a true artist, he has worked with opposite and blinded them together harmoniously. He blends, together all contrarities, nature and art, poetry and prose, seriousness and morthrecollection and anticipation, “Spirituality and sensuality, terrestrial and celestical life and death”.

The following characters and incidences are noteworthy in this play. They are 1) Imogen- A delicious mixture of Juliet, Helen, Isabel, Viola, and Portia. 2) Iachimo – A rogue villain 3) Posthumus – The suspicious gentleman of low thinking 4) Imogen’s bed chamber scene 5) Philarmonous interpretation of Jupiter’s Prophecy.

Imogen, the lady of independent character, as she marries posthumus in opposition of her father’s will, she replied in her defense, that she chose an eagle and did avoid a puttock (kite). Barnad shaw, described Imogen as idiotic paragon of virtue Imogen has sharp intelligence and correct judgement. Her beauty accomplishment and wisdom is even admired by Cloten.

Iachimo, is a rogue villain and is responsible for an unhappiness between husband and wife. He has devilish brain of wickedness. He is always after any woman. Iachimo is jealous of the goodness of others. He is cunning but lastly, he has repented of his crime.

Imogen’s bed chamber scene is Shakespeare’s poetic romanticism. Shakespeare has used all the lovely words in describing the beauty of Imogen. Imogen can be compared with the wife of the Yaksha (the Servant of Kuber, Gods treasurer) In the Kalidasa’s ‘Meghdoot’ of (The cloud messenger), the great epic in Sanskrit literature and hence Kalidas’s work in Sanskrit can
be compared with Shakespeare’s in English. Hence “Shakespeare is the Kalidas of British Kingdom, while Kalidas is the Shakespeare of Indian Kingdom”.

Philarmomous interpretation of Jupiter’s prophecy is the masterpiece of denouement as quoted by Herford, the interpretation of Jupiter’s prophecy for the treaty of England and Rome in the masterpiece. The original prophecy in the word’s of Shakespeare has no match in any language and in any poetry any where in the world, We have to salute the Author for such a wonderful literature created by him.

Shakespeare’s Hamlet is a tragedy of tragedies. Hamlet is the best Known character in the theatre of the world. Title page of the first quarto of 1603 was “The tragical Historyof Hamlet – prince of Denmark”. Here is the tragedy of a very keen and imaginative mind haunted and finally dominated by the very thoughts that it was sought.

The story of the Hamlet is found in Spanish tragedy (Kyd) and ur hamlet (Armin)and also in the folk literature of Iceland, Ireland and Denmark. Danish Historian, Saxo Grammaticus, Histor a Danica, was of much help. Some of the stories are from francis de Belleforest” Histories tragiques.”

The chief characters are the weak, willed and melancholic Hamlet, the wicked Claudius, the frail Gertrude, the foolish Polonius, the fiery and cunning Laerates, and the dall like Ophelia, all from a pitiful medlery well suited to work out the main theme, while the involuntary killing of Polonius precipitates, the idea of revenge of a headlong course of tragedy.

Hamlet is a noble prince and is tender hearted though brave. He is imaginative almost to morbidity and is so full of melancholy that at his young age, he is a weary of the world. He has strong sense of duty and willingly takes up the task of revenge, but he is too weak – willed for the strong action for which that duty calls and is irresolute, so that too long he entertain only thoughts, doubts and words.

Ophelia is a fair, doll like creature who is not distinguished by any individual traits of character, except great and unswearing duty and obedience. Much has been written about Hamlet than about any other single character in literature in the history of the world, S. T. Coleridge designated Hamlet as philosopher. Andrew Cecil Bradley studied Hamlet in Subjective and
philosophical way, Ernos Johes has analysed Hamlet according to ‘freud’ theory. All the views reflect that everybody is analyzing Hamlet as per their own views. What Shakespeare was thinking while portraying the image of Hamlet, still remains unanswered. Only Shakespeare would have analysed the character perfectly and nobody else.

“To be or not to be”: “that is the question, whether ‘tis nobler is in the mind to suffer’ Here to be means to exist, to live, Here Hamlet’s thinking is not for him but for whole mankind and for this question he himself has given the answer and that is ‘let Be ‘i. e. watch and act according to circumstances. The ‘Rest is Silence’ and ‘Rediness is all’, are the two philosophies of death. A small sparrow cannot die, if there is no wish of the God of it’s death. We must welcome death, when it comes. We must be ready and everything after death is silence. In sum, Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet’ is a masterpiece amongst his whole literature, which he has given to the world’s readers.

The last play of the Shakespeare, The tempest, most probably written by him in 1611 and published in 1623. There are various views about the title of the play. It was Tempest (violent storm or cyclone) which brought father and daughter on an isolated island. It is said that Tempest can be the tempest of passion and revenge which was there for 12 years in the mind of Prospero. The whole play is on a remote, unknown, uninhabited and enchanting island which either might be in between Malta and Coast of Africa or in the North Atlantic Ocean near ‘Bermuda Triangle’.

The Tempst is romantic in substance and clerical in form. It is a tale of magic and enchantment. Play characters are unique, strange and fascinating. Forgiveness and reconciliation is the central theme of the play. It seems that Tempest is the autobiography of Shakespear. The Hero of the play i. e. prospero is the mirror image of Shakespeare. The use of good and reforming magic and the Miranda, the innocent child of the nature are the notable features of this play.

