

Chapter-1

William Shakespeare and *As You Like It*

1.1 William Shakespeare and his dramatic career

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), an English playwright and poet, is recognized in much of the world as the greatest of all dramatists. Hundreds of editions of his plays have been published, including translations in all major languages. Scholars have written thousands of books and articles about his plots, characters, themes, and language. He is the most widely quoted author in history, and his plays have probably been performed many more times than those of any other dramatist. There is no simple explanation for Shakespeare's unrivaled popularity, but he remains our greatest entertainer and perhaps our most profound thinker. He had a remarkable knowledge of human behavior, which he was able to communicate through his portrayal of a wide variety of characters. He was able to enter fully into the point of view of each of his characters and to create vivid dramatic situations in which to explore human motivations and behavior. His mastery of poetic language and of the techniques of drama enabled him to combine these multiple viewpoints, human motives, and actions to produce a uniquely compelling theatrical experience.

Shakespeare probably had attended the Stratford grammar school, the King's New School, which educated the sons of Stratford citizens. The school's rigorous curriculum was based largely on the study of Latin and the major classical writers. Shakespeare's writings show that he was well acquainted with the Latin poet Ovid as well as other Latin works, including comedies by Terence and Plautus, two much-admired Roman playwrights.

Critics say that Shakespeare was not a well learned man and he has nothing in his work to suggest that he was. In his early plays, there were few Latin quotations which he had learned from school. Except this he had no Greek but some French and Italian that he had learned in London. F.E. Halliday says:

“Both from his conversation with scholars , courtiers and travelers and other men of the world, and from his extensive reading, all the knowledge that is revealed in his works, which is remarkable only for its breadth and not for its profundity.”(13)

In spite of some criticism he is highly admired by all literary writers of the world. Really Shakespeare was a quite intelligent person. His enthusiasm and hard labor helped him to pave the way toward success. He learned to exploit brilliantly the stagecraft, the acting, and public taste of his day. He learned a lot while building his career in spite of his poor schooling. None of Shakespeare’s contemporaries thought it strange that a boy born in Stratford, who passed the first twenty or so many years of his life would in next thirty years of work in London, give the stage a series of comedies and tragedies that place him among the great creative minds of all ages. Appreciating Shakespeare’s ability David Daiches writes:

“Man of theatre, poet, and expert in the human passions, Shakespeare has appealed equally to those who admire the art with which he renders a story in terms of the acted drama or the insight with which he presents states of mind and complexities.”(246)

Shakespeare was a man of Elizabethan theatre. It happens very rarely in the history of literature. A craftsman who has acquired perfect control over his medium and masterly ease in handling the techniques and conventions of his day is also a universal genius of the highest order.

Widely regarded as the writer of all time, William Shakespeare occupies an important position in the world literature. Other poets, such as Homer and Dante, and novelists, such as Leo Tolstoy and Charles Dickens, have transcended national barriers, but no writers’ living reputation can seriously be compared with that of Shakespeare, whose plays, written in the late sixteenth century for a small repertory theatre, are now performed and read more often and in more centuries than ever before. Ben Johnson, the contemporary poet and dramatist, had prophesized that “Shakespeare was not of an age, but for all time” (qtd. in “Shakespeare”,

615). The prophesy was marvelously proved true. About Johnson's admiration of Shakespeare Peter Alexander says that:

“Ben Johnson, in the lines which he wrote in 1623 for the volume in which Shakespeare colleagues, John Hemminge and Henry Condell, collected their friend's plays, does not think it out of keeping to refer to the place of birth of dramatist whom he judges to have excelled even the dramatist of antiquity, the man Johnson himself was fain to call his masters.”(1-2)

Johnson himself has also reminded his readers of the strong impression the plays has made upon Queen Elizabeth I and King James I at court performances:

Sweet swan of Avon, what a sight it were
To see thee on our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames
That so did take Eliza and James! (qtd. in “Shakespeare” 617)

Here the phrase “sweet swan of Avon” is used for the appreciation and the glory of Shakespeare. It may be audacious even to attempt a definition of his greatness, but it is so difficult to describe the variety of gifts that enabled him to create imaginative versions of pathos and mirth that whether read in the book or witnessed in the theatre, fill mind and linger there. He is a writer of great intellectual rapidity, perceptiveness, and poetic power:

“Johnson could not conceal entirely his loyalties as a scholar or refrain from wishing that Shakespeare with all genius had paid more attention to classical forms and perfected himself in the art of learned imitation that Johnson cultivated so resolutely. Other writers also have those qualities, but with Shakespeare the keenness of mind was applied not to abstruse or remote subjects but to human beings and their complete range of emotion and conflicts.”(“Shakespeare” 615).

Shakespeare is astonishingly clever with words and images, so that his mental energy, when applied to intelligible human situations, finds full memorable expression, convincing and imaginatively stimulating. As the art from which his creative energies went was not remote and bookish but involved the vivid stage impersonation of human beings, commanding sympathy and invite vicarious participation. Thus many of Shakespeare's great merits can survive translation into other languages from that of Elizabethan England.

The first reference to Shakespeare in the literary world of London comes in 1592, when a fellow dramatist, Robert Greene, declared in a pamphlet written on his death bed:

“There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with Tigers' heart wrapped in a players hide supposes he is a well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit the only shake-scene in a country.” (“Shakespeare” 616)

It is difficult to exactly interpret what those words mean; but it is clear that they are insulting and that Shakespeare is the object of sarcasms. According to *Britannica*, when the book in which they appeared (Greene, *Grotes Worth of Witte*, 1592), published after Greene's death, a mutual acquaintance wrote a preface offering an apology to Shakespeare and testifying to his worth (“Shakespeare” 616). Shakespeare's reputation today is, however, based primarily on the 38 plays that he wrote, modified, or collaborated on. Granville writes in the praise of Shakespeare:

“What we come to call ‘Elizabethan Drama’ seems to us quite clearly to have been launched on its career between the time Shakespeare was definitely living in Stratford and at the time when he was probably writing his first play.” (244)

Records of Shakespeare's plays begin to appear from 1594, when the theaters reopened with the passing of the plague that had closed them for 21 months. In December of 1594 his play *The Comedy of Errors* was performed in London during the Christmas revels at

Gray's Inn, one of the London law schools. Shakespeare wrote nearly all of his plays from 1590 to 1611, when he retired to New Place. A series of history plays and joyful comedies appeared throughout the 1590s, ending with *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. At the same time as he was writing comedy, he also wrote nine history plays, treating the reigns of England's medieval kings and exploring realities of power still relevant those days. The great tragedies including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* were written during the first decade of the 1600s.

