THE TREATMENT OF SELF-REALIZATION IN SHAKESPEARE'S HAPPY COMEDIES

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Chapter I

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

A human being depends upon other individuals as well as social conditions for his knowledge, expression, development, and preservation. The same human individual possesses an ability to develop himself through the encounters with others as well as through his own experiences. As a result, this individual appears a part of the humanity of the entire world.

Being a social individual, man tries to acquire things by trying to discriminate between how he behaves and how other individuals do. He seeks experience through persistent processes of trials and errors, mistakings and misunderstandings, while debating what is wisdom and what is folly. As a result, the self of the person will find a new course of action which, when discovered, shall constitute a modification of his former deeds in the direction of the deeds of other models, joining in the harmony of the world.

A person grows, however, by means of encounters with other individuals. The result is that the newly developed individual, the life of his inner self, experiences a series of generative processes which develop into self-realization or self-knowledge which leads a disillusioned individual into the consciousness of his real existence. Self-knowledge implies that naivety, deception, and illusion have been abandoned.

The world of the disillusioned person is usually limited and narrow, for he lives in the 'now' and the 'here' where his experiences retain constant concern for many things. His world again finds its varying centre in his own being. His experience expands through his encounters with others, and these encounters lead him to the discovery of his inner self. As an inevitable outcome, truth finds continual confirmation in the person in the fact that it is always reality which best lends itself to the participant himself, his purposes, and his activities. Therefore, there is a constant reaction between his internal reality and the external reality of the world. In short, each maintains the other. If the individual must investigate experience as he finds it, then its actual course inevitably generates his self-centered understanding of the nature of reality, and provides it with a foundation which has a consistent, though implicit integrity of its own, attuned to the individual himself and thus to society as a whole. As a result, experiences become organized into a real world of self-realization, where laws and conditions might be built upon reflections, but which can never properly be fulfilled by them. Whenever reflections exhibit conflict or contradiction, harmony can be restored by experiences being brought into direct contact, but only through their becoming indirectly related to the achievement of the

person's self-realization.

The treatment of the theme of the self-realization of an individual as a member of society is commonplace in literature as well as in life itself. In real life, man is sometimes unable to see through the outward appearances of his surroundings or even of his own character, and therefore such an individual remains self-deceived unless he recognizes truth in life and attains self-realization--a situation that is not only particularly characteristic of William Shakespeare's tragedies, but also is equally true of his comedies. This same theme has always been one of the major themes of drama. It appears in Greek and Roman tragedies, and in medieval allegorical literary works, as well as in more recent literature.

Among the best of the Renaissance dramatists who were concerned with the treatment of self-realization of characters in drama is William Shakespeare who successfully treated this theme not only in his tragedies, but also in his comedies as well.

To understand Shakespeare's outlook on life, it is essential to understand his special treatment of comedy. To Shakespeare, comedy seems to be a group of happenings that begin with sadness and end in happiness. Although it is implicit throughout his plays, Shakespeare tries to show order being restored by social correction, not by direct satire or criticism. However, unlike Ben Jonson

and other dramatists of this period, Shakespeare's concern was not with different kinds of comedy, but rather with plots involving an increasingly complex depth of characterization. Shakespeare would not understand comedy to be only a direct imitation of life or an imitation of the errors of people. It appears natural to Shakespeare that the dramatic material which he used for artistic purpose, in order to entertain his audience, should be material which embodied social criticism of follies and vices, together with critical attitudes of various ideals and ways of life.

Shakespeare's comedies are critical and comprehensive, for the material he uses involves an essential part of its being in the weighing and assessing of different values and ways of life. One of his main concerns is the problem of the individual versus society, the problem of the character being torn between his passion and his reason, his faults and his discovery of self-realization.

Shakespeare, as a great dramatist, would not permit this main understanding or the concept of the conflict of the individual to pass without impressing some of his philosophical ideas which are presented in his plays.

He believed that the individual is an actor who willingly takes part in the game of life in which one is held responsible for his own happiness in life. What a character presents himself to be in society is sometimes

opposed to what he really is behind a social mask.

Another thing beyond human society which is directly responsible for the solving of the complications of the character is Nature or Fortune.

Shakespeare neither seems to blame the social system as he knows it for the misfortunes shown in his comedies, nor does he suggest that social arrangements as such are self-sufficient. He stresses the individual himself and his education, showing that life itself is a dramatic or comic performance. A character who has fulfilled his potentialities is normally idealized by Shakespeare as a person who enjoys a free choice in love, friendships, and his relationships with others such as Bassanio of The Merchant of Venice and Orlando in As You Like It. There is a balance between passion and reason, especially in love as a basis for a happy marriage, and there is a person's truth and sincerity for the well-being of his country as well.

Shakespeare's first comedies show the writer's inner struggles for adjustment and his attempts to master the writing of comedy. In his middle or mature comedies, he clearly tries to abandon blind romance and mere conventionality in love. Shakespeare describes romantic love in these happy comedies as courtly love as understood by the Elizabethan society and practised in Renaissance literature. He shows great mastery in combining the

material of the classical traditions with the culture of his own society that served his purpose in displaying his points of view concerning the individual's love and life.

From his range of experience in his early comedies, Shakespeare tried to look for something deeper in his mature comedies, something more alluring and more comprehensive in describing his characters; hence, in these later plays wit becomes a major characteristic.

By employing wit, Shakespeare shows individuals in love as not only witty lovers, but also as lovers who are wits. For Shakespeare, the character is not a typed character, but rather is one of true flesh and blood. In that aspect, the best of his characters who are witty and subtle are the female characters who really understand love as being beholders and partakers themselves of love. They criticize and acknowledge in themselves the absurdities which they rebuke in others. These characters help other individuals to realize themselves and admit the ridiculousness of their position.

On the other hand, there stands the role of the witty fool which Shakespeare greatly emphasized in order to resolve the plays in the sense in which he understands it; for him it is "Better a witty fool than a foolish wit" (I. v. 34).[1] So the sequence of events of his comedies

[1] William Shakespeare, "Twelfth Night," in The Arden Shakespeare, ed. J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1975), p. 23.

comes to be a course of sharp dialogue between Wit and Folly or those characters who allegorically represent wit, women and fools, and those who are indulged in folly as characters of illusion.

As a matter of fact, part of Shakespeare's success in his happy comedies rests upon the methods that he is employing -- the use of subordinate material to reflect exaggerations of his characters' actions through mocking, parody, or caricature. His characterizations become as vivid and lively as those in his other masterpieces.

Northrop Frye remarks that comedy, unlike tragedy, "is designed not to condemn evil, but to ridicule a lack of self-knowledge."[2] Frye describes the characters of illusions as

> People who are in some kind of mental bondage, who are helplessly driven by ruling passions, neurotic compulsions, social rituals and selfishness. The miser, the hypochondriac, the hypocrite, the pedant, the snob: these are humours; people who do not fully know what they are doing, who are slaves to a predictable self-imposed pattern of behavior.[3]

To a certain degree, one might say that Frye's idea of comedy is one of identity, not a comedy of action. In other words, this same drama to which Frye is referring

[2] Northrop Frye, "The Argument of Comedy," Essays in Shakespearean Criticism, ed. James Calderwood and Harold Toliver (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 51.

[3] Ibid., p. 51.

is a comedy where the focus arises from characters rather than from action. There is a significant development of the characters instead of their being manipulated into situations becoming merely humorous as a result of mistaken identity or misunderstanding.

The same kind of comedy is being stressed by Shakespeare in his mature, happy comedies where the emphasis is laid upon identification of the character rather than on physical action: a deep revelation of character occurs in one way or another. Among these comedies, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, and Twelfth Night show the characters inhabiting a stage-world in which folly is a reality. These characters are involved in appearances and pretenses through which the spectators see into these foundations of the characters' personality which are completely human. They are portrayed on the level of transformation; they undergo experiences, like those of the great tragic heroes, which effect a basic transformation of values and ideals.

This can be clearly seen in the characters Antonio, Bassanio, and Jessica in the play The Merchant of Venice, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter II

The Merchant of Venice

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

It is essential for a better understanding of Shakespeare to realize the fact that one of his most fundamental concerns in playwrighting is the portraying of his characters as completely and as near to life as his greatness and versatility would permit him.

The Merchant of Venice is a play which is apt to be seriously misunderstood by modern audiences if they do not bear in mind Shakespeare's emphasis on the character portrayals of the merchant Antonio, his friend Bassanio and the escaped daughter Jessica.

One unmistakable quality of the play is that its characters are capable of many interpretations. They are complex creations, perhaps the most realistic comic characters by Shakespeare to the time of the writing of this play.

In these characters Shakespeare is actually creating a series of scenes which manipulate the spectators' attitudes towards an individual character by progressively revealing the deceptions concealed within the individual himself.

What is the play about? One might say it is about the qualities of ideal and true love or the conflict between justice and mercy or the importance of making a good choice. At any rate, it is obvious that these themes of the play are being moulded by the talent of Shakespeare in creating

characters such as those of The Merchant of Venice in which the spectators can find credibility as if these figures were actual living human beings, true-to-life in a world of men and women.

The play opens with the rich, well-to-do merchant Antonio who is lovable, kind, and good. Antonio is presented with two other happy companions who seem to be in contrast to him since he says that he suffers from melancholy. In spite of the fact that good fortune should characterize Antonio, he seems sad, disturbed, and unbalanced. Shakespeare intended to present the uneasy mind of the merchant to show another side to his character. This melancholia is meant to show a character being divided between passion and reason, a theme always repeated in Shakespeare's plays and characterized within the Elizabethan mind. This unknown source of sadness is an indication mainly emphasized by Shakespeare to reveal an unbalanced or deceived personality. So this sadness, whose origins are neither from falling in love nor from thinking about the problem, is a melancholy passed off by the statement: "Let us say you are sad because you are not merry" (I. i. 48-49).[1]

N.B.: Lines and references to this play are taken from J. R. Brown's Arden edition. References will be consistent throughout this thesis.

[1] J. R. Brown, ed., The Merchant of Venice, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen and Company and Harvard University Press, 1961).

This commentary characterizes the mind of the merchant:

> Gra. They lose it that do buy it with much care,--
> Believe me you are marvellously chang'd.
> Ant. I hold the world but as the world Gratiano,
> A state, where every man must play a part,
> And mine a sad one.
> (I. i. 75-79)

In the opening lines, he admits this disturbance of which he is much aware: it worries him, but he can not find any cause for this problem. What he really discovers is that he has to learn something from it and that he must cure himself: "I have much ado to know myself" (I. i. 7). What is he to know? Why is he the rich and prosperous, yet sad merchant and why is he accompanied by joyful friends who are poor?

If anybody would consider Antonio's melancholy, he would understand that this merchant lacks something more important than 'love' and 'business.' He lacks a simple, well balanced character whose world is that of reality and not of illusion.

The motive for this melancholy becomes clear as soon as Bassanio, "the most noble kinsman" (I. i. 57) of Antonio, meets him alone. Antonio claims that he loves his friend very deeply and honestly, but what good is the friendship which is based on material sacrifice? In other words, when Gratiano asks help, Antonio tells him that he would offer his purse in the first place, and then his person:

> My purse, my person, my extremest means
> Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.
> (I. i. 138-139)

Antonio is so much involved with his argosies that he has left no place for the compensation of other matters in his life. His business belongs to one who is oblivious to everything but the materialistic mercantile life and way of thinking. When Bassanio wishes to have 'the means' (I. i. 173) to win Portia, Antonio answers him in a typical manner of a merchant who can express himself only in terms of money:

> Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea,
> Neither have I money, nor commodity
> To raise a present sum.
> (I. i. 177-179)

Antonio's great friendship with Bassanio is expressed through mercantile imagery. Money is understood to be the only vehicle for the expression of friendship in a place like Venice. If this is the case with Antonio's loving a dear friend, how about his treating a Machiavellian Jew who himself suffers disturbances in behavior due to the material world in which he is living? Throughout the play, money, in the vision of Shylock, is only seen as gold that can be put to work to produce more gold. To Antonio, money is only seen as a means that can be worked out to express friendship.

Antonio goes to Shylock to solve this problem of loaning money, but what does he gain? He loses everything

and is even about to lose his life. This happens when Bassanio wants to have some money with which to woo Portia. All that Antonio had to do was to get a loan from his enemy, the Jew, who hardly considered him a human being or a friend. The first words Antonio utters are

> Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow
> By taking nor by giving of excess,
> Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
> I'll break a custom:
> (I. iii. 56-59)

No matter what the result of this loan is going to be, Antonio is blind to all its consequences. His expression in asking, accepting, or signing the bond gives a good idea of the merchant who is unable to understand the world except in terms of business and currency. When accepting the loan on interest, he commits an illegal and immoral act. Although it was a custom of Venetian merchants to practice usury on lending money, at that time it was against the law. Antonio suffers henceforth because he had signed the bond by which he had risked his fortune and his life. Sigurd Burckhardt says the following concerning Antonio's serious mistake in relation to Shylock:

> The Jew draws his eloquence and dignity
> from raising to the level of principle
> something which by its very nature seems to
> deny principle: use. Antonio's most serious
> mistake--or rather failure of imagination--
> is that he cannot conceive of this possibility.
> He takes a fearful risk for Bassanio, but

> he cannot claim full credit for it, because he does not know what he is risking.[2]

After all, Antonio is blamed for short sightedness or an inability to understand the real value of things: first, in being a spendthrift; and second, with his relation to Bassanio and Shylock. He is a prosperous merchant as his poor but happy friends, Salerio and Solario, claim. But at the time when Bassanio has asked for the three thousand ducats, Antonio says that he does not have any money to offer to his best friend. Antonio himself knows well that "his fortune is in the sea" (I. i. 177). His friend Salerio as well as his enemy Shylock describes him vividly. Shylock says:

> Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies, I understand moreover upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath squand'red abroad.
> (I. iii. 15-19)

Although Antonio is an intelligent person, his mind fails to foresee the results of his present behavior because he only lives for today and not for tomorrow. Otherwise, he would have thought of his future and would have saved some of the money he had been earning for many years. This idea is not only applied to his private life, but also to his relationship with his dearest friend Bassanio. Antonio

[2] Sigurd Burckhardt, "The Merchant of Venice: The Gentle Bond," Essays in Shakespearean Criticism, ed. by James L. Calderwood and Harold E. Toliver (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 241.

could not perceive what real friendship is. To him, it is comprehended through either getting money or by breaking the law. Antonio does not know what to give nor how to give to a fellow human. He offers Bassanio his purse which is of no value and he does not sacrifice his person or his heart. Such actions are self-deceiving by Antonio who has to pay his debts in the long series of incidents with which he is confronted.

