PREFACE

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the tragedies of Shakespeare constitute a very rich and important part of the heritage of world literature. Obviously, therefore, no literature of any other author, age or clime has been as much commented upon as the tragedies of Shakespeare. Among his tragedies, again, the ones to have received the greatest critical attention have been the plays Hamlet, King Lear, Othello and Macbeth customarily acclaimed as the four major tragedies of Shakespeare. These plays have been so much commented upon that any new effort to deal with them inevitably involves a herculean task. Yet the effort continues to study the plays in the light of new perspectives and meanings. Hence, this effort to study the plays from an angle that, we believe, has not been used extensively by any scholar till date. The aim of the present thesis then is to study the ending of the tragedies of Shakespeare with a view to discovering a coherent pattern. We hope that our study will throw some light on the understanding of the plays as a coherent entity, which may be called “Shakespearean Tragedy.”

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Finally, it is to the memory of my father who had been a constant source of encouragement and inspiration from the beginning of this venture and who had passed away suddenly during the course of my work and to my mother who too is no more in the land of the living that I dedicate this thesis.

Santam Sarma

Dated: 29.3.97

(GAUTAM SARMA)