Shakespearean comedies are divided into four parts: Early Comedies, Middle Comedies, Mature Comedies and Problem Comedies. Early comedies include *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. These comedies reflect in their gaiety and exuberant language the lively and self-confident tone of the English nation after 1588, the year England defeated the Spanish Armada, an invasion force from Spain. Although very different in tone, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merchant of Venice* from the mid-1590s provide evidence of Shakespeare's growing mastery of the comic form and his willingness to explore and test its dramatic possibilities. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* represents Shakespeare's first outstanding success in the field of romantic comedy. The romantic plays *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Twelfth Night* are often characterized as joyous mature comedies because of their generally happy mood and sympathetic characters. Written around 1599 and 1600, they represent Shakespeare's triumph in the field of high comedy. These mature comedies revolve around beautiful, intelligent, and strong-minded heroines, a type anticipated by the quick-witted heiress Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*. Nothing quite like these plays appears in earlier English drama, and Shakespeare never wrote anything like them in later years. They present a contrast to the satiric comedy that was coming into fashion at the time, and many critics believe they demonstrate not only Shakespeare's mastery of his art

but also his congenial temperament in the sympathy he reveals toward his characters. Three plays; *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Measure for Measure*; written soon after the mature comedies are usually called by modern critics "problem plays," a term first coined for them in 1896. The problem comedies touch on complex and often unpleasant themes and contain characters whose moral flaws are graver and more difficult to change than the shortcomings of the characters in the farces or the joyous comedies. Little of the light-hearted humor of the earlier comedies, not the easy satisfaction of their endings, appears in these plays. They are, however, emotionally rich and dramatically exciting, and have become increasingly successful on stage and stimulating to readers.

Shakespearean comedies celebrate human social life even as they expose human folly. By means that are sometimes humiliating, even painful, characters learn greater wisdom and emerge with a clearer view of reality. Some of his early comedies can be regarded as light farces in that their humor depends mainly upon complications of plot, minor foibles of the characters, and elements of physical comedy such as slapstick. The so-called joyous comedies follow the early comedies and culminate in *As You Like It*. Written about 1600, this comedy strikes a perfect balance between the worlds of the city and the country, verbal wit and physical comedy, and realism and fantasy. After 1600, Shakespearean comedies took on a darker tone, as Shakespeare uses the comic form to explore less changeable aspects of human behavior. *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure* test the ability of comedy to deal with the unsettling realities of human desire, and these plays, therefore, have usually been thought of as "problem comedies".

History plays, sometimes known as chronicle plays (after the "chronicles" from which the plots were taken), were a highly popular form of drama in Shakespeare's time. History plays became increasingly popular after 1588 and the defeat of the Spanish Armada, so clearly the interest in English history reflected a growing patriotic consciousness.

Shakespeare wrote ten plays listed in the 1623 Folio as histories and differentiated from the other categories, comedies and tragedies, by their common origin in English history. Eight of Shakespeare's history plays re-create the period in English history from 1399, when King Henry IV took the throne after deposing King Richard II, to the defeat of Richard III in battle in 1485. Henry IV was the first English king from the house of Lancaster. The history plays cover the conflict between the houses of Lancaster and York, known as the Wars of the Roses, from 1455 to 1485. The final event is the victory of Henry VII over Richard III in 1485, ending the rule of the York dynasty and beginning the Tudor dynasty. The eight plays devoted to this period, listed in the chronological order of the kings with the dates of their composition in parentheses, are *Richard II* (1597?); *Henry IV, Parts I and II* (1597?); *Henry V* (1598?); *Henry VI, Parts I, II, and III* (1590-1592?); and *Richard III* (1592-1593?). As their dates indicate, Shakespeare did not write the plays in chronological order. He wrote the second half of the story first and only later returned to the events that initiated the political problems.

Shakespearean tragedies are among the most powerful studies of human nature in all literature and appropriately stand as the greatest achievements of his dramatic artistry. Attention understandably has focused on his unforgettable tragic characters, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. Yet the plays also explore and extend the very nature of tragedy itself by discovering within it a structure that derives meaning precisely from its refusal to offer consolation or compensation for the suffering it traces. Regarding his tragedy H.B. Charlton writes:

“His plays are plays that show human beings engaged in human actions in a world of all of us. His tragedies depict men struggling with life and brought by it to death. The source of these powers in Shakespeare is his instinctive sense of personality and his intuitive vision of the ways of moral destiny, the cosmic arbiters and universal laws of

human life. To be admitted to such imaginative insight into truth and reality is for the spectator itself a pleasure. (12-13)

All focus on a basically decent individual who brings about his own downfall through a tragic flaw.

Scholars have theorized about the reasons behind this change in Shakespeare's vision, and the switch from a focus on social aspects of human activity to the rending experience of the individual. But no one knows whether events in his own life or changes in England's circumstances triggered the shift, or whether it was just an aesthetic decision. Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, had died in 1596 at the age of 11, his father died in 1601, and England's popular monarch, Elizabeth I, died in 1603, so it is not unreasonable to think that the change in Shakespeare's genre and tone reflects some change in his own view of life prompted by these events. In his last years working as a playwright, however, Shakespeare wrote a number of plays that are often called romances or tragicomedies, plays in which the tragic facts of human existence are fully acknowledged but where reassuring patterns of reconciliation and harmony can be seen finally to shape the action.

Toward the end of his career, Shakespeare created several experimental plays that have become known as tragicomedies or romances. These plays differ considerably from Shakespeare's earlier comedies, being more radical in their dramatic art and showing greater concern with reconciliation among generations. Yet like the earlier comedies the tragicomedies end happily with reunions or renewal. Typically, virtue is sorely tested in the tragicomedies, but almost miraculously succeeds. Through the intervention of magic and art; or their emotional equivalent, compassion, or their theological equivalent, grace; the spectacular triumph of virtue that marks the ends of these plays suggests redemptive hope for the human condition. In these late plays, the necessity of death and sadness in human existence is recognized but located within larger patterns of harmony that suggest we are "led

on by heaven, and crowned with joy at last,” as the epilogue of *Pericles* proposes. Critics from Dowden to the present are agreed that *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winters Tale* and the *Tempest* have so many characteristics in common as would justify their being grouped together. Critics moreover, are agreed that the most obvious characteristics of these plays are their affinity with romance. Thus Dowden wrote: “There is a certain romantic element in each romance” (3). Howard Felprin has further written that “the history of criticism of Shakespeare’s last plays is in effect a record of the response to their peculiarly romantic character, to the features’ that distinguish them as a group and link them with romance tradition”(6).