He shows also great deficiency and shortsightedness with his relationships with Shylock. He ignores Antonio's self-expression in terms of money as most merchants do. Despite this, he reveals a great hatred of Shylock as a person. Recalling Antonio's words, Shylock says that once Antonio had called him 'dog' (III. iii. 6) and mocked him, and that is the reason which causes Shylock to lend him the money. Antonio arouses the spirit of hatred and revenge in order to remind Shylock what should be done if he breaks the bond:

> If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
> As to thy friends, for when did friendship take
> A breed for barren metal of his friend?
> But lend it rather to thine enemy,
> Who if he break, thou may'st with better face
> Exact the penalty.
>
> (I. iii. 127-132)

So blind was Antonio's persuasion that he did not only risk his life, but also he was deceived enough to think of Shylock as having real 'kindness' (I. iii. 139) after he had agreed to lend him the money and to forget the grudge Shylock had

for him. However, when deciding to meet Shylock to receive the money, Bassanio tells Antonio that he does not like fair faces and false hearts, and he is conscious of Shylock's feelings about Antonio. As a result, Antonio is fascinated by the sudden conversion of his enemy's mind and says:

> Hie thee gentle Jew.
> The Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind.
> (I. iii. 173-4)

Antonio misunderstands himself in his treatment of Shylock, the reason being that he hates him because he is a Jew and therefore an enemy. On this point, Sigurd Burckhardt says of Antonio:

> He is sure that the Jew wants to buy something, to make some kind of profit, and pleasantly surprised that the profit is to be of so "gentle" (gentile) a kind; he cannot conceive that a greedy usurer would risk three thousand ducats for a profitless piece of carrion flesh. His too fastidious generosity prevents him from reckoning with the generosity of hatred.[3]

His fault is that he was judging things through their appearances rather than their realities. Like others, Antonio submits to the literal side of civil laws of government rather than to the potentiality of human laws or the laws of nature. In other words, civil law is not generally corrupt, but whenever it does injustice to innocent people like Antonio, then people must follow the laws of nature where each one governs himself according to

[3] Burckhardt, p. 241.

how his own deeds affect humanity as a whole. So, Antonio, despite feeling the evil of Shylock and thus of his bond, ignores everything around him and sticks himself to his enemy's bond, taking it for granted and accepting it:

> . . . but since he stands obdurate,
> And that no lawful means can carry me
> Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
> My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
> To suffer with a quietness of spirit,
> The very tyranny and rage of his.
> (IV. i. 8-13)

His illusion prevented him from seeing the truth behind this law and how it should be applied in legal as well as in religious terms. Antonio mentions that the Duke can not 'deny the course of law' (III. iii. 26) of Venice which is only applied to the Venetians and not to strangers living there. In religious terms, too, he explains the illegality of taking interest in loaning although he himself never recognizes its outcomes.

Of what had preceded, it seems clear that although Antonio is a good hearted man, he is also a self-deceived person who suffers from disturbances of character. This is shown as a conflict within himself (melancholia) or as a struggle between his misunderstanding of friendship and enmity. But since the human being is able to regenerate due to certain experiences or incidents that face him, one can then show that Antonio is capable of recovering himself and attaining a self-realization through personal experiences which help him to overcome his

deceptions.

At the very beginning of the play, Antonio suffers from a melancholy of which he does not know the cause. As mentioned before, any reader or spectator would recognize that the merchant's illness is a foreshadowing of the tragic events which are to follow. Fortune, symbolized by his loss in the shipwreck, was a first shock which became a stepping stone as a means to overcome his sadness. Salerio once hoped "the full stop" (III. i. 15) to come and save Antonio's ill management in business and that it might prove the end of his losses (III. i. 18). To his bankruptcy Antonio reacted saying,

> I am a tainted wether of the flock,
> Meetest for death,--the weakest kind of fruit
> Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
> (IV. i. 114-116)

At that time, Antonio expressed himself either through his mercantile attitudes or by his shortsightedness. After he signed the bond and after the demand of Shylock for his flesh, his imprisonment and his trial revealed the real meaning of losing everything and even one's own life. He came to know himself as seen in his own words: "I have much ado to know myself" (I. i. 7). He was able to know that sadness is not merely a mask someone wears whenever he wishes. It is explained as the loss or the absence of happiness for which he did not know how to compensate. At the trial he seems patient and calm, opposed to the rage,

tyranny, and fury of Shylock. After that, his personality begins to reveal itself as a balanced one due to his recognition that life is full of so many combinations of good and bad things that one should not always be pessimistic and melancholic for the sake of it. Antonio's illusion is being uncovered, and this is shown in his attitude to the world of money in which he was living or in the so called mercantile way of thinking. He is not interpreting human relationships in terms of his 'purse' anymore. This is best revealed in his friendship with Bassanio, in his relationship to Portia and in his contacts with Shylock.

In the trial scene Antonio shows great love and sacrifice for his dear friend Bassanio who was ready to lose his life for his sake without any complaints. Antonio sent Bassanio an emotional letter explaining how Antonio had lost his ships and estates. In this letter Antonio reveals himself to be a sincere friend to Bassanio who is able to bear the calamities of fortune with a deep heart:

> Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit, and (since in paying it, it is impossible I should all live), debts are clear'd between you and I, if I might but see you at my death: notwithstanding, use your pleasure,-- if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.
>
> (III. ii. 314-320)

In the same way, Antonio shows great respect and gratitude to Portia who had saved his life, not through the payment

of money but by her wit and great intelligence. Antonio declares to the disguised Portia at the end of the trial scene that he is always

> . . . indebted over and above
> In love and service to you evermore.
> (IV. i. 409-410)

Besides Antonio's loss of fortune which has removed the mask of his deception, his friendship with Bassanio and Portia that was recognized, and the importance in his disillusionment in the character of Shylock are his problems. The greediness and lust for money by Shylock as well as his hatred for mankind magnified for Antonio the evils of the mercantile society and honoured the value of friendship. Antonio's misfortunes also showed him the reality of facing problems in life. His spendthrifty nature led him to prison and almost to death. Probably Antonio would no longer face such financial problems, this lesson having taught him great things about difficulties of everyday life. Nor is he to face more problems in being unable to misjudge human relationships and friendships. By misjudging, he develops his disillusionment through misery. Antonio hates Shylock but when feeling his cruelty in the court, Antonio remembers his own feelings of hatred for him and forgives him:

> . . . that for this favour
> He presently became a Christian:
> The other, that he do record a gift.
> (IV. i. 382-384)

That is all that Antonio demands from him after he forgives him--to grant his money to Lorenzo and Jessica. He did not ask them for himself, although he is still greatly in need of money. He also asks to let Shylock become a Christian. To an Elizabethan this would be regarded as an act of mercy. Larry S. Champion comments that

> in the Jew's clutches, Antonio witnesses the awesome ugliness of sheer hate as Shylock demands his pound of flesh. And apparently he recognizes the like passion within himself as he sees it reflected in another.[4]

So human law, the essence of which Antonio refused to admit, becomes predominant over civil law, prevailing in his forgiveness of Shylock.

Antonio's self-realization is completely achieved with his transcendent understanding of love and friendship and of human relations as a whole. Antonio says to Bassanio in the court before the trial had turned to his benefit:

> You cannot better be employ'd Bassanio,
> Than to live still and write mine epitaph.
> (IV. i. 117-118)

In these two lines, Antonio is shown as a character who had achieved his development, something which provides an effective dramatic perspective that may be related to his friend Bassanio as well.

[4] Larry S. Champion, The Evolution of Shakespeare's Comedy (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 65.

Bassanio is a second character who develops from his own experiences. Bassanio's many mistakes seem to be the same as those of his friend Antonio. Bassanio shares with his friend the error of having an unbalanced life. He has the same mercantile way of thinking; his attitudes towards friendship and love are disproportionate. As a result of these disturbances, he lacks a sharp understanding of human nature.

Due to the commercial life which he is living, Bassanio seems to be too much affected by the material values of living. This is reflected in his being a spend-thrift and in his relationships with Portia, Antonio, and Shylock.

In his first encounter with Antonio and in the precise speech in which Bassanio tells him about his debts, he informs him of the only reason of his coming which is money. Bassanio represents the world in which he is living and the only world he seeks. When he asks money from Antonio, he says:

> . . . to you Antonio
> I owe the most in money and in love,
> And from your love I have a warranty
> To unburthen all my plots and purposes
> How to get clear of all the debts I owe.
> (I. i. 130-134)

Bassanio suffers from the disillusionment of being an easy spender of money. He loses his estate and asks for three thousand ducats, a great sum of money, in order to be able

to woo a rich lady who has a good fortune. She herself is a replacement for his losses and debts. His trip to Portia is only for money to give Antonio and to find another source. In one of his speeches to Antonio, he reveals himself to be a fortune seeker who is only looking for money:

> O my Antonio, had I but the means
> To hold a rival place with one of them,
> I have a mind presages me such thrift
> That I should questionless be fortunate.
> (I. i. 173-176)

Bassanio is interested in the golden side of Portia because the first thing he says about her, commercially speaking, is that she is a lady 'richly left' (I. i. 161). Only after that does he explain that she is 'fair' (I. i. 162) and 'of wondrous virtues' (I. i. 163). His attitude to Shylock also assures his deception in judging others. Bassanio blindly accepts the bond of Shylock and considers it as a nice gesture of 'kindness' (I. iii. 139), although he knows quite well that the Jew hides something evil for his friend at the moment when he declares that he does not like fair faces and bad deeds (I. iii. 175). In the trial scene, all that he can offer to save Antonio's life is to increase the amount of money he must give to Shylock: "for three thousand ducats here is six!" (IV. i. 84). Bassanio's deception is not only limited to financial considerations but also to his conception of friendship.

Bassanio disrespects the kind-hearted Gratiano. Behind his back, he attacks his friend very severely when he says in the presence of Antonio:

> Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing (more than any man in all Venice), his reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.
> (I. i. 114-118)

He is not even happy to take Gratiano with him to Belmont. He lectures him as a father talking to his son, but nevertheless Gratiano remains loving and he is convinced, allowing his friend to behave as he wished.

It is clear then that Bassanio lacks a poised personality and is unable to recognize the values of true friendship or sincere love. His love is based on appearances rather than realities. Most of the time he expresses his emotions materially and conventionally. In describing Portia, he refers to her outward beauty of appearance rather than her inner virtues which are mentioned secondarily concerning the fortune he is to gain upon winning her. Even his description of her beauty is one of the conventional lover in which he describes her in commercial terms. Bassanio is torn between his passion and his reason:

> Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
> Hath come so near creation? move these eyes?
> Or whether (riding on the balls of mine)
> Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips
> Parted with sugar breath.
> (III. ii. 115-119)

His love for Portia is fancy, and it develops later on from his moral and emotional appreciation of a true relationship. Bassanio's disturbance in the relationships of love and friendship is a result of his misunderstanding of the values of human nature although it is not as vigorous as Antonio's.

Like Bassanio's friend Antonio, there are several incidents that make Bassanio unmask the cover he is wearing and cause him to return to reality and truth. In one of the collected essays of Wolfgang Clemen, there are comments about characters who are fooled by appearances. Typical is the following quotation:

> The scales fall from the characters' eyes when they become aware of their deception. However, not one of them escapes it, for deception penetrates into the life of all these people in a great variety of forms: misleading events, misunderstanding, unfortunate chains, hypocrisy, disguise, all of which are forever causing man to take appearances for reality.[5]

Through Portia's relationship, Bassanio was made to overcome many of his deceptions. She is no more a 'golden fleece' (I. i. 170), nor is his relationship to her an unbelievable one. His choice of the lead casket and his long speech which follows his choice dignify his intentions, and for the first time, he forgets about money and the

[5] Wolfgang Clemen, Shakespeare's Dramatic Art: Collected Essays (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1972), p. 171.

commercial language which he had used. The description of Portia opens with her fair beauty. To him, Antonio is no longer a source of money, but rather a dear and sincere link which binds them together.

Bassanio understood Shylock very well, for Shylock had made some of Bassanio's mistakes clear to him. Bassanio knows that life and communications are not only gold induced to produce more gold, nor is money the only means to comprise precious values in this world.