After writing this play, Shakespear is willing to leave London and go to his native place i.e. Milan. Actually, Milan is nothing but my Stratford. Stratford is Shakespear’s home. He utter’s goodbye to all by giving his daughter (Miranda) i. e. drama as to the young generation of
which Ferdinand is the symbole. Even though, there are much similarities between the life and character of Prospero and Shakespeare, we must keep in mind Dr. Garnet’s statement – “Prospero is not Shakespeare, but the play is in a certain measure auto-biographical. Prospero cannot be wholly identified with Shakespeare. It may be called as ‘Replica’ of Shakespeare.

The Tempest is a drama of magic and enchantment. Magical atmosphere is typical. In this play, this atmosphere is very strange and closely associated with “Renaissance magic” – Magic as an intellectual system of the universe. Magic as a moral and reforming involvement and uniting opposing religious opinions. Here the magic is white magic and not the black magic. Prospero uses it benevolently for his own good and for the good of the others and not to harm anyone.

Miranda is the only female character in this play. She is romantic heroine. She lives on an unmanned island with her father. She is emotional girl with natural beauty. She is indeed the innocent child of nature and can be compared with Milton’s Eve and Wordsworth’s Lucy. Mrs. James calls her a woman walking on the earth in her mortal loveliness. By this play, Shakespeare says good bye to his loving listeners and readers of London and of Globe theatre.

Shakespeare wrote ‘Othello’ in the year 1603 in the name of ‘The tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice. In Othello, there is internal conflict which is in between Othello and his hated and overwhelming love for Desdemona. Here, in Othello, the story is a crude love – hated and revenge results in tragic gradeur and makes Othello one of the finest tragedies in world literature.

The main source of Othello is the story of the Moor of Venice in Giraldi Cinthoids novella ‘Hecatommithi’. Few other source are from the anthropology, the sulphermires, the poetic sea etc. Shakespeare has modified, no doubt, the original story in several ways in order to suit his own dramatic conception.

Desdemona is a virtuous lady, falls in love with Othello, considering his virtues. Father was not happy with her love. Which resulted into marriage. Being General of Venice, Othello was sent to Cyprus. Iago, the villain prepares a play of accusing Desdemona with a charge of Adultery and Othello’s mind was spoiled. Desdemona’s Handkerchief in Cassio’s hand,
confirms her adultery and Othello kills her. After knowing the truth, he stabs Iago and himself makes a suicide. This is the simple but most touching story of the play.

Various researches like Mr. Raleigh, A. C. Bradley, and Wilson Knight have criticized the character of Othello. Desdemona has been beautifully describe as female counterpart of Christ. She is young, tender, shy and never bold. She has witnessed only two males. One is her father and second is her husband. Irving Ribner observed that just as Iago stands for jealousy, Desdemona stands for virtue of love. Desdemona is all bounty, all trust and all forgiveness. In the perfection of her love, she reflects the love of Christ for man. She stands both for self sacrifice and for redemption.

Iago is often described as Director of the tragedy. He is expert puppet master, he holds the strongs of all and makes them dance of his tunes. Iago has no fixed motive but he hunts and looks for motives to execute his next move. His villainty does not even spare his wife Emilia, to whom, he stabs. Iago cannot think of love above sexual appetite nor does he believes that men and women exist in any other relationship than only sexual desire.

The role of Handkerchief even though, it is the symbol of love acts, as a turning point in changing love into cruelty which ended in tragedy. Thus, Othello is one of the finest tragedies in the world literature.

The last play selected by the researcher for his study is Winter’s Tale. Which is the Romantic drama written by Shakespeare in 1610. The drama presents a cycle of prosperity, destruction and regeneration. The winter’s tale is a fantasy, where things happen which will generally not happen in normal life. Characters are of mixed nature. The title of the play is Catchy. It is a story told during long winter by the side of burning fire by an old woman to anybody, who is willing to listen. Such stories are fantasies and cannot be tested on the proof of reality. They are imaginary, fantastic. Improbable, unbelievable but interesting and pleasant in the sense of Romance.

The major story is based on Robert Green’s novel, Pondosto. The important characters in the play are Leonates, who is the puppet of jealousy, Hermoine is the queenliest of women and
womanliest of queens. Perdita is the beautiful princess and Daffodile in Nature’s paradise. While Paulina is the faithfull, bold ambassador of Hermoine.

Perdita, the daughter of Leonates and hermoine, born in prison and brought up in shephard’s family in Bohemia. Perdita’s romantic discovery, pastoral life, romantic courtship by Florizel and her reunion with her parents are the important scenes in this play. She is remarkably beautiful and as beautiful as the’ Daffodil in the paradise of Nature’. There are 5 songs in this play, which are sung at the sheep shearing ceremony. All these songs are essential to bring relief in the tense act among the play. In sum, Winter’s Tale is the master piece in the poetic historical pseudo dramas and throughout the world, Winter’s Tale of Shakespeare is much more popular.
1.8. Study Material : The following study material is being used for the research


ii. Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland by Rahael Holinshe

iii. Daniel's History of the Civil wars.

iv. Shakespeare's Historical play and other Plays.

v. Criticism

1. Dowden : Shakespeare His mind and Art.


3. E.M.W. Tillyard : Shakespeare's History plays

4. S.C. Sen Gupta : Shakespeare's Historical plays


6. Traversi Derek : Shakespeare from Richard II to Henry V

7. Knight willson : i) the Imperial theme

ii) the crown of life

8. Willson Dower : The Fortunes of Falstaff