Shakespearean Sonnets are also important contribution to English literary world. Thought to be written between 1595 and 1599, the sonnets are of the English or Shakespearean form, which consists of three quatrains and a couplet. The sonnets describe the devotion of a person, often identified as Shakespeare himself, to a young man whose beauty and virtue he praises and to a mysterious and faithless Dark Lady with whom the poet is infatuated. Some critics have been tempted to declare that:

“It does not matter who the young man and the dark lady were-that the poetry is the important thing. The sonnets on the whole retain an obstinate privacy that is a bar to enjoyment and therefore must be judged a fault, one that would hinder altogether the appreciation of any poem less brilliant.” (“Shakespeare” 615)

In several sonnets the poet accuses his patron of deserting him for a rival poet or charges him with stealing the poet’s mistress, the Dark Lady. The ensuing triangular situation, resulting from the attraction of the poet’s friend to the Dark Lady, is treated with passionate intensity and psychological insight. The sonnets are grouped in a rough pattern, loosely linked by subject matter, stylistic device, or theme. The first 126 sonnets are addressed to the young nobleman. Sonnets 127 to 152 are miscellaneous but are mostly

addressed to the Dark Lady, who has already appeared in some of the earlier sonnets. The poet's attitude towards her is lustful, accompanied by occasional pangs of guilt and revulsion. While some readers accept the sonnets as a literal account of events that actually happened to Shakespeare, most critics view them as semiautobiographical evidence that has yet to be satisfactorily proven. While the sonnets may provide little conclusive information about Shakespeare's life, they do provide insight into him as an artist. Like his later plays, Shakespearean sonnets are highly metaphorical. The sonnets derive their artistic unity less from the story that runs intermittently through them than from their exploration of the universal human themes of time, death, change, love, lust, and beauty. Shakespeare's deep seriousness permeates even the most lyrical passages. None of the early readers of sonnets 129 or 146, for example, could have doubted his eventual capacity to write great dramatic prose.

1.2 Shakespearean Theatre

Before Shakespearean time and during his boyhood, troupes of actors performed wherever they could in halls, courts, courtyards and any other spaces available. Just to the opposite of puritan city council's desire, who believed that "play acting" was a violation of the biblical commandment against idolatry, these performances attracted large and often rowdy crowds. However, in 1574, when Shakespeare was ten years old, the Common Council passed a law requiring plays and theatres in London to be licensed. In 1576, actor and future lord Chamberlain's Man, "James Burbage and his company of players leased land close to Shoreditch. Their, they built the first public playhouse in England, completed in 1576 the theatre was an immediate success" (Barnet, 266). After this many more theatres were established, including the Globe Theatre, where most of Shakespearean plays were premiered.

Harrison and E.A.G. Lamborn mentions that Shakespeare first got chance of viewing play in 1569, he was nearly six years old then, when the Earl of Worcester's servants visited the town and presented a play. During this time the play performers were recognized as servants of Earl and Lords, as they have to take permission for performance from them (77). Regarding the theatrical conditions of that time R. Willis, the contemporary of Shakespeare had written in a book called "*Mount Tabor*":

“In the city of Gloucester the manner is, as I think it is in other like corporations, when, players of interludes come to town, they first attend the mayor to enforce him what nobleman's servants they are, and so to get license for their public playing... and that is called the mayor play.”(qtd. In Harrison 77)

The feudal idea that every man must have a “lord” who should be answerable for him was still strong; and any company visiting a town should have justify the corporation that they were not “master less men”, but were the retainers of some noble and had his authority to travel. The company to which Shakespeare attached himself was under the Lord Stranger's men; at his death in April 1594 they transferred their allegiance to Henry Carey, the queen's cousin and Chamberlain, so that they could style themselves ‘the Lord Chamberlain's servants’; in 1603, on the accession of James I, they were taken over as the king's players, ranking with the Grooms of the chamber. The company was reorganized as the first in the kingdom.

According to W. Moelwyn Merchant, the design of the first experimental theatre provided for a playing space or stage roughly circular in shape and at floor level. The audience was grouped around it on three sides, the fourth side being used to enable the use of theatrical setting and so provide a tangible link with the orthodox theatre of our day. The audience was raised in tiers to ensure visibility and no members of the audience were placed more than forty feet from the actor. “A theatre produced on this plan is exactly the shape as

the classical Greek theatre, though very much smaller in size. The size and the degree of the embracement of the actor by the audience are compared very closely with what we know of the Elizabethan playhouse” (Merchant 18). Elizabethan theatres were generally built after the design of the original theatre. Built of the wood, these theatres comprised three tiers of seats in a circular shape, with a stage on one side of the circle. The audience’s seats and part of the stage were roofed, but much of the main stage and the area in front of the stage in the center of the circle were open to the elements. About fifteen audience members could pay extra money to sit in the covered seating areas, while about eight hundred groundlings paid less money to stand in the open area before the stage. The stage itself was divided into three levels: a main stage area with doors at the rear and a curtained area in the back for “discovery scenes”; an upper canopied area called “heaven” for balcony scenes; and area under the stage called “hell”, accessed by a trap door in the stage. There were dressing rooms located behind the stage, but no curtain in the front of the stage, which meant that scenes had to flow into each other and “dead bodies”, had to be dragged off.

Performances took place during the day, using natural light from the open center of the theatre. Since there could be no dramatic lighting and there was very little scenery or props, audiences relied on the actors lines and stage directions to supply the time of the day and year, the weather, location, and mood of the scenes. Various theatrical conventions looking strange today were normally practiced in Shakespearean theatre. The roles of female were usually done by male person because of the delicate puritan social convention. Costumes were usually colorful and elaborate versions of regular versions Elizabethan dress, whether worn for *Macbeth*, set in the 11th century or of *Julius Caesar*, set in the 44 B.C. scenery was almost nonexistent. A single tree might stand for forest, a chair for a throne room. Shakespeare made for the lack of scenery by giving characters descriptive passages to help the audience visualize the scenes. Shakespearean plays masterfully supply this

information. For example, in *Hamlet* the audience learns with the first twenty lines of dialogue where the scene takes place (“Have you had Quite Guard? “), what time of day is (“‘Tis now stroke twelf”), what the weather is like (“‘tis better cold”), and what mood the character are in (“and I am sick at heart”).