As a result, his concept of friendship has been turned to a relationship that was built upon love, sacrifice and sincerity. If the Jew is to have Antonio's flesh, Bassanio is ready to save his friend's life and never to let him lose a drop of blood. In one of his speeches, Bassanio shows great respect and gratitude to his friend to whom he is ready to surrender his wife, his life, and everything, but not to lose so dear a friend as Antonio:

> Antonio, I am married to a wife
> Which is as dear to me as life itself,
> But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
> Are not with me esteem'd above thy life.
> I would lose all, ay sacrifice them all
> Here to this devil, to deliver you.
> (IV. i. 278-283)

When Bassanio receives the letter from Antonio, and immediately after his marriage, he leaves his wife showing great sacrifice for him. Even the Fool Gobbo himself ascertains Bassanio's deception when Gobbo leaves his master, the Jew, in order to work for Bassanio in whom he

feels something very graceful, something from 'the grace of God' (II. ii. 143-144). Gratiano, his companion in the journey, no more suffers from the company of a person who is a hypocrite and who is self-conceited. Bassanio treats his friend well, especially when Gratiano mentions his will in marrying Maria. Bassanio in a very understandable way blesses his good will and wishes him the best of fortune. In return, Gratiano happily relates his meeting Maria to his gentle lord.

His wife Portia has a good share in his realization too, first in pointing out his errors which he had previously thought were right, and later in her praises to him through her wit that made Bassanio open his eyes and enlighten his mind. It is important now to recall her inportance in educating her husband especially in the casket scene. When he opens the lead casket and sees Portia's picture, he describes her outer appearance, and Portia tells him not to look upon external evidence alone for such appearances fool people. She then praises him and honours him highly, he being her 'King' as she says:

> As from her lord, her governor, her king.
> Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours
> Is now converted.
> (III. ii. 165-167)

Bassanio's love for Portia is now more highly developed. He is not loving her for love's sake nor for money's sake. His love grows from his moral deliberation

(the head) and by his emotional attunement to the appropriate mood (the heart). He becomes a balanced ideal lover whose reason and passion are well proportioned. Larry Champion, in his article "Comedies of Identity" in commenting on the role of Portia in the achieving of Bassanio's realization, notes that

> Portia's love, however, kindles the best sparks in his character. Certainly by the time he is forced to choose between three caskets, his scale of values has undergone a significant change. The 'gaudy gold, / Hard food for Midas' (III. ii. 101-102), the earlier Bassanio would never have been able to pass by; and his reflection that 'outward shows' are but deceptive ornament to true worth hardly suggests the gallant of 'swelling port.' So too, following the marriage and the return to Venice, his magnanimity toward Antonio reaches its greatest heights with the offer of his life for that of his friend.[6]

Bassanio is now a true lover who was converted by marriage, and the scene of exchanging the rings reveals his sincere love for Portia.

All these new experiences that helped Bassanio to find himself are to a great extent significant in making him understand the reality of human nature as a whole, not only his friends but his wife and enemies as well.

The third character with whom Shakespeare took great concern in this play and who has received much discussion by different critics is Jessica, the fugitive daughter, who

[6] Champion, p. 63.

experiences so many things from her communications with people other than her father or her Jewish society.

In dealing with Jessica, one can tell that her illusions are the result of the frustrated life which she has had at her father's house. Her father, Shylock, loved money more than he loved her, and he showed no tenderness or feeling towards her. In one of his commandments to her, it is revealed that he only considers her as being a guard for his property and money. In Act II, scene v, Shylock's orders to his daughter sound like 'Look to my house' (16), 'Lock up my doors' (29), 'Stop my house's ears' (34), and 'Fast bind, fast find' (53) which make life intolerable for Jessica. She was frustrated by her Jewish society as well. Her father warns her not to watch the Christian life, especially when Christians celebrate certain kinds of festivities which he does not like. These restrictions prevent her from rebelling against her father, although she is aware of them. To Gobbo, her only friend, she says that their home is like Hell, and Gobbo, the fool, plays the merry devil. Through Gobbo, Jessica comforts herself by talking whenever her father is absent:

> Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
> To be ashamed to be my father's child!
> But though I am a daughter to his blood
> I am not to his manners: O Lorenzo
> If thou keep promise I shall end this strife,
> Become a Christian and thy loving wife!
> (II. iii. 16-21)

It is evident that through love and marriage, she

is going to find the strength for achievement and self-preservation of her being in society and family bonds and in love and marriage. But despite her self-achievement, one can not but notice some defects which she does not admit herself in her relationship with her father. Jessica is indifferent to her father. Also she steals his money and spends it in a "nowhere" in order to honeymoon with her husband Lorenzo. And so she is a childish spendthrift in exchanging the turquoise ring, so dear to her father, for a poor monkey. Sigurd Burckhardt says of the ring-exchange in his 'Gentle Bond':

> The ring which ought to seal their love is traded for a monkey,

and he adds in describing their love that it

> is lawless, financed by theft and engineered through a gross breach of trust. It is subjected to no test: 'Here, catch this casket, it is worth the pains.'[7]

In the scene of the elopement, she shows some weakness of personality in her disguise, in opposition to Shakespeare's other disguised female characters. Jessica was reluctant and ashamed of herself in adopting this role:

> I am glad 'tis night--you do not look on me,--
> For I am much asham'd of my exchange:
> But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
> The pretty follies that themselves commit,
> For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
> To see me thus transformed to a boy.
> (II. vi. 34-39)

[7] Burckhardt, p. 249.

Shakespeare's female characters like Portia, Rosalind and Viola show strong personalities when assuming disguises which help them to reveal more wit and intelligence. But Jessica, who suffers from filial and social obligations which cause her self-deception and illusions, is blamed for having such a character. But as is evident from the later incidents of the play, Jessica is not destined to be left without being educated nor achieving self-realization. As mentioned, Gobbo, her companion, was her only comfort upon whom she can rest and tell the secrets of her sadness. He is the first person to help her meet her lover Lorenzo and elope with him. After her marriage, her disillusionment is brought about and mentioned by her husband's narration rather than by her own actions:

> . . . I love her heartily,
> For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
> And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
> And true she is, as she hath prov'd herself:
> And therefore like herself, wise, fair and true,
> Shall she be placed in my constant soul.
> (II. vi. 52-57)

Lorenzo says that she is wise before even mentioning how beautiful she is which shows his fine appreciation of her. Jessica achieves self-realization by running away from her father and her society, and she sacrifices her friend, family, wealth and country in order to live her own life and to face its realities. Besides the role of the fool, Gobbo and her husband Lorenzo, there is the role of Portia who greatly emphasizes the maintenance of Jessica's private

and social life. She becomes honest and competent by Portia's grace:

> Jessica and Lorenzo turn fugitive thieves for the sake of these ducats; it is only at the very end, and by the grace of Portia, that they are given an honest competence.[8]

When Portia leaves for Venice, she leaves her house at Belmont in the hands of Jessica and Lorenzo. She gives them shelter and security, much of which was gratefully appreciated by Jessica who can well adjust herself in the disillusioned life she is going to lead.

The play ends up with everything in harmony. The Venetian world is overwhelmed with true love and real friendship. Because self-realization was achieved love and friendship became predominant and were absorbed into real life and new order.

[8] Ibid., p. 242.

Chapter III

As You Like It

AS YOU LIKE IT

As You Like It is very much different from The Merchant of Venice and belongs in a category of its own. It is obvious in As You Like It that Shakespeare's concern is with characters who are depicted as romantic lovers rather than ideal lovers. Therefore, the characters in this play are well-rounded and well-developed figures who are primarily involved with the process of reformation because of the romantic pastoral life of the Forest of Arden.

As You Like It could be considered to include a group of different themes combined in order to emphasize some other significant elements within the play. This work is about pastoral love in which the world is askew with displaced rulers and children; in other words, the world is out of tune. There are imbalances between nature and fortune, the learned and the natural, true learning and pretended learning, and art and artifice. The drama presents many problems popular with Elizabethan audiences, problems found as well in many other works like Edmund Spenser's The Shepheardes Calender and Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia. In the Arden Shakespeare edition of As You Like It, the editor, Agnes Latham, argues that the various characters undergo learning experiences:

> There are certainly lessons to be learnt. The Duke has to accustom himself to winter and rough weather. Phebe must learn what

> love is and accept Silvius thankfully. Rosalind tests Orlando's love and finds it pure gold. Orlando forgives Oliver, even before he learns of his repentance. Oliver discovers Celia, and this selfish and status-conscious young man will take her dowerless. It is true, he has not much on his side to give, no height left to stoop from, but that is part of the lesson.[1]

These lessons involve a series of problems--blind love, lust for power, Utopian dreams, and servants' duties--and are the things that create a tone of realism and form an ironic double image which comments upon the stilted world of pastoral romance. It also adds much to the education and development of characters like Orlando, Oliver, Duke Frederick, Duke Senior, Silvius, and Phebe.

Shakespeare's portrayal of the blind lover Orlando, presented as a figure who lacks order with himself due to some deceptions of character, is characteristic of the great dramatist. These defects result in a distorted personality, one which is lacking in self-realization. Here again Shakespeare depicts a growth in the comprehension of real life in a character, Orlando, which subsequently leads him to a fuller and more complete realization of his true personality.

Orlando, the youngest son of a rich gentleman, is shown in the opening scene of the play as a poor fellow

[1] Agnes Latham, ed., As You Like It (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1975), p. lxxxiii.

who suffers from the ill treatment by his elder brother Oliver. In the first couple of lines, Orlando tries to comfort himself by telling his servant Adam information of which Adam can hardly be ignorant. Orlando admits that his elder brother has deprived him of a well-educated gentleman's way of living, and Orlando mentions that the animals bred at their place are better treated than he is. As a result, Orlando is living a life of poverty and suppression, but why is he "gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device" (I. i. 164-165)? As Oliver knows very well, Orlando seems to be extremely passive and stable in the face of the envy and tyranny of his brother.

Orlando's inability to grasp the reality of life prevents him from facing many problems which he encounters in daily life. Orlando is unable to comprehend the nature of Oliver, and the outcome of Orlando's running away and trying to avoid him is tantamount to cowardice. Orlando is quite aware of Oliver's villainy, but he is not mature enough to face the problem and overcome it as any poised person would do. In his first series of speeches to his brother, Orlando displays a hatred of him, an emotion reflected by his putting a wrestler's grip on Oliver. However, Orlando could not preserve his dignity in this

N.B.: Lines and references to this play are taken from Arden edition. These references will be consistent throughout this chapter.

manner because that kind of action does not provide any benefit. Although Orlando recognizes his own inadequacy, he admits that he has no immediate solution:

> I will no longer endure it,
> though yet I know no wise remedy how to
> avoid it.
> (I. i. 23-25)

Upon entering, Oliver asks Orlando a question to which Orlando replies in a very simple manner. Since Orlando is younger, he takes it for granted that Oliver possesses more understanding than he himself:

> Oli. Now sir, what make you here?
> Orl. Nothing. I am not taught to make anything.
> Oli. What mar you then sir?
> Orl. Marry sir, I am helping you to mar that which
> God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours,
> with idleness.
> (I. i. 29-34)

While Orlando admits his inability to find a solution to his problem, he remains open to advice from those around him. In Act II of this play, Adam warns Orlando not to enter his house which is described as "a butchery" (II. iii. 27). Again Orlando answers:

> Orl. Why whither Adam would'st thou have me go?
> Adam. No matter whither, so you come not here.
> Orl. What, wouldst thou have me go and beg my food,
> Or with a base and boist'rous sword enforce
> A thievish living on the common road?
> This I must do, or know not what to do;
> (II. iii. 29-34)

He can only express himself in a savage, uncivilized manner of communication. Although this attitude of <u>savoir d'etre</u> was the only law for survival in olden times, it is no

longer a man-made law of the universe.

Orlando's blindness and misjudgment cause him to fail to comprehend the evil aspects around him, thereby placing himself in dangerous and compromising situations. All the people in the court and outside it know that Duke Frederick is a "humorous" character who, as a usurper of his brother's dukedom, is an enemy of Sir Rowland de Boys, Orlando's father. Adding to his lack of understanding about the reality around him, Orlando is unable to recognize either this fact about the Duke or the result to which it is going to lead. Again and again it seems that Orlando's mistakes reveal his inability to see the truth, and he stands idle unless he is warned by another like LeBeau, the courtier attending upon Duke Frederick. LeBeau tells Orlando of the Duke's wickedness, saying:

> Good Sir, I do in friendship counsel you
> To leave this place. Albeit you have deserv'd
> High commendation, true applause, and love,
> Yet such is now the Duke's condition
> That he misconsters all that you have done.
> The Duke is humorous; what he is indeed
> More suits you to conceive than I to speak of.
> (I. ii. 251-257)

However, Orlando seems indifferent to the good counsel of this man despite the fact that the Duke himself tells Orlando about his hatred of Orlando's father. This same enmity prevented the Duke from giving Orlando any reward for his triumph over Charles, the wrestler.

After the torture caused by his brother's actions

which followed the shock Orlando has received from the Duke, he follows the advice of both Adam and LeBeau and leaves the court life. Since Adam had warned Orlando not to enter his brother's house and LeBeau had advised him not to stay in the Duke's place, Orlando decides to seek a better life in the Forest of Arden.

Orlando, accompanied by Adam, reaches the forest where the old servant, suffering from severe hunger, persuades Orlando to leave him to die because he is unable to continue further. Now in the forest, Orlando shows himself to be an arrogant person whose ignorance of the purity of life in the forest leads him to think that only through the survival-of-the-fittest adage could one live:

> If this uncouth forest yield anything savage, I will either be food for it, or bring it for food to thee. . . . Come, I will bear thee to some shelter and thou shalt not die for lack of a dinner, if there live any thing in this desert. (II. vi. 6-7, 15-17)

His speech beginning "Forbear, and eat no more" (II. vii. 88), as well as his entrance with sword in hand in order to interrupt Duke Senior's banquet by his threatening demand for food (II. vii. 99), are lessons for him to learn that reality is always hidden from persons deceived by appearances. Orlando's comment, "He dies that touches any of this fruit" (II. vii. 99), is answered kindly, thereby showing the great hospitality of the Duke:

What would you have? Your gentleness shall force,

> More than your force move us to gentleness.
> (II. vii. 102-103)

Orlando is a passive man rather than an active one. He tries to calm himself by being melancholic and indifferent to life as a whole. Orlando tells Adam that he himself no longer can endure the tyranny of his brother and, he adds, "This is it, Adam, that grieves me" (I. i. 21). Oliver's ill treatment of Orlando makes him confused and this is the origin of his sadness. Before the wrestling match with Charles, when asked by Rosalind and Celia not to wrestle, Orlando answers with pessimism and is seemingly indifferent to life, not caring what is to become of him. He says:

> . . . wherein if I be foiled, there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; only in the world I fill up a place which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.
> (I. ii. 176-182)

The words he utters are reminiscent of Antonio's in The Merchant of Venice. Both of them reveal despair and indifference to life.[2]

> I hold the world but as the world Gratiano,
> A stage, where every man must play a part,
> And mine a sad one.
> (I. i. 77-79)

[2] John Russell Brown, ed., The Merchant of Venice (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 8.