One important difference between plays written in Shakespearean time and those written today is that Elizabethan plays were published after their performances, sometimes even after their authors’ deaths and were in many ways a record of what happened on stage during these performances, rather than directions for what should happen. Actors were allowed to suggest changes to scenes and dialogue and had much more freedom with their parts than actors today. Shakespearean plays are no exceptions. In *Hamlet*, for instance, much of the plot revolves around the fact that Hamlet writes his own scene to be added to play in order to ensnare his murderous father.

Certain Shakespearean theatrical conventions, which might be quite strange for these days audience, were natural to the Elizabethan audiences. For Example:

“Most of the Shakespeare’s characters speak in blank verse-unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter. In these verse form, each line is divided into five units, or feet, with stress falling on every second syllable. Because the rhythm of blank verse mimics the natural rhythm of spoken English, it is especially appropriate for dialogue.”(Barnet 267)

Shakespeare’s plays were published in various forms and with a wide variety of accuracy during his time. The discrepancies between versions of his plays from one publication to the next make it difficult for editors to put together authoritative editions of his works. Plays could be published in large anthologies called Folios (the first folio of Shakespeare’s contains thirty six plays) or smaller quartos. Folios were so named because of the way their paper was folded in half to make chunks of two pages each which were sewn

together to make a large volume. Quartos were smaller, cheaper books containing only one play. Their paper was folded twice, making four pages; in general, the First folio was of better quality than the quartos. Therefore, plays that are printed in the First Folio are much easier for editors to compile.

Although Shakespeare's language and classical references seem archaic to some modern readers, they were commonplace to his audiences. His viewers came from all classes, and his plays appealed to all kind of sensibilities, from "highbrow" accounts of kings and queens of old to the "lowbrow" blundering of clowns and servants. Even his most tragic plays include clown characters for comic relief and to comment on the events of the play. Audiences would have been familiar with his numerous references to classical mythology and literature, since these stories were staples of the Elizabethan knowledge base. While Shakespeare's plays appealed to all levels of society and included familiar story lines and themes, they also expanded his audiences' vocabularies. Many phrases and words that we use today, like "amazement", "in my mind's eye", and "the milk of human kindness" were coined by Shakespeare. His plays contain a greater variety and number of word than almost any other work in the English language, showing he was quick to innovate, had a huge vocabulary, and was interested in using new phrases and words.

1.3 *As You Like It* and William Shakespeare

In *As You Like It*, written about 1599 but not published until the 1623 First Folio, Shakespeare draws a rich and varied contrast between the strict code of manners at the court and the relative freedom from such structure in the countryside. Yet it also satirizes popular pastoral plays, novels, and poems of the time. Those popular but sentimental works presented rural life as idyllic and its inhabitants as innocents not yet corrupted by the world. In Shakespeare's play the rural world is far from perfect, and the characters are not always what they appear. Rosalind and Celia have disguised themselves when they flee the court for the

forest, but other characters not disguised are self-deceived. In the forest, however, true identities are re-established. A number of love matches mark the conclusion, and the play ends in a parade of lovers marching two-by-two. Even the melancholy Jacques, who remains outside the play's concluding harmonies, expresses his benevolent hopes for the lovers, as the comic logic promises all "true delights."

There is not complete clearance about the fixed written date of the play except the logics to assimilate its right date of written. *As You Like It* has been guessed to have written between 1598 to 1600. It can scarcely have been written before 1598. "It contains a quotation (the line "who ever loved that loved not at first sight", III.5.79) from Marlowe's poem *Hero and Leander*, which was not published till 1598, though Marlowe died in 1593" (Verity, viii). The presence of this line in *As You Like It* can not be explained by the supposition that Shakespeare had seen a manuscript copy of *Hero and Leander* or heard it recited. The manner in which the quotation is introduced implies that *Hero and Leander* were so well known that the line would be recognized by audience. Further *As You Like It* is not included in the list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Mores in his *Palladis Tamia*, published in autumn of 1598" (Verity viii). First its name was known when it was entered on the stationers register in 1600.

The title name *As You Like It* strikes the chord of this beautiful, gay, and graceful play. Shakespeare himself was very much amused by his own piece of writing when he himself had read it after he had written it. He had said:

"Take it as you like it, in whatever way it pleases you. Take its mirth or seriousness, its matter of thought or fancy, its grave or lively characters, its youthful love and self-conscious melancholy-take anything you like out of it. There is plenty to please all kinds of men. It is written for your pleasure. Take it for your pleasure."(qtd. in Brooke 155)

Shakespeare wrote this play mainly with the purpose of entertaining himself and also with the expectation of other's enjoyment, without any kind of moral propose the solemn professor, the most solid moralist, will not be able to assert that Shakespeare wrote this play with a moral purpose of, or from a special desire to teach mankind. He wrote it for his own delight. It is true there is much matter in it, as there is in human life, which the prophets and moralists may use for their own purposes, but Shakespeare did not write these things for their ethical ends. He wrote those things because they were right thing in their places; and he smiled, as he wrote them, with pleasures in them. 'I do not mind,' he would have said, how you use my play, if only you let the lover and his maiden, the Duke and his hunters, the fool and the shepherds, Jacques, Silvius and Phoebe, and the forest and the deer, do with it also what they like, and as they like it. I have made a new thing; let every one enjoy it.' Verity writes about the title of the play:

“The title *As You Like It* must have been used by Shakespeare with a special significance. *As You Like It* is a mixture of comedy and romance, with occasional touches of seriousness. The poet seems to forestall objection by saying: “Here is the piece; interpret it in any spirit you like.”(xix)

Shakespeare is quite successful to take us back, out of the tragic and semi tragic world in which we have been, to the full and delightful gaiety, to the very root of his nature, to that which made him, the wise, delightful sunny creature, whom nature in her happiest hour gave to us for our eternal pleasure. In *As You Like It* we touch Shakespeare as nature freshly made him, the wise, delightful, sunny creature. Milton also has appreciated the grace, wildness, gaiety, sweetness and joy, as the primal things of Shakespeare. Milton has kept only the sweet time comedies in his mind not the great tragedies when he writes of him:

Sweetest Shakespeare, Nature's child,

Warbles his native wood- notes wild. (qtd. in Brooke 156)

‘Wood-notes’, the very word has been selected for the admiration of the presentation of the Forest of Arden in the play.

This play appeared after the history plays: *Richard II, III, Henry IV and V*, written after the English victory over Spanish Armada with violence and slaughter, indicates Shakespeare’s return to his sunny happiness in delightful comedies-*Twelfth Night, Much Ado About Nothing*, and *As You Like It*. With this return he resumes his constant subject, of love. And in these comedies he is at play with love. They are ruled by the god of love at his choicest pranks, in protean shapes, and varied through a multitude of moods. Most men at Shakespeare’s age (he was now about thirty seven or thirty eight) would have lost their youthful brightness, gamesomeness, and delight in life. Love would have ceased to be radiant, jeweled with joy, and full of sport. But “Shakespeare has lost nothing. He is Orlando, he is Rosalind. Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale his infinite variety.” (Brooke 156)

Shakespeare’s presentation of Arden sceneries is well admired. Scenery of the play is quite brilliantly presented by suggestions on the lips of the actors into lovely land shapes. The forest of, by a coincidence of names, puts us in mind of an English forest; and seems to transfer the action to the English land. And Shakespeare, no doubt, with this patriotic passion, would have desired this. Whether he desired it or no, he prayed into this idea. He used, as material, his youthful wanderings in the glades and by the streams of Warwickshire. A.W. Verity writes:

“Shakespeare did not select the Forest of Arden for the scene of his story from amongst other forests of Europe. It is the scene of the incidents in the novel from which he wrought, but he would not value the name the less because it was that of the mother from which he sprang, and of the forest country of Warwickshire, it and around which his family had been seated for more generations.”(xx)

It was likely enough that Shakespeare had seen this very place. But whether he drew direct from nature or not, his forest is beautiful. Shakespeare being enchanted with the place, and carried the forest away from this earth where winter breaks up the joyous plentitudes of summer, and places it in the far land of imagination, where it is always summer, and wonderful things are common. Dowden describes the Forest of Arden as a resting place of Shakespeare from the hangover of historical plays:

“Shakespeare, when he wrote this idyllic play, was himself in his Forest of Arden. He had ended one great ambition –the historical plays – and not yet commenced the tragedies. It was a resting place. He sends his imagination into the woods to find repose.”(81)

Instead of the court and camps of England, and embattled pain of France, here was this woodland scene, where the palm-tree and birds are to be found; possessed of flora and fauna that flourish in spite of physical geography. There is an open air feeling throughout the play. The dialogue as has been observed catches freedom and freshness from the atmosphere.

“‘Never is scene within doors except when something discordant is introduced to heighten as if were the harmony.’ After the trumpets tone of Henry V, comes the sweet pastoral strain so bright, so tender, must it not be all in keeping? Shakespeare was not trying to control his melancholy” (Dowden 81). When he needed to do that, Shakespeare confronted his melancholy very passionately, and looked it full in the face. Here he needed refreshment, a sunlight tempered by forest boughs, a breeze, upon his forehead, a stream murmuring in his ears.

Compared with the blank verse of plays like *Richard II*, the blank verse of *As You Like It* is of that freer type which illustrates Shakespeare’s variations of the singular type; yet not in the same degree as that of plays like *Macbeth* and *King Lear* which are known to belong to a later period still less of plays like the *Tempest* and *The Winters Tale*. The

influence of rhyme is still less seen, as in the plays of Shakespeare's middle period. There is much prose as in *Much Ado about Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*. The style and diction are essentially those of the dramatist's of middle period. To quote Dowden's familiar summary:

“In Shakespeare's earliest plays the language is sometimes as it were a dress put upon the thought – a dress ornamented with superficial care: the idea is at times hardly sufficient to fill out the language in which it is put.”(Verity, xi)

During the middle period of his dramatic career, he seems perfectly successful in keeping balance between thought and expression as in *Julius Caesar*. In the later plays, he has given much stress upon the expression rather than the thought. In *Tempest* some of Prospero's speeches are abrupt and irregular. Therefore Shakespeare's middle plays including *As You Like It* are considered as mature comedies.

The plot of *As You Like It* is based on Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde*. “*Rosalynde* is a primitive type of novel, similar in its pastoral character to Sydney's *Arcadia* and imitative of the pretty but affected style of Lyly's *Eupheues*”, (Verity, xii). Some features are directly taken from the master plot and many are much changed to give completely new test. It indicates Shakespeare's ability to perform his quality. In the play three characters are entirely new from its master creations: Jacques, Audrey, Touchstone have no counterpart in *Rosalynde*, several of names are changed. Rosander and Saladin the two brothers of the novel, became respectively Orlando and Oliver, Alinda is changed to Celia and Montaus to Silvius. In the novel the rival dukes are not related; Shakespeare makes them brothers, in order that the relation between them may be parallel to those brothers between Orlando and Oliver. In the novel Alinda (Celia in the play) is exiled by her father on account of her constancy to her friend Rosalynde; in the play Celia's banishment is a voluntary act of devotion.

In the play, the role of Rosalynde has been given much more prominence than in the novel; this is done by subordinating the character of Orlando, who (as Rosander) is of equal importance in *Rosalynde*. At the close of *As You Like It* the usurping Duke represents and resigns ill-won dignities, in *Rosalinde* he is defeated in battle and killed by his rival. Shakespeare's purpose is to admit nothing that could distress: no classical must dim the serene horizon, and repentance is better than revenge.

Furthermore, Shakespeare has used historical figure's glory through name of his character- Orlando. French says:

“It is very probable that Shakespeare took the name of his knight (Sir Roland de Boys) from an old but extinct family of great note in Leicester and Warwickshire, whose memory was long preserved in the latter country, Sir Ernold or Arnold de Boys; Arnold being easily transposed to Orlando, and there we have Orlando.”

(qtd. in Verity xxi)

Upon the whole, *As You Like It* is the sweetest and happiest comedies among Shakespearean comedies. Everything comes to a happy end without any kind of suffering of the characters. The pastoral hours that the characters passes are measured by no clocks, no regulated recurrences of duty or toil; they flow on unnumbered in voluntary occupation of fanciful idleness, to which every one addicts himself according to his humor or disposition; and this unlimited freedom compensates all of them for the lost conveniences of life. Selfishness, envy, and ambition have been left in the city behind them; of all human passions, where it dictates the same language to the simple shepherd and this chivalrous youth, who hangs his love ditty to a tree.