One of the many illusions that Orlando shares with other unbalanced characters in Shakespeare's comedies is the fact that he is a conventionally blind lover who is shocked at the first sight of his beloved. Such is the case of many other characters whose lack of self-realization causes them to judge things by appearances. Helena Martin mentions, in discussing Rosalind's love affair with Orlando, that after Rosalind offers the chain to her lover and waits for his answer, he seems incapable of replying:

> Here she [Rosalind] pauses, naturally expecting some acknowledgement from Orlando; but finding none come, and not knowing how to break off an interview which has kindled a strange emotion within her, she adds, "Shall we go, coz?" Celia, heart-whole as she is, has no such difficulty. "Ay. Fare you well, fair gentleman," she says, and turns away. Rosalind is going with her. Meanwhile Orlando, overcome by a new feeling, finds himself spell-bound.
>
> It cannot be that he should let them go thus without a word of thanks! Rosalind at least will not think so. What he mutters faintly to himself must surely have been meant for them. But his heart is too full, his tongue too heavily weighted by passion, to find vent in words. His action is constrained. He bows but makes no answering sign.[3]

Only when Rosalind is gone can Orlando find words to express his new-born passion:

[3] Helena F. Martin, "Rosalind," On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1910), p. 245.

> What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?
> I cannot speak to her, yet she urg'd conference.
> O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown!
> Or Charles, or something weaker masters thee.
> (I. ii. 247-250)

Through these few lines, one learns that Orlando has become a lovesick man, who stands wondering at the charm of the lady about whom he has heard a lot previously. Even LeBeau's anticipation of the Duke's bad manners and his advice to Orlando to stop lingering around the court come to nothing but a reply of a lover who had neglected everything except a simple inquiry. He asks LeBeau about his beloved's identity:

> I thank you sir; and pray you tell me this,
> Which of the two was daughter of the Duke
> That here was at the wrestling?
> (I. ii. 258-260)

After Orlando has moved to the Forest of Arden, retracing his first encounter with Rosalind in Act I and his meeting of her in the forest in Act II, one can easily see that the very conventional Petrarchan lover is the same person writing verses addressed to Rosalind and putting them on the trees. Very much akin to the early verses of Shakespeare's Romeo, Orlando's verses, as well as their rhyme, versification, and imagery, are nearly the same as that which Romeo had practised previously. In Act I, scene i of Romeo and Juliet, Romeo says of a lovesick man:

> He that is strucken blind cannot forget

> The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:
> Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
> What doth her beauty serve but as a note.
> Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?
> (I. i. 225-229)[4]

When alone in the forest, Orlando says:

> Run, run Orlando, carve on every tree
> The fair, the chaste, and unexpressive she.
> (III. ii. 9-10)

Orlando cannot express his love to "heavenly Rosalind" (I. iii. 279) and many times in the past he has felt shy and hesitant in her presence. His reactions towards love as well as nature and human beings are extreme, and the madness of love is what he wants. In the forest, Jaques was the first individual to mock Orlando's love. Jaques tells Orlando not to bother himself by hanging love songs on trees and that the worst thing Orlando does is to simply fall in love. Then Jaques asks Orlando, mocking him:

> You are full of pretty answers. Have you not been acquainted with goldsmiths' wives, and conned them out of rings?
> (III. ii. 266-268)

Jaques' mockery of Orlando indicates that Orlando's love is a mere creation of his fancy and he is not truly in love. Orlando's verses place Rosalind on a pedestal, but still when she has her conversation with him in the Forest, Rosalind is not so happy about his being so "love-shaked"

[4] William Shakespeare, A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet, ed. Horace Howard Furness (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963), pp. 29-30.

(III. ii. 357) and she tries to make Orlando understand that he does not look like a true lover. But Orlando keeps the same conventionality in expressing his love. He wants so badly to know what a true description of an ordinary lover would be since Orlando himself is not a good representative:

> Orl. Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.
> Ros. Me believe it! You may as soon make her that you love believe it, which I warrant she is apter to do than to confess she does. That is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?
> Orl. I swear to thee youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.
> (III. ii. 375-385)

When evaluating the conversation between Orlando and Ganymede, John Russell Brown says of the role of Rosalind in clearing the deceits of Orlando that

> Rosalind's true voice may not be heard until the comment and excuse, consciously deciding to speak her mind is caught up in the imaginative fiction. Whoever speaks her last words--'certainly a woman's thought runs before her actions'--Orlando must hear them, for he takes up her meaning, identifying himself with that response and extending the image from running to levitation, and from immediate to far-ranging reference: 'So do all thoughts, they are winged.' All his imagination is alive, so that where no response is needed he joins in, leaving the key word to last so that his more general idea does not lack precision.[5]

[5] John Russell Brown, "As You Like It," Shakespeare's Dramatic Style (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1971), p. 87.

In tracing the incidents that Orlando experiences throughout the play, one can tell that he is a good man who has noble ideas. However, he suffers from a distortion of character. Orlando is unable to comprehend the reality of life, to understand human nature, and to admit his conventionality in his love relationship.

Orlando must, therefore, acquire certain experiences that should educate him into a self-discovery of his own life. These experiences pass through a process of trials and errors, mistakings and misunderstandings until truth is discovered.

When Orlando has received ill-treatment from both his brother and the Duke, he is forced to run away into the green woods of Arden. Why does everyone escape to the Forest of Arden when he faces ill-treatment?

Helen Gardner answers this question in her essay on <u>As You Like It</u> when she mentions the role of the Forest in purifying the individual from deceit and error. She says:

> Arden is a place of discovery where the truth becomes clear and where each man finds himself and his true way. This discovery of truth in comedy is made through errors and mistakings. The trial and error by which we come to knowledge of ourselves and of our world is symbolized by the disguisings which are a recurrent element in all comedy, but are particularly common in Shakespeare's. Things have, as it were, to become worse before they become better, more confused and farther from the proper pattern. By misunderstandings men come to understand,

> and by lies and feignings they discover truth.[6]

As a first step in healing his own injuries, Orlando comes to the discovery that such an "uncouth forest" (II. vi. 6) is never to be hated or misjudged because of its appearances. His knowledge of the reality of life is completed in the Forest of Arden. Orlando was conscious of the evil nature of his brother Oliver, and thus he tried to avoid any contact with him by turning his back. But once Orlando understands the good life led by people in the forest, he saves his brother who had been in danger of being attacked by a snake and a lioness. In that same place, Orlando knew that life is not necessarily evil but is a combination of both good and evil. An educated person is one who is aware of both qualities and their possibilities.

The characteristics of Duke Frederick, the usurper, are known to all in the play. They realize that he is an evil character, but still anyone can see that Orlando is the only person who could not conceive of the dangers of meeting this man. However, when he completes his self-discovery in Arden, he discovers Duke Frederick's wicked temper not only in treating Orlando but also in

[6] Helen Gardner, "As You Like It," in Shakespeare The Comedies, ed. Kenneth Muir (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 67.

treating his niece Rosalind and his daughter Celia.

Upon his arrival in the Forest of Arden, Orlando finds the forest hostile because he is lost and hungry. But when he had a meal offered by the Duke, Orlando's misunderstandings vanish concerning the roughness of the forest. He recognizes the fact that there is goodness and truth in the forest, and he also knows that in such a place there is evil which is symbolized here by the appearance of the lioness. After his triumph over the lioness, an incident that made him have self-confidence for the first time in his life, Orlando becomes an active man:

> Twice did he turn his back, and purpos'd so.
> But kindness, nobler ever than revenge,
> And nature, stronger than his just occasion,
> Made him give battle to the lioness.
> (IV. iii. 127-130)

Orlando's new understanding of human nature is not limited to the understanding of Oliver and Duke Frederick's characters, but it is also revealed in his relationship with Old Adam. Orlando seems really appreciative that the servant has been in the service of Orlando's family for a long time. He shows great devotion to Adam when he holds him in his arms when Adam was starving to death. Orlando addresses his servant in the quiet and serious sense of an old order lost, and Adam as a survivor of better days:

> O good old man, how well in thee appears

> The constant service of the antique world,
> When service sweat for duty, not for meed.
> Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
> Where none will sweat but for promotion,
> And having that, do choke their service up
> Even with the having; it is not so with thee.
> (II. iv. 56-62)

In Arden, too, Orlando finds his tongue and his spirits and uses wit to comfort Adam in his depression. When Orlando intrudes into the banquet of the Duke and feels the good hearted people of that shadowy place, he hints of the recovery of the old world:

> Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time;
> If ever you have look'd on better days;
> If ever been where bells have knoll'd to church;
> If ever sat at any good man's feast;
> If ever from your eyelids wip'd a tear,
> And know what 'tis to pity and be pitied,
> Let gentleness my strong enforcement be;
> In the which hope, I blush, and hide my sword.
> (II. vii. 112-119)

Then, Orlando becomes very much aware of his melancholy and tries to cure himself of it. He is conscious enough of his melancholy so that he rebukes the melancholy of others and mocks Jaques in a special way when he says:

> I am glad of your departure. Adieu good Monsieur Melancholy.
> (III. ii. 288-289)

Orlando then makes fun of fools in general, and he tricks Jaques in the following sequence:

> Jaques. By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found you.
> Orl. He is drowned in the brook. Look but in and you shall see him.
> Jaques. There I shall see mine own figure.
> Orl. Which I take to be either a fool, or a cipher.
> (III. ii. 280-285)

In these few lines, one sees Jaques is fooled by Orlando. For the first time Jaques becomes the target of mockery and parody coming from a good wit like Orlando.

Later on, Orlando's pretenses stop as he recognizes the necessity of balancing passion and reason. In his love, he is confused between pastoralism and romanticism, idealism and realism. Larry Champion comments the following concerning Orlando's growth of personality:

> . . . his affection apparently achieves a degree of maturation when he ceases to regard it as a bittersweet game, informing Ganymede that he no longer can be satisfied with the pretense of wooing by proxy (V. ii. 55). With this maturation comes the corollary ability to forgive the elder brother and literally to save the brother's life at the expense of his own personal safety. Obviously, then, through the catalyst of love, Orlando's personality is purged and his highest qualities realized.[7]

If one would follow the development of the pure love of Orlando for his 'heavenly Rosalind,' he could see that Orlando becomes representative of the ideal lover as understood by Shakespeare. Orlando's development of his concept of love has passed through several stages and many events have shaped it. First, there is the love affair of Silvius and Phebe, although it is not a mature relationship until the end. However, it still represents a caricature of conventional love from which Orlando learns to emulate

[7] Larry S. Champion, The Evolution of Shakespeare's Comedy (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 66.

good and avoid folly. There are also the roles of Jaques and Touchstone who represent different attitudes to life, although they do frequently parody the Petrarchan lover. Touchstone makes fun of the romantic lover and the way Orlando had expressed his love through easy and overblown verses. Orlando says to Rosalind about his songs hung on the tree:

> Truly the tree yields bad fruit.
> (III. ii. 114)

As mentioned before, when Jaques tells Orlando that the latter committed a great mistake by falling in love, Orlando seems to recognize the parody which accompanied Jaques' words. Orlando knows that he either has to quit his love, which is out of the question, or he has to adjust himself to witty answers that may shock the great satirist himself:

> Jaques. You have a nimble wit; I think 'twas made of Atalanta's heels. Will you sit down with me and we two will rail against our mistress the world and all our misery?
> Orl. I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults.
> (III. ii. 271-276)

Besides the roles of Jaques and Touchstone, there is the role of Rosalind, disguised as Ganymede, who plays a major role in educating Orlando.

The folly in love is not only equal to Orlando's but also is shared among all lovers in the Forest of Arden and so their illusions are abandoned at the end of the play. C. L. Barber in "The Alliance of Seriousness and

Levity in As You Like It" comments about such individuals as follows:

> The lovers who in the second half of the play present "nature in love" each exhibit a kind of folly. In each there is a different version of the incongruity between reality and the illusions (in poetry, the hyperboles) which love generates and by which it is expressed. The comic variations are centered around the seriously-felt love of Rosalind and Orlando. The final effect is to enhance the reality of this love by making it independent of illusions, whose incongruity with life is recognized and laughed off.[8]

The schooling of Orlando by Rosalind begins when Ganymede sees and recognizes her lover's folly in love. In discussing this, William Martz in his "Rosalind and Character in Comedy" says that the conversation held between the two about Rosalind's purpose in "curing" her lover is only a test for Orlando to see "whether or not his love is deeply spiritual."[9] He then continues:

> . . . she will test their compatibility, their real understanding, the certainty of their knowledge--carved on the tree of personality's inner depths--that they are in love. Orlando agrees to the test--"With all my heart, good youth."[10]

[8] C. L. Barber, "The Alliance of Seriousness and Levity in As You Like It," Essays in Shakespearean Criticism, by J. L. Calderwood & H. E. Toliver (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 265.

[9] William J. Martz, "Rosalind and Character in Comedy," Shakespeare's Universe of Comedy (New York: David Lewis, 1971), p. 92.

[10] Ibid., p. 93.

Henceforth, Orlando recognizes that he has many faults and that he requires certain remedies. Besides her love for Orlando, Rosalind seems to show him sympathy and understanding. Upon failing to appear for their meeting in order that Orlando should start his lessons with Ganymede, Rosalind accuses him of not being a good lover. She concludes by asking him what would he do if he was then meeting Rosalind instead of Ganymede. His answer of "I would kiss before I spoke" (IV. i. 69) is not admired by Ganymede. Then she says:

> Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were gravelled for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss.
> (IV. i. 70-72)

Throughout this scene, Rosalind attacks the very conventional, passionate words Orlando repeats such as "her frown might kill me" (IV. i. 105), until she comes to the place where they perform the pretended marriage and she questions him again. Here he returns to conventionality, and at the end of his schooling, he becomes content in accordance with his self-realization. Rosalind says:

> Ros. Now tell me how long you would have her, after you have possessed her?
> Orl. For ever, and a day.
> Ros. Say a day, without the ever. No, no, Orlando, men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives. I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen, more clamorous than a parrot against rain, more new-fangled than an ape, more giddy in my desires than a monkey. I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain, and

> I will do that when you are disposed to be merry. I will laugh like a hyen, and that when thou art inclined to sleep.
>
> (IV. i. 135-148)

At the end of this speech, Orlando is convinced that if his Rosalind will do the same things that Ganymede says, Rosalind will be "wise" (IV. i. 151) and that is what he will admire about her henceforth. Wisdom and wit will be combined. C. L. Barber again comments on Orlando's schooling:

> The expression of Rosalind's attitude towards being in love, in the great scene of disguised wooing, fulfills the whole movement of the play. The climax comes when Rosalind is able, in the midst of her golden moment, to look beyond it and mock its illusions, including the master illusion that love is an ultimate and final experience, a matter of life and death. Ideally, love should be final, and Orlando is romantically convinced that his is so, that he would die if Rosalind refused him. But Rosalind humorously corrects him, from behind her page's disguise.[11]

Now as Orlando admits that he is guilty of being romantically in love, his illusions of love have disappeared. Love is reconciled with judgment. After Rosalind had cured him, one senses the real relationship between the satiric posture and the love beneath it. Orlando now represents the ideal point of view of two disillusioned lovers who attain their union and complete harmony.

There remain in the process of Orlando's character

[11] Barber, p. 269.

development some incidents that show him not only a perfect lover but also a well-balanced personality. When Orlando sends his brother to offer the bloody napkin to Rosalind, he shows a genuine love token in which the lover proves his valour for his lady. In his whole behaviour when meeting Ganymede, Orlando reveals to the disguised Ganymede that he loves the real Rosalind. When Rosalind last appears in the disguise of a boy, Orlando remarks that she looks like his real Rosalind.

To sum things up, one can say that Orlando is no longer a misjudging person. His marriage and new ideals for life have shaped his character.

Oliver, the villain brother of Orlando, whose conversion and self-realization have been a concern of many critics of Shakespeare's comedy, attains his repentance too. This conversion is achieved by the encounter of significant characters and by his indulgence into the life of the Forest of Arden as well.

At the beginning of the play, Oliver is revealed as a person who shows great inhumanity in treating and raising his younger brother Orlando. Mention is made of things of which Oliver has deprived Orlando: Oliver had brought him up like a peasant and never had sent him to school for education although Orlando was of "noble device" (I. i. 165) as Oliver himself admits. Oliver calls his brother a "villain" (I. i. 55) and envies him

(I. i. 167-169). Oliver also hates Orlando for his excellence and because Oliver caricatures himself and so seems an inferior version of Orlando, his golden brother. The words with which he describes Orlando are only a reflection of his own mistakes. In telling Charles about Orlando, Oliver says:

> I'll tell thee Charles, it is the
> stubbornest young fellow of France, full
> of ambition, an envious emulator of every
> man's good parts, a secret and villainous
> contriver against me his natural brother.
> (I. i. 139-143)

After that, Oliver persuades the wrestler that Orlando is a dangerous, wicked person and encourages Charles to kill him in the fight:

> Therefore
> use thy discretion; I had as lief thou
> didst break his neck as his finger.
> (I. i. 143-145)

After this foiled plan of ridding himself of his brother, Oliver welcomes hastily another plan of Duke Frederick who opens Act III:

> Find out thy brother whereso'er he is;
> Seek him with candle: bring him dead or living
> Within this twelvmonth, or turn thou no more
> To seek a living in our territory.
> (III. i. 5-8)

To which Oliver replies very openly and showing his hatred for his brother:

> O that your Highness knew my heart in this!
> I never lov'd my brother in my life.
> (III. i. 13-14)

Oliver accepts the threats made by the Duke and agrees to

look for Orlando and bring him to the Duke dead or alive. Oliver also attacks Adam who had served his father for years. Oliver hates old Adam because he has witnessed the confrontation of the boys as well as Oliver's tyranny. Adam himself says that Oliver is an inferior copy of his father and that of his youngest brother:

> . . . within this roof
> The enemy of all your graces lives.
> Your brother, no, no brother, yet the son--
> Yet not the son, I will not call him son.
> (II. iii. 17-20)

Oliver shows ingratitude to Adam, and when Oliver urges Orlando to leave the place in peace, Adam does not miss an insult that injures the old man's feelings and good heartedness:

> Oli. Get you with him, you old dog.
> Adam. Is old dog my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master!--he would not have spoke such a word.
> (I. i. 81-84)

Oliver, like Orlando, is accused of loving Celia at first sight. Alexander Leggatt, in considering the submission to love by Rosalind and Orlando, continues with that of Celia and Oliver:

> Celia and Oliver present a similar balance, but within a narrower range: their love depends purely on the convention of love at first sight, with no attempt to rationalize it, but at least Oliver is prepared to acknowledge possible objections, even while sweeping them aside: Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of

her, the small acquaintance, "I love Aliena."[12] Although he loved Celia at first sight, Oliver's hastiness to love and to marry Celia is advised by Orlando who tells him that he hardly knows this lady so how is he 'to love', 'woo', and 'enjoy her' (V. ii. 2-4)! Oliver answers that he only cares about enjoying life with her:

> Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of her, the small acquaintance, my sudden wooing, nor her sudden consenting. But say with me, I love Aliena; say with her that she loves me; consent with both, that we may enjoy each other.
> (V. ii. 5-9)

Oliver also promises his brother a sacrificial love and promises to give him his father's house and money and that he will stay in the Forest as a shepherd.

Love and then marriage change many of Oliver's errors. Once he goes into the Forest, a place where healing is achieved and truth is revealed, he becomes human through his behavior to his brother, the Duke, and by his love for Celia. He becomes a new man. His conversion at the end of the play, due to Orlando's sacrifice and the love he found in that same Forest, heals him of his villainy and makes him look forward to a better life as a shepherd. To Celia, he confesses in repentance:

> 'Twas I. But 'tis not I. I do not shame
> To tell you what I was, since my conversion
> So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am.
> (IV. iii. 135-137)

[12] Alexander Leggatt, Shakespeare's Comedy of Love (London: Methuen & Company, Ltd., 1974), pp. 214-215.

Duke Frederick, the usurper of his brother's Dukedom, is also allied with Oliver as a villain who is converted through the development of his personality. As a result he becomes true to life and attains a discovery of the self.

Frederick suffers from a lust for power which has made him inhuman in his relationships with others around him. He usurps, banishes and replaces his brother's property; he mistreats the youthful Orlando and refuses to reward him because he is the son of his enemy. Frederick is an arbitrary villain, moody and irrational. He envies his brother's grace and popularity and admits, although feeling insecure, that the enmity of Sir Rowland de Boys may be because he was a good friend of the banished Duke. Ralph Berry, in his "No Exit From Arden," comments upon the bad character of Duke as follows:

> Duke Frederick, Oliver's parallel, may well be assumed to share this hatred of his civilized and urbane brother. His prevailing state of mind, as revealed, is characterized by suspiciousness and insecurity. A usurper himself, he sees threats everywhere. For him, the mere presence of people who recall his past is intolerably disturbing.[13]

The Duke is oppressed by the idea of his feeling superior to people around him. His court is uncivilized. It is a place where wits like Touchstone are suppressed for

[13] Ralph Berry, Shakespeare's Comedies: Explorations in Form (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 179.

attacking folly: "The more pity that fools may not speak wisely what wiseman do foolishly" (I. ii. 80-81). On the other hand, the Duke is jealous of Rosalind for her superiority over Celia. He keeps Rosalind in court for Celia and then he mistreats her and banishes her because he does not want anybody to remind him of his usurpation. David Young says of Duke Frederick's bad manners that

> . . . he is unable, when he suddenly decides to banish Rosalind, to give any convincing reason for his action. . . . The effect of such moments is partly to suggest the lack of self-knowledge in evil and unnatural behavior, and it is true that self-knowledge is an important theme in pastoral in general and As You Like It in particular.[14]

On the other hand, Duke Frederick pushes Oliver to kill his brother Orlando for no convincing reason.

Duke Frederick's process of self-realization starts initially with the escape of his only daughter, Celia. The Duke's instability in dealing with problems makes him open to reform, love, and loyalty. His sudden intrusion in the Forest

> Where, meeting with an old religious man,
> After some question with him, was converted
> Both from his enterprise and from the world,
> (V. iv. 159-161)

helps him to abandon his illusions concerning the life of the court. His conversion, as well as that of Oliver, is

[14] David Young, The Heart's Forest: A Study of Shakespeare's Pastoral Plays (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 42.

influenced by the power of love which is found abundantly in the greenwoods. Duke Frederick achieves self-realization through a holy hermit who symbolizes both the divine law and the natural law. Oliver is also influenced by the sacrificial love of Orlando, and in the Forest of Arden both men are going to remain and lead new ascetic lives, the values and ideals of which they have lacked in the past.

Duke Senior, the banished Duke, in spite of the quiet and good life he is leading in the Forest, has some notable errors to which anybody might point. These flaws include his being indifferent to life, to his Dukedom, to his daughter, and to his brother. He is described as living a Robin Hood-like life and spending the time carelessly. Duke Senior shows great contentment in adversity when he translates his ill fortune into a benefit which is mere idleness. He says:

> Sweet are the uses of adversity,
> Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
> Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
> And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything.
> (II. i. 12-17)

Duke Senior's description of his freedom is imaginative and philosophical, and he declares that the pastoral life is better than the court life:

> Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
> Than that of painted pomp?
> (II. i. 2-3)

Later on he does the opposite by recalling his better days:

> True is it that we have seen better days,
> And have with holy bell been knoll'd to church,
> And sat at good men's feasts, and wip'd our eyes
> Of drops that sacred pity hath engender'd.
> (II. vii. 120-123)

The Duke's urbane pastoralism is coloured by melancholy which is revealed by stressing his exile and by pretending to find some social and philosophic lessons in Arden. At times Duke Senior seems to welcome physical rather than moral pain, and when insisting upon the advantages of the Forest, he contradicts himself in his exchange with Orlando at the dinner. At last he admits his melancholy:

> Thou seest, we are not all alone unhappy:
> This wide and universal theatre
> Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
> Wherein we play in.
> (II. vii. 136-139)

In the whole play Duke Senior makes no mention of his daughter Rosalind. He has not seen her since she was a girl, and as a result she shows the audience her allegiance to him. On this point, Helena Martin comments:

> . . . he shows no bitterness against his usurping brother, and has no yearnings for the power of which he has been despoiled. The easy dreamy life of the woods suits his languid temperament. He likes nothing better than an argument with Jaques, whose cynical views of life excite and amuse him, though he has no sympathy with them. Amiable, but weak, separation from his daughter does not seem to have cost him much regret.[15]

[15] Martin, On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters, p. 253.

Due to some events that have occurred to the Duke in the Forest of Arden, he shows some hope in life and self-assertiveness. His banishment into the Forest helps him to overcome many problems which have shaken his entire personality and life. He perceives the natural kingdom of Arden as a power struggle where man usurps the beasts' peace just as he himself is the victim of usurpation. He finds in nature an image of his own tendency to moralize things, from mere 'stones' (II. i. 17), 'brooks' (II. i. 16), and all objects found in Arden. Jaques, the melancholic, attacks him for breaking the harmony of pure pastoralism and destroying the innocence of nature. In turn, the Duke himself is aware of Jaques' constant pessimism and he attacks him vigorously:

> Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin.
> For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
> As sensual as the brutish sting itself,
> And all th'embossed sores and headed evils
> That thou with licence of free foot hast caught
> Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.
> (II. vii. 64-69)

The Duke sees Jaques as an object of instruction and diversion and not only as a destroyer of other's feelings and ideas:

> I love to cope him in these sullen fits,
> For then he's full of matter.
> (II. i. 68-69)

The Duke's self-realization is completed with the meeting of his daughter and the return of his Dukedom as a result of his brother's repentance. At the end of the play, he

invites everybody to the dance so that all "shall share the good of our returned fortune" (V. iv. 173), and all lovers are joined together in harmony.