1.4 Reviews on *As You Like It*

As You Like It, the widely studied play of the Shakespeare has been reviewed by many critics as much the work of thought as the reward of feeling. The romance in the pastoral background has much attracted the heart of the critics. Frederick S. Boas says:

“The pastoral background is the simple greenery of the forest glades, such as the writer of the ballad and his hearers and themselves known. But in the Elizabethan age this homely native product became associated in the hands of lodge with a completely different literary growth- the conventional renaissance pastoral. In the primitive occupations of the Shepherd’s class, and in their simple joys and sorrows, these sophisticated wording found most piquant of contrasts to the problem of their own existence.”(276)

The pastoral romance has been much admired by critics. As soon as the scene shifts to the Forest of Arden there is a change, and we feel that the air of this sylvan retreat has a subtle effect on all who breathe it. *As You Like It* differs from the rest of the major comedies not only in its use of theatrical scenes but also of events linked together by the logical intricacies of cause and effect. Critics who have approached the play as a pastoral comedy also see the work as a combining of pastoral and anti pastoral elements. In *The Complete Signet Classic Shakespeare* Albert Gilman has said:

“Shakespeare has certainly handled the narrative expeditiously. It is very much as if he were eager to be in Arden to “fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world”. We had rather be in Arden where the wicked are converted by fiat and lovers marry in half dozen lots.”(839)

Critics have termed *As You like It* as one of the Shakespeare’s “three sunny or sweet-time comedies.” According to A.W. Verity’s *As You Like It* has united the radiant wit of *Much*

Ado About Nothing with the diverting mirth and tender sentiments of *Twelfth Night*. It has won the heart of the readers because of its combination of pastoral ideal and romance.

The Cambridge Guide to literature describes *As You Like It* as the most charitable Shakespearean comedies:

“*As You Like It*, despite the subtlety of its construction, acknowledges the more primitive full of fertility rituals and folk festivities. The release from the pressure and constraints of the court bring to all its leading characters a new understanding of their true priorities. However, improbable its incidents may seem on a purely narrative level, the harmony of their outcome is profoundly satisfying.” (Ousby 42)

Ousby is much impressed by the pastoral backdrop of the play, where the characters are living a tension free life knowing their true priorities. While they were in town, they were much concerned with property and authority. The usurper duke Frederick leaves his malicious motives when he enters in forest, Adam also is overwhelmed with the love for brother leaving his jealousy and other character are also living happily in the love and harmony of the nature.

Margaret Webster writes:

“*As You Like It*, however, is the most cloudless of the comedies. It has been described as most English. There are no dangers in this forest and not the mildest inconvenience to the progress of mellow thought, sweet speech, and gay, full hearted loving, predestine to happiness. (199)

The play has also been observed as a tribute for Christopher Marlowe by the critics. Peter Alexander writes:

“That Shakespeare had been reading Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander* (printed in 1598), is suggested by several passages, Phebe says,

“Dead shepherd” (iii.v.80).

A tribute to a former colleague, unique in Shakespeare, and yet strangely in place in what seems at first sight so very incongruous a setting.” (146)

There is nothing stuffy about the atmosphere of *As You Like It*. with a few trivial exceptions all the action takes place out of doors, in the country, by daylight, unaided by any magic save that of nature, and in this atmosphere the play is unique. The collaboration of the pastoral scene and the prose consistency, in its beauty of phrase and rhythm, approach so near to poetry is quite admiring. Halliday writes:

“The tranquil innocence of the scene - rural rather than sylvan - is suggested by the evenness of the writing and by impartiality with which Shakespeare distributes his poetry among the characters.” (120)

Shakespeare’s greatest contribution in the field of comedy is admired for *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*. *Twelfth Night* is largely occupied with the disclosure of unbalanced sentiments. There is the unrestrained emotionalism of Olivia. *As You Like It* handles an allied theme by its exposure of merely conventional pastoralism. Indeed once the positive construction of their larger world has been effected by the heroines, “There is now place, not only for their own safeguards for it, such as the perpetual alertness to expose the dangers of unbalanced sentiments, there is also place for sort of direct satire and the forthright comically which were the manners of the older classical tradition.” (Charlton, 288)

Jonson especially favors the comic dialogue between the characters and also the overall presentation of the play. According to him:

“The fable is wild and pleasing. The comic dialogue is very sprightly, with less mixture of low buffoonery than in some other plays; and the graver part is elegant and harmonious.”(qtd. in Halliday 404)

Another commentator Hazlitt comments upon the pastoral scenario of Arden, and praises it for the sentiments that it provokes:

“Shakespeare has here converted the Forest of Arden into another Arcadia, where they ‘fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world’. It is the most ideal of any of this author’s plays. It is a pastoral drama, in which the interests arises more out of sentiments and characters than out of actions and situations.” (qtd. In Charlton 404)

Hazlitt is much impressed by the pastoral air of the Arden:

“The very air of the place seems to breathe of philosophical poetry: to stir the thoughts, to touch the hearts with pity, as the drowsy forest rustles to the sighing gale. Never was there such beautiful moralizing, equally free from pedantry or petulance.”(qtd. In Charlton 404)

The significance of *As You Like It* is admired not only for its presentation of pastoral event but also for its relation with the Shakespeare’s changing mood of writing from history plays to something else which can provide relief to himself from the burden of writing violence and political intrigues. Shakespeare, when he had completed his English historical plays, needed rest for his imagination; and in such a mood, craving refreshment and recreation, he wrote his play of *As You Like It*. To understand the spirit of this play, we must bear in mind that it was written immediately after Shakespeare’s great series of histories, ending with *Henry V.* (1599), and before he began the great series of tragedies. Dowden writes:

“Shakespeare turned with a sense of relief, and a lungful sigh, from the oppressive subjects of history, so grave, so real, so massive, and found rest and freedom and pleasure in escape from courts and camps to the Forest of Arden:

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i’ the sun,

Come hither, come hither, come hither.”(76)

The same romantic spirit encouraged Shakespeare another much successful pastoral drama *The Winters Tale*. Critics have admired the graceful stories and the setting that he chose in each play. Derek Traversi writes:

“The ‘golden world’ is, accordingly, set in an ideal past, presented as a compound of legendary antiquity, of the reign of the gods and goddesses in Arcadia, and of the original timeless innocence which existed in the Garden of Eden before the fall. The ability to neglect the action of time, indeed, is essential to the conception, the key at once to its attraction to its final insufficiency.”(286)

Thus, different critics have approached Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* from different perspective but almost all of them are convinced with the fact that the presentation of the pastoral romance has led the Shakespearean talent to a brilliant height in the field of comedy.