Silvius and Phebe are united and married in the last scene of the play. Through love and marriage, this couple achieves truth in their relationship. Each has had self-deceptions or exaggerated attitudes towards values and ideals in their lives. Silvius had been attacked as displaying a silly conventionality in love when Phebe asks him:

> Good Shepherd, tell this youth what 'tis to love.
> Sil. It is to be all made of sighs and tears,
> (V. ii. 82-83)

and

> to have her and death were both one thing.
> (V. iv. 17)

This answer is contrasted with the mature love of Rosalind:

> . . . these are all lies: men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love.
> (IV. i. 101-103)

Silvius is locked unconsciously in a fixed position where nothing could appear to him but as shadows and deceits. His conversation with Corin reveals his dreamy, disembodied view of romantic love. He says:

> If thou remember'st not the slightest folly
> That ever love did make thee run into,
> Thou hast not lov'd.
> Or if thou hast not sat as I do now,
> Wearying thy hearer in thy mistress' praise,
> Thou hast not lov'd.
> Or if thou hast not broke from company

> Abruptly as my passion now makes me,
> Thou hast not lov'd.
> (II. iv. 31-39)

Silvius then accuses Corin, the old shepherd, of being too old to understand love; he can not believe that Corin's love was ever like his. Silvius then tells Corin that he is the unrequited lover sighing "upon a midnight pillow" (II. iv. 24).

Later on in the play, after Silvius' unrequited love for Phebe is presented, the latter sends a love letter to Rosalind with him. So Silvius, in the same manner of conventionality, starts to show Rosalind the discomfort and despair he is getting from Phebe's cruelty and rejection which made Celia pity this shepherd. Silvius' speech to Phebe and the words that individualize him reveal him to be as romantic a character as Romeo. He says:

> O dear Phebe,
> If ever, as that ever may be near,
> You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy,
> Then shall you know the wounds invisible
> That love's keen arrows make.
> (III. v. 27-31)

Besides his blindness and unbalanced love, Silvius has a limited intellect and a weak comprehension of things. He lacks common sense and suffers from an exaggerated, sentimental, self-abandonment, much to Phebe's disdain. Here Silvius tends to be a caricature through which Orlando is able to see similarities and correct himself.

Silvius is able to recognize the true love when he views his own follies and tries to avoid them. His love-sickness is eliminated through Rosalind, Corin, Touchstone, and Phebe herself.

In Rosalind, Silvius experiences the best of love's release and comfort, for Rosalind sees in his experience a reflection of her own love, making it easy for him. Rosalind, as such, is ashamed of Silvius when he submits to Phebe's treatment of him. Rosalind despises Silvius for his weakness and strikes hard on the weak spot saying:

> Wilt
> thou love such a woman? What, to make thee an instrument and play false strains upon thee? Not to be endured! Well, go your way to her, for I see love hath made thee a tame snake.
> (IV. iii. 66-70)

In Corin, Silvius can see a balanced view of life and love, and an individual who can teach him how he might win Phebe's love. So he seeks Corin's sympathy and advice because this older shepherd has known the game of love for many years before Silvius. Because Silvius expands his love to extremities, Touchstone mocks his romanticism. Shortly after, he admits that some of his actions are 'most ridiculous' (II. iv. 27). Even Phebe herself ridicules his wooing, which later opens his eyes. She says:

> Now I do frown on thee with all my heart,
> And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee.
> (III. v. 15-16)

At the end of the play, Silvius gives his romantic view of love a final statement acknowledging the truth behind it, by which his self-discovery has been reconciled:

> It is to be all made of fantasy,
> All made of passion and all made of wishes,
> All adoration, duty and observance,
> All humbleness, all patience and impatience,
> All purity, all trial, all observance;
> And so am I for Phebe.
> (V. ii. 93-98)

And so Phebe attains her self-realization at the close of the play. Phebe's reaction to love is the result of her whole personality. She rebukes the love of Silvius and rejects it by being a proud and disdainful lover. To Silvius, she declares that she refuses to believe in love's invisible wound, but nevertheless she herself has a stereotyped attitude of love. When she falls in love at first sight and becomes enamored by Ganymede, she is unconscious of what is happening to her. She uses conventional language, naive and trivial, such as her unqualified Petrarchan sentiments of 'Why I am sorry for thee gentle Silvius' (III. v. 85). She exhibits to Silvius the ridiculous and perverse qualities of exaggerated romanticism in love. Along with others, she is taken by appearances of people rather than by their realities when she loves the disguised Rosalind.

Rosalind recognizes the mistakes of Phebe and suggests that Phebe's reality is hidden because of what she romantically thinks of herself. To do this, Rosalind

> uses Phoebe's love for her (as a man) to soften her heart, to make her understand what Silvius has suffered; and, in that new temper, Phoebe takes Silvius because he has been faithful. The conventional love is led into the natural.[16]

Rosalind reminds her that she is nature's creature and her love should not be that romantic. Her affection for Ganymede ends when Rosalind reveals her own identity. Whenever Phebe gives a more conventional rhetorical description, she is advised by Rosalind and she finally tells her to marry as quickly as possible: "Sell when you can, you are not for all markets" (III. v. 60). She discovers at the end that it is better to love than to be loved and to scorn one's lover. Her conversion is a motif like Olivia and Orsino's in Twelfth Night in which those who mock and disdain love suddenly discover they are in love. In Act V of the play, she surrenders to Silvius saying:

> I will not eat my word; now thou art mine,
> Thy faith my fancy to thee doth combine.
> (V. iv. 148-149)

When the play ends, everyone recognizes what had caused each one's disturbance of character. No vengeance and suffering are going to be retained since the Forest of Arden itself is a place of discovery of truth. It celebrates the values of harmony with nature, an uncomplicated life,

[16] Stopford A. Brooke, "As You Like It," On Ten Plays of Shakespeare (New York: AMS Press, 1971), p. 161.

and love without sacrifice. When the old order is maintained, the characters try to look for the future with a new social order symbolized by the peaceful intervention of Hymen, the god of marriage:

> Then is there mirth in heaven,
> When earthly things made even
> Atone together.
> (V. iv. 107-109)

In conclusion, a brief summation of the group of characters who helped illusioned personalities to attain self-realization is necessary. These characters include Rosalind, Touchstone, Jaques, and the Forest of Arden itself.

Rosalind's effect upon everyone in the play is unquestionable. She is the balance between the idealism of romance and the realism of the world, and with that asset she joins all lovers. Rosalind is aware of love's illusions although she herself is in love. She has a romantic participation in love and a humorous detachment from its follies. She combines feeling and judgment, mocked romance, exaggerated feelings, and conventionality in love. Furthermore, she defines a successful marriage pattern.

The role of Touchstone is second in importance only to Rosalind's. He is a critic of love and lovers, of court and courtiers. He mocks desires and feelings ideally resolved by the pastoral life and conventional love. He

represents the conflict or opposition of the idealism of romance and the facts of the real world, and so just like Rosalind, he compromises the two. The professional fool comments that life is a passage of time illustrating how men ripen and rot, and that the present time passes slowly or quickly according to the moods and occasions of the person.

Another fool, but a very melancholic one, is Jaques the satirist. He ridicules life as a whole, but he shows friendly interest in the union of lovers. Life to him is a flower to be plucked and enjoyed before it fades; nevertheless, he comments on man's intrusion into pure nature and this is where his melancholy begins.

At last there is the role of the Forest of Arden upon which the play is centered. It is a place of refuge and shelter where the lives and personalities of people are purified and self-realization is achieved. There remains one question to be answered: what is going to happen to those people who are harmonized at the end of the play? And so William Martz answers as follows:

> Why does everyone return to court at the end of the play? Is not the forest of Arden happiness enough? Is loving Arden and leaving for court in fact a contradiction? The answer to this, it seems to me, is simple enough. The best locale for the process of self-discovery is not the best locale for the working out of the results of that process. What lovers need after an Arden of wooing or of instant love is a chance to prove--to live--the

> meaning of it all under conditions of challenge.[17]

The achievement of true love is necessary but it is not a sufficient condition for living. The lovers themselves after a period of wooing require more chances to prove themselves and to live every aspect of life, and this is why everybody returns to the court at the end of this play.

[17] William J. Martz, "Rosalind and Character in Comedy," Shakespeare's Universe of Comedy (New York: David Lewis, 1971), p. 99.

CHAPTER IV

Twelfth Night

TWELFTH NIGHT

The first thing that captures the attention of the reader of Twelfth Night is that it is a play about love and variations of love where the whole world of lovers is turned upside down. It is also a comedy of characters and manners, written almost in the middle of Shakespeare's career. It shows complete maturity of technical development and yet still reflects the lighthearted joyfulness of spirit which was soon to be clouded over by the gloom and passion of Shakespeare's tragedies.

Most of the characters of the play do not achieve self-realization, and even Orsino and Olivia, whose characters are chosen to be discussed in this chapter as being well-rounded characters, do not achieve a self-knowledge that is complete. Unlike Bassanio and Orlando in The Merchant of Venice and As You Like It, Orsino reveals himself to be a mere lovesick person whose concept of love is distorted. Olivia, too, resembles the female characters of the earlier plays since she suffers from mere love illusions.

Orsino and Olivia live in illusions concentrated on the imbalances of their concepts of love, and as so there is no real attention to other social illusions. In the earlier comedies the unbalanced characters had conflicts with nearly every social aspect of life and so they gained

from everything and were completely educated. Those characters are revealed as complete human beings who face problems of ordinary life. They were out of harmony, but through a process of self-realization they become attuned to life. They are shown to be persons communicating with others through friendship and family bonds rather than through love and marriage. These aspects do not apply to the characters of Twelfth Night. In their social relationships as well as in their family relationships, the characters do not tend to suffer from any illusions. Shakespeare, it seems, intended to make things different for these personalities to reform and regenerate. One would notice that the play is about love and the achievement of the ideals of love. And that is why persons like the Duke and the Countess are only unbalanced in the concept of love. This gives the play a thematic unity in which love is the only theme more apparent than in many of Shakespeare's other plots. In their political domain, in their relationships with their servants and friends, they are personalities knowing others' follies.

As mentioned before, other characters in the play and especially those of the subplot are unbalanced persons living in deceptions but they do not achieve self-knowledge, a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this chapter. Characters like Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Malvolio do live in a world of errors and folly but even at the end of the

play, they can not attune themselves to the norm of achieving self-realization unlike Orsino and Olivia. For this reason the main focus in this chapter is placed upon the characters of the Duke and the Countess who really get themselves into the reality of life by balancing their concepts of love.

If one asks what the play is about, one possible answer is that it is mainly preoccupied with illusion and reality, madness and sanity, and wisdom and folly.[1] Its concern is with proportion and moderation in romantic love. This includes the disdain of love and the education of a romantic lover. It then projects the lovers' ideals and the ways to achieve inner and outer fulfillment; in other words, a unity within and a harmony with the world in which people live. Berry, in his "Messages of Twelfth Night," states that

> The main business of Twelfth Night is illusion, error, and deceit. Error is a matter of plot alone, stemming from the chance of mistaken identity. But illusion and deceit are inherent to the main actors. The play can usefully be analyzed in terms of fantasy (or illusion) and reality.[2]

If one asks who is deceived in this play, the answer might

[1] Ralph Berry, "The Messages of Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's Comedies: Explorations in Form (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 199.

[2] Ibid., p. 199.

be, who is not? As episodes are exposed, the audience discovers deceit piled upon deceit. Olivia and Orsino are both deceived by Cesario. Antonio and Sebastian are deceived, Malvolio is deceived by Maria and the others. The play is a tissue of deceits and misunderstandings that have been caused by errors and the workings of chance. But since the focus of this chapter is on the people who are deceived by themselves and not only through others, and those who attain self-realization at the end of this play, then the concentration will be on the characters of Orsino and Olivia.

Orsino, the Duke of Illyria, seems to be poised in every aspect except his understanding of love. The words he utters at the opening scene of the play are those of the conventional lover and suitor of the Countess Olivia. His words, full of poetic thoughts and sentiments, may win the audience's sympathy at first:

> If music be the food of love, play on,
> Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die.
> (I. i. 1-3)

But does he retain this sympathy? One can not but doubt the genuineness of his feelings. Orsino is in love with the idea of love[3] through which he abandons his con-

[3] John Dover Wilson, "Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's Happy Comedies (London: Faber & Faber, 1962), p. 169. Harold Jenkins, "Shakespeare's Twelfth Night," Shakespeare The Comedies, edited by Kenneth Muir (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1965), p. 77.

ventionality and loving at first sight. He does not comprehend the personality of Olivia and he does not try to understand it. She is only the object upon which his need for love is reflected, and this is revealed in his persistent wooing of Olivia after all her refusals. Orsino embodies the disconsolate unrequited lover who, with exaggerated feeling, shows pretenses in his love for Olivia. John Dover Wilson mentions some of the illusions the Duke builds in his mind when he seems to enjoy the idea that "love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers" (I. i. 41). Wilson says:

> Orsino is the sentimentalist in love with love. He has steeped himself, we may imagine, in Petrarch; he prefers worshipping at a distance and wooing by proxy; he likes to stab himself with the thought of the cruelty of his adored. It is not Olivia's person he desires--he readily makes shift with Viola at the end, when Olivia proves to be the bride of another.[4]

Orsino gluts himself on his own version of romantic love which allows him to make the most extravagant and self-deceptive statements about it. He is an example of the stereotyped aristocratic, forlorn lover when he advises Cesario that

> If ever thou shalt love,
> In the sweet pangs of it remember me:
> For such as I am, all true lovers are,
> Unstaid and skittish in all motions else,
> Save in the constant image of the creature
> That is belov'd.
> (II. iv. 15-20)

[4] Wilson, p. 169.

It is the symbol and not the essence of the thing itself which Orsino requires. For him, the only reality is the illusion to which he is blindly obedient. His passion is highly ambivalent and for a short moment he seems confident and self-assertive, then once more his love collapses into passive self-indulgence. He is an unfulfilled lover strolling to and fro like a lost soul. He describes his own conventionality in love as does Viola to Olivia. In Act I, scene v, when sending Cesario as a messenger to Olivia, Viola says in commenting on his love which is accompanied with isolation, indulgence, uncertainty, and frustration:

> Olivia: How does he love me?
> Viola: With adorations, fertile tears,
> With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.
> (I. v. 258-260)

In spite of this, he shows much of being an Epicurean lover seeking the perpetuation of his desires. He seems to turn everything into verbal fantasies in order to feed his appetite for sensation. In claiming his love to Olivia, he says:

> O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,
> Methought she purg'd the air of pestilence;
> That instant was I turn'd into a hart,
> And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
> E'er since pursue me.
> (I. i. 19-23)

Orsino is not able to understand mutual love. In his mind the ideas are held not in balance but in confusion. So he reveals his sentimental conception of what he thinks is

his passion for Olivia in that his psychological condition and his behavior individualize his situation. Harold Jenkins, in his article on Twelfth Night, discusses the faults of such romantic lovers as a parody of the "traditional love-comments." He argues that

> Orsino, content to woo by proxy a woman who immures herself in a seven-year mourning for a dead brother, may have the glamour of a knight of romance but he is not quite free from the risk of absurdity. He seems, they tell us with some justice, in love not so much with a woman as with his own idea of love.[5]

In spite of the illusions he suffers himself, Orsino attempts to emphasize his "love-thoughts" (I. i. 41) by giving advice to Cesario on love and the uncertainties of women (II. iv. 36-39). Orsino says that if Cesario must be in love, the beloved should be younger than he is since Olivia is younger too. He then attacks the infatuation of women in love.

Orsino contradicts himself. In giving a lesson to Cesario, his advice about love and his claim for another reflects intellectual toying with the idea of love, but not an emotional one. He says:

> There is no woman's sides
> Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
> As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart
> So big, to hold so much: they lack retention.
> Alas, their love may be call'd appetite,
> No motion of the liver, but the palate,

[5] Jenkins, p. 77.

> That suffers surfeit, cloyment, and revolt;
> But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
> And can digest as much. Make no compare
> Between that love a woman can bear me
> And that I owe Olivia.
> (II. iv. 94-104)

The same qualities he accuses women of are his own for in that same accusation he is including himself and his errors, but he is unaware of his own misunderstandings and this shows him to be a proud man infatuated with the social poses of the romantic lover.

Orsino has affectations for Olivia rather than true love. Many of these affectations have been rejected by Olivia but are repeated by Orsino. For this same reason, he sends a wooer to her instead of appearing before her himself, thus creating an unattainable object in order to satisfy his melancholic disposition and his own self-pity. Consequently, both faults, melancholy and self-pity, become the cause of his illusions about love instead of being the result of personal disappointments and frustrations. In other words, the unbalanced human nature of Orsino causes him to be a melancholic person who pities himself, and since he is indulged in 'love'--as he thinks--he tries to build a world of his own where he shows pessimistic behaviour, especially in love. When he hears the song of "Come Away Death" sung by Feste, the Duke laments that his passion is a waste of time, an absurdity, and a rejection of life.

In many respects, he likes to feed his moods with music in which he shows great fancy. He says

> Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
> That old and antic song we heard last night;
> Methought it did relieve my passion much,
> More than light airs and recollected terms
> Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times.
> (II. iv. 2-6)

In his love for Olivia, Orsino tries to enchant his imagination, forgetting completely the winning of the heart. He seems to be delighted with his melancholy so that everything he does is attributed to melancholy. He never forgets himself as the person of chief consequence, and he believes that Olivia's devotion should be a matter of course. Besides his indulgence in music and his love of fancy, Orsino's love affair is passive rather than active. He sends a messenger to woo his beloved and tries in vain to let this messenger express his ideas of love to Olivia. In Act II, scene iv, Orsino tries to reveal his love to Olivia by telling Cesario what to say:

> Once more, Cesario,
> Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty.
> Tell her my love, more noble than the world,
> Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;
> The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon her,
> Tell her I hold as giddily as fortune:
> But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems
> That nature pranks her in, attracts my soul.
> (II. iv. 80-87)

The words he uses to describe his passion are the same words repeated by most romantic, conventional lovers. He chooses such words as 'giddily,' 'gems,' and 'pranks' that

supposedly attract his soul, but which actually attract his sight, and appeal to outer fancies. His mind lacks sensibility, and he is the stereotype of the cultured person in delight with emotion. His mere passivity also shows itself when sending a message of his love to Olivia by Viola. He is simply not interested in any answer other than acceptance; that is, he will not accept the realities of the situation and can not come to understand the truth of his sentiments.

Peter Phialas tries in his article entitled "Twelfth Night" to illustrate the contrasting attitudes towards love. He comments that

> Orsino in his opening lines reveals and exposes to the censure of the comic spirit his immoderately sentimental conception of what he thinks is his passion for Olivia. His fancy is, in his own words, "high fantastical," and the pain it causes him is insupportable. For that reason he calls for music as a way to relieve his passion.[6]

Orsino's inability to understand himself makes him a dull and sophisticated person who prefers loneliness and melancholy. As an outcome, in many incidents in the play, he does not care about Olivia's sentiments and does not try to understand her human nature. The mask he has prepared for himself prevents him from seeking the truth and avoiding the folly. Orsino is unable to recognize the

[6] Peter Phialas, "Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's Romantic Comedies (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), p. 270.

seriousness behind Viola's conversation with him. She has a great part in educating Orsino, but still he could not acknowledge her role. Viola uses the rhetoric of love which Orsino admires, thereby making her first serious contact with him by assuring him that she can speak his language:

> Orsino. How dost thou like this tune?
> Viola. It gives a very echo to the seat
> Where Love is thron'd.
> Orsino. Thou dost speak masterly.
> My life upon't, young though thou art, thine eye
> Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves.
> (II. iv. 20-24)

Orsino takes her words as if Viola is in love herself, just as he is, so nothing would be wrong if he had to speak to his beloved in that same way. The conventionality which Orsino has in expressing his love is also revealed in his love for music which to him is a well of emotion in which he allows his rhetoric to submerge. His phrases, rhythms, metres, and images all describe the passionate world of his love just as Romeo and Orlando have done in earlier plays.

But throughout the first part of the play, Orsino suffers from confused emotions, and as Harold Jenkins says

> No denouement is possible until the characters have grown in insight to the point where they can acknowledge the feelings that nature has planted in them. Thus Twelfth Night exhibits in its action one of the fundamental motifs of comedy: the education of a man or woman.[7]

[7] Jenkins, p. 73.

The education of Orsino has taken place with respect to his relationships with three major characters of the play: first through Viola, second through Feste, and third through Olivia.

The disillusionment of Orsino has undergone several stages. The role of Viola-Cesario is the best in helping him to recognize his folly as well as in pushing him to self-realization. Orsino's true quality of love reveals him as a complete character by his actions as well as by his speech and language.

Viola's first schooling of Orsino begins in Act I where she appears in a man's attire and is recognized as the messenger Cesario who wants to woo Olivia. The conversation begins in the Duke's attendance after the refusal of Orsino to abandon his love, with his unclasping to Viola "the book even of [his] secret soul" (I. iv. 14), and asking her to "stand at her doors" (I. iv. 16), in case she will soften her heart and accept him. Viola's answers to him are the first steps to make him understand his human nature, although Orsino himself is unaware of what is becoming of him:

> Duke. Be clamorous, and leap all civil bounds,
> Rather than make unprofited return.
> Viola. Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then?
> Duke. O, then unfold the passion of my love,
> Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith.
> (I. iv. 21-25)

At that moment Viola's sense of his character has

been verified and some of her words should be recalled when she tells the captain of the ship at the beginning of the play that

> I can sing,
> And speak to him in many sorts of music,
> That will allow me very worth his service.
> (I. ii. 57-59)

Viola, who does not deceive herself, is clever enough to attack the misjudgment of Orsino's love through the eye--by her actions and her direct speech to him. When Orsino advises Cesario on the kind of woman to love, he says:

> Then let thy love be younger than thyself,
> Or thy affection cannot hold the bent:
> For women are as roses, whose fair flower
> Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.
> (II. iv. 36-39)

In this passage, Orsino contemplates the transience of beauty. He seems, contradicting his previous words, to have a good understanding of the instant beauty of women since nature does not allow its endurance (II. iv. 37-39). In her second attempt to cure Orsino, Viola tries to develop and unmask the Duke's character, so he may become conscious of what she does throughout their conversation and through her ideal love for him. In an article on the play, Harold Jenkins discusses the conversation of Orsino and Viola which leads to the more complete development of Orsino. He says that

> Orsino is still sending messages to one he calls his "sovereign," but his throne, we may say, is still unoccupied. For his splendid fantasies are as yet self regarding.

> When Viola objects, "But if she cannot love you, sir?" he dismisses this with "I cannot be so answered." Yet when she simply retorts, "Sooth, but you must," he receives his first instruction in the necessity of accommodating his fantasies to practical realities. And soon begins, however unwittingly, to learn. As Viola tells the history of her father's daughter, though he does not see that she is speaking of herself, he finds himself for the first time giving attention to a sorrow not his own. "But died thy sister of her love, my boy?" he asks. To this Viola can only reply, "I know not;" for at this stage in the drama the issue is still in the balance, though Orsino's new absorption in another's plight will provide us with a clue to the outcome. In the very act of sending a fresh embassy to his mistress his thoughts are momentarily distracted from his own affair. When it is necessary for Viola to prompt him "Sir, shall I to this lady?"--though he rapidly collects himself, we know that his development has begun.[8]

Later on, through the fool Feste, Orsino regains the equilibrium of his passion. The case is the same with Shakespeare's other fools: their great role is to pretend folly in order to allow characters to say the wise and the true. In the presence of Orsino, Feste attempts to mime the errors of the Duke in order to make things more apparent to him. Feste criticizes Orsino's enjoying of the melancholy song, "Come Away Death," after he has sung it:

> Now the melancholy god protect thee, and the tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for thy mind is a very opal. I would have men of such constancy put to sea, that their business might be everything, and their intent everywhere,

[8] Jenkins, Shakespeare The Comedies, p. 79.

> for that's it that always makes a good voyage of nothing.
>
> (II. iv. 73-79)

This same song of Feste mocks Orsino's lack of mental stability and his exaggerated sense of grief in love that could find release only in death. The only reason that Orsino likes that song is because it expresses his own melancholy and self-pity. But Feste has great hope in trying to cure Orsino's unbalanced passion. As he said to Viola,

> A sentence
> is but a chev'ril glove to a good wit--how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!
>
> (III. i. 11-13)

To Feste, he continues:

> Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun, it shines everywhere. I would be sorry, sir, but the fool should be as oft with your master as with my mistress.
>
> (III. i. 39-42)

Later in his same article, Jenkins comments on the role of Feste in the self-realization of Orsino:

> Twelfth Night has no unfaithful lover. But it cannot escape notice that Orsino's love is repeatedly compared to the sea--vast, hungry, but unstable; while his mind appears to Feste like an opal, a jewel of magical but ever-changing colors. The changeable man is there, but he has undergone a subtle transformation.[9]

Besides the two roles of Viola and Feste, there remains the role of Olivia who indirectly helps Orsino to recognize his

[9] Ibid., p. 74.

deceptions. Through Orsino's insistence on wooing Olivia, she openly mentions her refusal of his love, thus making him aware of his whims and his self-affectations although he does not admit these at the beginning of the play. In the last Act, the Duke says addressing Viola:

> My thoughts are ripe in mischief:
> I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,
> To spite a raven's heart within a dove.
> (V. i. 127-129)

So he knows the faults of loving a lady who is indifferent to him, and he appreciates the ideal love of Viola whose love she keeps in secret and sincerity. Her words to him in the speech about women's love are exactly what she herself feels towards him, for women she says "are as true of heart as we" (II. iv. 107), their love is crowned with "concealment" (II. iv. 112), "patience" (II. iv. 115), and "smiling at grief" (II. iv. 116). "Was not this love indeed?" (II. iv. 116) she asks him at the end where he keeps his answer until the closing lines of the play when he recognizes the real qualities of the true love of Viola and calls her his "mistress" and "queen" (V. i. 387).

In spite of Olivia's passiveness in loving Orsino, she does not harm him in any way because as a result he becomes aware of the stupidity of his actions. Jenkins comments on her role, as follows:

> So Orsino's repeated rejections by his mistress do not throw him into despair. Instead he recognizes, in her equally fantastic devotion, a nature of surpassingly "fine frame" and

> he reflects on how she will love when the throne of her heart shall find its "King." How too will he love, we are entitled to infer, when his inexhaustible but as yet deluded fancy shall also find the true sovereign it seeks. This of course it does at the end of the play when he exchanges all his dreams of passion for the love of someone he has come to know.[10]

Orsino's language has become harsh, direct and sincere, unadorned with the conventional images which he has used at the beginning of the play. With the development of the Duke's character, his rhetoric has developed as anyone can see in the last scene of the play.