Chapter-2

Pastoral Romanticism and Shakespeare

2.1 Romanticism in Shakespearean Comedy

Shakespearean comedies are most often observed as romantic comedies. What else should one call comedies which are set in the Forest of Arden, and through which Rosalind and Orlando fleet the time as is the food of love? And what is the fantasia like in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but are the very ecstasy of Romanticism. It not only seems to fit the quality of Shakespearean comedies; it catches in a word the prevailing atmosphere of Elizabethan literature at large. And for what concerns comedy in particular, it has an additional recommendation. "Being named 'Romantic Comedies', Shakespeare's can be easily and conveniently distinguished from the counter blasts with which, in the name of the classical comedians, Ben Johnson retaliated on them" (Charlton 19). Therefore, continue talk of Shakespeare's romantic comedies, especially as "romantic" is so variable and vague in its connotation that it can be used to mean almost anything which anybody may take Shakespearean comedies to be.

Study of Shakespearean comedy as romantic comedy is much concerned with the features of the definition of being called as "romantic", features which enter into the comedy for the first time in Shakespeare's day, features which more than any others bear the stamp of the emotional stamp of the imaginative fashion of his generation. About Shakespearean romantic comedies H.B. Charlton writes:

"They surround a Dutch interior with a tale of love and of adventure, of prouesse and courtesie? That is the justification for calling the Elizabethan age as a romantic age. Shakespeare and his fellow were romantic in strict sense that they clamored for fuller draughts of the sprit of the romanticism which the middle ages had first discovered and revealed in their tales of chivalry and night errantry."(20)

In the literature of medieval period, wooing was presented as the most emotional experiences of man and tuned to that key he eagerly responded to those other phases of existence. About the romances of the medieval age Jonson had said that:

“Their comedies had to be of a duke in love with a countess, the countess to be in love with the duke’s son, and the son to love the lady’s waiting-maid, with other such cross-wooing.”(qtd. in Charlton 20)

Medieval romance depicts an ideal world of which each element is occasioned by the ideal of chivalry. It is a world of courtesy. Its heroes are without fears and without reproach they are initiated in courtly forms of service in the lady’s bower, until with manhood they lay their heart before the lady of their choice, and from thenceforward their lives are dedicated to proofs of their worthiness by facing unprecedented trials and overcoming incredible obstacles in the uttermost parts of the earth. That is why the medieval love-story is perforce a story of adventure. Its wooing follows elaborately prescribed formalities, and its quest penetrate strange remote regions where deeds of unexplained valor are called forth by the attacks of terrifying monsters more horrible than the eye of man has seen.

Romantic comedy is pre-eminently the comedy of love. It has its specific occupation with wooing which distinguishes it most markedly from classical or Roman comedy. And although between a fully grown romantic comedy such as *As You Like It*, and Roman comedy such as of Plautus, there may appear to be the widest difference in matter and in spirit, the one has in fact grown out of the other by a gradual modification of current view of the way of a man with a maid. Classical dramatists dealt freely with amorous intrigues between young men and girls; but solicitation is a social institution, whereas wooing is a mystical experience. When modern comedy started in Italy at the beginning of the sixteenth century, its founders eagerly imitated classical models. Italy’s audiences in the sixteenth century were much more thrilled by youth than by age, and youth in love was its most alluring theme. Its comic writers

might set themselves to imitate Roman drama as closely as possible; but without knowing it, they could not escape dallying with the young folks of the play far more than Roman precedent warranted. Ariosto, Ludovico's (1474-1533) last comedy, the *Scolastica*, not only ties interest down to the love of its youths for its maidens; it even gives to that love something of the quality of romantic devotion. Without intention, and as yet, without much change in outward form, classical comedy is moving gradually to Romantic comedy, and is taking to itself a situation and a temper which in due course will transform the type to the sort which characterizes romantic comedy.

Elizabethan romantic comedy did not emerge through a process of natural evolution: it was a product of an obligation imposed ruthlessly on the dramatists by their own age. They were required to beat out a play which should be comic and romantic at once; and at first, they scarcely realized that the task involved almost insuperable difficulties. It seemed a simple matter merely to lift the romances bodily on to the comic stage: the whole history of Elizabethan comedy is a tale of the reluctance of comedy to compromise itself with romance. Elizabethan romantic comedy was an attempt to adapt the world of romance and all its implications to the service of comedy. Shakespeare appeared in such context as an influential figure with his romantic plays:

“Shakespeare's play embodies a literary manner and a moral code; its actions are conducted according to a conventional etiquette and are determined by a particular creed; and every feature of it, in matter and in sentiment, is traceable to the romantic attitude of man to woman. The course of the whole play is determined by the values such doctrine attaches to the love of man and woman.”(Charlton 27)

Love between male and female has an influential impact upon the subject matter of Shakespearean plays rather than the chivalry and adventures. Shakespearean comedies celebrate human social life even as they expose human folly. By means that are sometimes

humiliating, even painful, characters learn greater wisdom and emerge with a clearer view of reality. Some of his early comedies can be regarded as light farces in that their humor depends mainly upon complications of plot, minor foibles of the characters, and elements of physical comedy such as slapstick. The so-called joyous comedies follow the early comedies and culminate in *As You Like It*. Written about 1600, this comedy strikes a perfect balance between the worlds of the city and the country, verbal wit and physical comedy, and realism and fantasy.