The next character to be considered is Olivia the countess, once deceived and formerly wooed by Orsino. Olivia is deluded by appearances for she is unaware of the true identity of Viola, although many times in their meetings Viola has hinted at the self-deceiving Olivia, but Olivia does not listen to what Viola says. In the first appearance of Viola at her palace, she tries on purpose to show Olivia that she deceives herself:

> Olivia. If I do not usurp myself, I am.
> Viola. Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself: for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission. I will on with my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of my message.
> (I. v. 187-192)

After their first meeting, Olivia feels that she has fallen in love with this messenger. Her love is a whim or caprice

[10] Ibid., p. 78.

with ungoverned and unreasoning passion. Just like Orsino, she embodies fancy in her love. Later on in other scenes, she acts the role of the aggressor in her love affair and offers Cesario a ring as a love token. When she is alone, she admits her love for Cesario:

> Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
> With an invisible and subtle stealth
> To creep in at mine eyes.
> (I. v. 300-302)

Then she becomes trapped in a situation beyond her control, one in which there is no right course of action. Olivia knows she has compromised herself and has betrayed her dignity by offering love so frankly to an inferior, to one who is unwilling to accept her, but she is powerless to control her feelings:

> Well, come again to-morrow. Fare thee well;
> A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell.
> (III. iv. 218-219)

Despite her romantic sentimentality, she suffers from melancholia[11] and morbid solemnity: a restrain of the self from functioning properly. After her brother's death, she vows not to meet any man, but she listens to the messenger with delight for she is interested in the person, not the message. When Cesario comes to plead the case of Orsino to Olivia, she asks Malvolio to tell the messenger that she is sick or not at home, and when Cesario's persistence

[11] Larry S. Champion, "Comedies of Identity," The Evolution of Shakespeare's Comedy (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 81.

prevails, Olivia hides her face with the veil--the physical symbol of her artificial pose. When abjuring the sight of men, she seems fond with grief bordering upon boundless sentiment. Her excessive sentimentality shows as folly--overindulging her passion. Valentine says the following in describing her sentimental affectation:

> . . . till seven years' heat,
> Shall not behold her face at ample view;
> But like a cloistress she will veiled walk,
> And water once a day her chamber round
> With eye-offending brine: all this to season
> A brother's dead love.
> (I. i. 26-31)

Larry Champion in his "Comedies of Identity" mentions that

> Major characters at the outset attempt to hide their real nature behind a facade of physical action which is eventually revealed as a mere pose--Olivia as a victim of fashionable melancholia.[12]

This sadness of which she is accused is a self-punishing routine of mourning for a dead brother. As a result, she becomes unable to understand her inner self and feelings, and she is unable to recognize the truth about this young messenger whom she loves. Viola says to Olivia at their first meeting: "I see you what you are, you are too proud" (I. v. 254); it may be partly the pride of rank which is doomed to be humbled. At a later meeting, Viola hints to her to look through the reality and not to be blinded by appearances:

[12] Ibid., p. 81.

Olivia. I prithee tell me what thou think'st of me.
Viola. That you do think you are not what you are.
Olivia. If I think so, I think the same of you.
Viola. Then think you right; I am not what I am.
Olivia. I would you were as I would have you be.
(III. i. 140-144)

As an outcome of Viola's conversation with her, Olivia seems to communicate, and through her encounters she is able to look beyond her folly. Viola attacks her on moral grounds when she tells her not to hide her beauty by the veil she wears, and it will not "endure wind and weather" (I. v. 240-241), as she claims, for she is, "the cruell'st she alive, / If you will lead these graces to the grave" (I. v. 244-245). As a matter of fact, Viola helps to acknowledge Olivia's feelings and like Phebe of As You Like It, she is forced to admit the reality behind the conventions. Olivia learns that love is meant to be given, and not to be retained for beauty of appearances which does not conquer time or fate.

On the other hand, Olivia's pursuit of Cesario is not without remorse for she realizes the indignity of her actions:

> There's something in me that reproves my fault:
> But such a headstrong potent fault it is,
> That it but mocks reproof.
> (III. iv. 205-207)

In another occasion, she admits her madness just like Malvolio: "I'm as mad as he, / If sad and merry madness equal be" (III. iv. 14-15). Olivia knows what she

is doing is not proper for a dignified lady, and it is a kind of madness that she overcomes at the end. Nevertheless, Olivia herself says that her eyes have deceived her and that is why she is flattered:

> I do I know not what, and fear to find
> Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.
> Fate, show thy force; ourselves we do not owe.
> (I. v. 312-314)

Ralph Berry in his "Messages of Twelfth Night" comments on the illusion of Olivia saying:

> Olivia is in part under the sway of illusion, but is more poseuse than fantasist. When we first meet her, her self-chosen role of grief-prostrated sister is clearly becoming irksome. She is ready to be delivered from her ennui by the clown; and his catechism establishes the folly of her over-long mourning. Nevertheless, her colloquy with Viola reveals her intelligence and capacity to lay aside her pose. In the course of their meeting (I, 5) she symbolically unveils herself, and changes (with Viola) from prose, in this scene the language of fencing and social deception, to verse, the language of truth and intensely felt emotion. Viola thus elicits from Olivia the communication of truth.[13]

The second phase of Olivia's self-realization becomes known through the fool. Feste mocks her melancholy by proving her a fool in a very wise and tricky way:

> Clown. Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?
> Olivia. Good fool, for my brother's death.
> Clown. I think his soul is in hell, madonna.
> Olivia. I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

[13] Ralph Berry, "The Messages of Twelfth Night," Shakespeare's Comedies: Explorations in Form (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 200.

> Clown. The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.
>
> (I. v. 64-70)

Feste comments on Olivia's folly also. He follows a song where he indicates her love refusal as being one of complete passivity and selfishness. He warns her with common sense that female beauty is of short duration and that the Countess should accept love before it is too late and that "Youth's a stuff will not endure" (II. iii. 53). Furthermore, "As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty's a flower" (I. v. 49-50). George Duthie continues with the idea, saying:

> She should therefore accept love before it is too late, before her beauty fades and no lover will have her; beauty being so transient, one cannot afford to waste time in an affected keeping of love at arm's length.[14]

Feste observes the development of her character and mentions later that she does not have any "folly," inferring that Olivia is in the process of approaching her self-realization.

On the other hand, the self-loving Malvolio who indulges in folly himself, has a role in educating Olivia. His role heightens the absurdity of Olivia's love for Cesario by making him an unrequited lover himself. She perceives the excessive prudishness in Malvolio's manner:

[14] George Duthie, "Comedy," Shakespeare (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1966), p. 73.

> O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and
> taste with a distempered appetite.
> (I. v. 89-90)

After that, Olivia recognizes the causes of her own dreams. At the end, she values Malvolio as an admirable steward, and after her development, she expresses sympathy for him and implicitly condemns the jest as a sorry one (V. i. 350-354). From that point on, Malvolio stands for order and sobriety in the commonwealth of Olivia's household. Her kinsman Sir Toby also criticizes the course of life she is taking:

> . . . for I am now so far in offence with
> my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety
> this sport to the upshot.
> (IV. ii. 71-73)

There remains the role of Sebastian who in his sudden appearance at the end of the play embodies the ideal person upon whom Olivia can reflect her true love. The dream she used to live has been changed into reality through her encounter and marriage with Sebastian. Through that sudden encounter, it can be said that Olivia has found her complete self, and has achieved her self-realization and now has been absorbed into normal society.

In Viola and Feste, both Orsino and Olivia experience the best of love's release and comfort. Viola, on one side, is able to moderate the grief of both characters; she is able to help Orsino and Olivia to see the reality of their actions. Peter Phialas comments upon

her important role in the self-realization of Orsino and Olivia:

> . . . she clearly presents a contrast to these two, and her role in the rest of the play will be to aid them in amending their ways. On the one hand, Viola essays to persuade Olivia that falling in love--with Orsino or another--is her unavoidable responsibility (else she usurps herself); on the other, she tells the Duke that he is not the only one who suffers from unrequited love. From the above we should conclude that Viola is intended to represent the norm, an attitude we might call ideal. . . . To such recognition and self-knowledge these two are led by the agency of Viola, by what she says and does, by what she is.[15]

Feste, on the other hand, proclaims the absurdity of Orsino and Olivia's attitudes; he observes them from the outside, liberates, and confines. He mediates between the two worlds of fantasy and reality and compromises both worlds to the benefit of both characters.

Berry says of the clown that

> He, in the design of Twelfth Night, is the reality figure, and the mediator of reality. "I wear not motley in my brain." (1, 5, 51-52) His operations relate to both worlds, for he speaks truth through folly, and expresses reality through the fantasy symbol, music.[16]

To conclude, there is no doubt that the play Twelfth Night is a fitting play to celebrate Shakespeare's farewell to his happy comedies. But this play, when allied

[15] Phialas, Shakespeare's Romantic Comedies, pp. 272-273.

[16] Berry, p. 201.

with The Merchant of Venice and As You Like It, represents a comprehensive and developing view of love and personal relationships, and of life itself as experienced through such relationships. In these three plays, lovers represent the mutual recognition of love, a realization which carries its own convictions of truth. Something which must be acknowledged is that the play Twelfth Night, as with other Shakespearean comedies, emphasizes the joy of characters in love who are made happy through self-restraint. John Hollander comments on the unmasking in the last scene of the play and says:

> But we have been dealing with the Action of Twelfth Night as representing the killing off of excessive appetite through indulgence of it, leading to the rebirth of the unencumbered self. The long final scene, then, serves to show forth the Caesario-King, and to unmask, discover and reveal the fulfilled selves in the major characters.[17]

[17] John Hollander, "Twelfth Night and the Morality of Indulgence," Essays in Shakespearean Criticisms, ed., Calderwood and Toliver (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 301.

Chapter V

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

After discussing the treatment of self-realization in three happy comedies of William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, and Twelfth Night, there remains for consideration the methods Shakespeare uses to accomplish such achievements in his work, aspects which are important to a better understanding of these plays from this versatile period of his writing. Shakespeare tried to present aspects of his own philosophy of life in his happy comedies. These thoughts range from what is reasonable to what is passionate. This conclusion must stress the ideas of his method and the philosophic importance of this subject of self-realization. By self-realization, one means the fulfilment of one's own potential capacities; in other words, it is when illusion, deception, dependency, and naivety have been dismissed, thereby allowing the individual to function most happily and completely.

In these comedies, Shakespeare tries through many incidents to place the individual in a series of conflicts within himself. These conflicts, presented as a struggle or as groups of struggles within a character, result in the triumph of goodness and the happy progress of life as a whole. Conflicts within the individual are the result of an inability to understand properly one's real self, as well as to understand the existence of opposing forces within one's personality. This is seen in the

deluded characters of Bassanio, Orlando, and Orsino before they come to have self-knowledge.

The second type of conflict which Shakespeare uses is placing the individual in a conflict with other individuals. Such conflicts are revealed through the struggle of the character between what is good and what is bad. An example such as the conflict of Antonio the good with Shylock the bad is typical. There is also the struggle between characters with different concepts about life. Shakespeare presents situations in which each individual tries to win the other to his own concept as with the case of Portia and Bassanio, Rosalind and Orlando, and Viola and Orsino. In these cases the male characters are in conflict with the female characters because of their different outlooks concerning life.

The third method of conflict Shakespeare uses is placing the person into a conflict with society. The self-realization of such a character is attained once he attempts to free himself from the boundaries of traditions and conventions. Such examples are Bassanio, Orlando, and Orsino.

The last method Shakespeare uses is revealing the individual in conflict with fate, fortune, nature, and supernatural forces. These unpredictable powers help the character to realize his potential by becoming attuned to society, and being able to cope with others. Figures

achieving fulfilment by this method include Orlando, Bassanio, and Antonio.

Besides these series of conflicts, Shakespeare uses the improbability of both action and characterization which produces acceptable variations within characters. This happens whenever Shakespeare's plots are out of his control and the probable sequence of the incidents is hindered. Therefore, Shakespeare comes to the use of improbable actions and characterizations. Through the use of improbability, Shakespeare provides the way for disguises, coincidences, mistaken identities, and other comic conventions to let the devices mock, acknowledge, and comment about others' follies rather than to reprimand characters through direct, harsh attacks. An example of improbability in action is the role of the hermit and the lioness presented at the end of the play As You Like It. In Twelfth Night, the improbability in characterization shows itself in the self-indulgence of the character Orsino when he meets the poised and well balanced character of Viola who insists upon educating him no matter what the consequences may be.

The philosophic importance of self-realization in Shakespeare's happy comedies reveals four main ideas which were used in building up the deluded characters of these plays. Of major importance is the idea of order and disorder, the significance of which is universally accepted

to the Elizabethans and to Shakespeare. This concept was known to them as being connected to the universe as a whole. Since every creature was believed to be operating in a Chain of Being, he should harmonize himself in order to become a properly functioning, well ordered part of the cycle. Therefore, self-realization brings order to the personality of an individual once the balance between passion and reason is obtained. Order is given to the family of the same individual as well as to his society, and at last to the universe as a whole. Alexander Leggatt, in commenting upon the new social order achieved at the end of As You Like It, a concept which likewise can be applied to the other two comedies, says:

> The image of marriage at the end is thus a complex one, bringing together a rich variety of attitudes. And the new world of marriage is fused with the old world of decency and order. . . . There is a harmony of different generations suggested here, quite different from the conflict of youth and age so frequently found in comedy. . . . The harmony of the ending finally includes more than the joining of sexes in marriage: it involves a full restoration of social order in the broadest terms.[1]

The second concept is the idea of reality as opposed to appearances in which the personality of the individual changes from deception from appearances to conformity with reality after self-realization has been achieved.

[1] Alexander Leggatt, Shakespeare's Comedy of Love (London: Methuen & Company, Limited, 1974), pp. 215-216.

The third concept of philosophic importance to Shakespeare is the idea of true love. True or ideal love as understood by Shakespeare shows that the lover should know himself and know how to have a good relationship with other people, thereby having a balanced kind of love, an equilibrium within the lover's self and his ideals of life.

The fourth aspect of philosophic importance is the impossibility of attaining self-realization for all members of society such as Shylock, Jaques, and Malvolio who all have illusions but who never get attuned to the norms of society. The point to be stressed here is that Shylock the avaricious, Jaques the cynic, and Malvolio the self-centered are characters representing certain views of the human condition, but these views are extreme and for that reason unacceptable. Their roles in the plays are to provide realistic points of view upon which the final formulation of the thoughts of the plays are being made. Nevertheless, despite Shakespeare's excessive use of many improbabilities in these comedies, he remains the most outstanding dramatist whose characters achieve their full potential through the poet's sharp eyes and mind.

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