During the 19th century the Romantic Movement did much to shape both Shakespeare's international reputation and the view of his achievement that has persisted ever since. Particularly important were the lectures on Shakespeare by English romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the writings of German romantic poet and dramatist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Romantic authors claimed Shakespeare as a great precursor of their own literary values. They celebrated his work as an embodiment of universal human truths and an unequalled articulation of the human condition in all its nobility and variety:

“The views of the Romantic Movement have in many ways been cemented during the 20th century. Institutions such as the Folger Shakespeare Library, established in the United States in 1932, and the Royal Shakespeare Company, founded in Britain in 1961, have ensured that Shakespeare's work remains a central icon of Western culture.”(Caston “Shakespeare, William”)

The Two Gentlemen of Verona, which appears as the second comedy in the First Folio, was probably first performed about 1594. Shakespeare's first attempt at romantic comedy, it concerns two friends, Proteus and Valentine, and two women, Julia and Sylvia. The play traces the relations of the four, until the two sets of lovers are happily paired: Proteus with Julia, and Valentine with Sylvia. About the play Charlton writes:

“Throughout the play, “love's mighty lord,”

There is no woe to his correction

Nor to his service no such joy on earth.”(28)

Another Romantic comedy *Love’s Labour’s Lost* satirizes the loves of its main male characters as well as their fashionable devotion to studious pursuits. The noblemen in the play have sought to avoid romantic and worldly entanglements by devoting themselves in their studies, and they voice their pretensions in an artificially ornate style, until love forces them to recognize their own self-deceptions.

A Midsummer Night’s Dream represents Shakespeare’s first outstanding success in the field of romantic comedy. The play is loved for the romantic activities of its characters in a fairy world:

“The device of taking his characters away from court and city into a freer, half fairy tale world (a device he was to employ again in *As You Like It*, *The Winters Tale*, and *The Tempest*), Shakespeare first fully discovered in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.”
(Rowse 203)

In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare sets motifs of masculine friendship and romantic love in opposition to the bitterness of Shylock, whose own misfortunes are presented so as to arouse understanding and even sympathy. The romantic plays *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Twelfth Night* are often characterized as joyous comedies because of their generally happy mood and sympathetic characters. Written around 1599 and 1600, they represent Shakespeare’s triumph in the field of high comedy. These mature comedies revolve around beautiful, intelligent, and strong-minded heroines, a type anticipated by the quick-witted heiress Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*. *Twelfth Night* is the most mature of Shakespeare’s romantic comedies and one that recalls his own earlier plays. It was written probably in 1601 and was published for the first time in the Folio of 1623. It is a play of great emotional range, from farcical

misunderstandings (based on a set of separated twins, as in *The Comedy of Errors*) to poignant moments in which a woman in disguise must serve the man she loves (as in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*). The play ends with lovers happily paired like *As You Like It*. Romantic love between Troilus and Cressida has been very well depicted in *Troilus and Cressida* (written about 1602). Critics always have had trouble classifying *Troilus and Cressida* as a tragedy, a history, or a comedy. In many ways it qualifies as all three, and its earliest readers did not seem to know what kind of play it was. The editors of the First Folio placed the play at the beginning of the section of tragedies; the 1609 quarto titles the play *The Famous Historie of Troylus and Cresesid*; and the prefatory note in that edition considers the play one of Shakespearean comedies and worthy of comparison with the best of the classical comic playwrights. The play has two plots. The first, a dramatic version of the siege of Troy by Greek armies during the Trojan War, and the second, which gives the play its name, a rendering of the medieval legend of the doomed love between Troilus, son of the king of Troy, and Cressida, daughter of a Trojan priest who treacherously takes the Greek side during the war. The legend has inspired a number of other works, including the tragic poem *Troilus and Criseyde* (1385?) by Geoffrey Chaucer. Shakespeare's play, however, brilliantly combines the two plots in a withering exploration of the realities of both chivalric honor and romantic love.

Shakespeare also wrote romantic tragicomedies, recognized as romances, but his romantic plays are different from those romances. His Romances presents the existence of supernatural force for the ultimate victory of the protagonist in the face of loss. In the romantic plays there is only love and natural adventures and natural solution. Typically, virtue is sorely tested in the tragicomedies, but almost miraculously succeeds. "The late plays by their distancing, by their constant reminders of artifice, by their theatrical contrasts and displays, break up their participation, which is so essential to ritual or for that matter to

tragedy” (Smith 6). Through the intervention of magic and art; or their emotional equivalent, compassion, or their theological equivalent, grace; the spectacular triumph of virtue that marks the ends of these plays suggests redemptive hope for the human condition. The romantic tragicomedy *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* was written in 1607 and 1608 and first published in 1609. It concerns the trials and tribulations of the title character, including the painful loss of his wife and the persecution of his daughter. After many exotic adventures, Pericles is reunited with his loved ones; even his supposedly dead wife is discovered to have been magically preserved. *Pericles* focuses particularly on the relationship between father and daughter, as do *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*.

As You Like It deals with the pastoral romance between Rosalind and Orlando and other three pairs. Like in other romantic comedies the characters are overwhelmed with the thought of love. With much love intrigues, at the end, the characters expose their love and becomes of each other’s. Like in the medieval romance, Orlando, the hero of the play, wins the heart of the lady defeating renowned wrestler. Orlando shows his valor defeating a lion and gets the lady of his choice. In act 4, scene 1, Rosalind, disguised as Ganymede, plays with the love-struck Orlando. She makes Orlando to express his love to her. After act 2, *As you Like It* becomes a play of lovers, and the comedy of it. The theme of romantic love is worked out in greatest detail and most delightfully in the courtship of Rosalind and Orlando.

Alan Brissenden says:

“Love is associated with Rosalind from the beginning, when she suggests falling in love as a game that might make her merry (1.2.23), and Celia warns that she must be careful to ‘love no man in good earnest’, nor go so far that she cannot escape the situation without losing her honor. But, grieving for her father, Rosalind is in an emotionally receptive state when Orlando arrives to wrestle with Charles, and

whereas in the first part of the scene Celia has been the initiator of dialogue, it is Rosalind who takes charge of the conversation when Orlando appears. (86)

In this courtship, which is both farcical and serious, Rosalind in the guise of Ganymede assumes the role of "Rosalind," so that Orlando, in the guise of his love-maddened self, may practice as a lover and to be "cured." The premise of this masquerade is set forth by Rosalind in 3.2: "Love is merely a madness"; and there is good sense in this. She and Orlando fell in love "at first sight" in act 1. Rosalind, who is as smart and resourceful as she needs to be, realizes that such a love requires testing:

“Lovers in the madness of new love are, as Albany says of Goneril in *King Lear*, “self-covered”, Rosalind’s “cure,” as it turns out, is a trial for herself as well as for Orlando. It removes the “cover” of selfhood; it tests them and proves them worthy of each other and ready for marriage.”(Berry 211-238)

It is important to notice that these lovers do not turn seriously toward each other and toward their marriage until each of them has explicitly rejected the company of the cynical and sentimental Jacques. The issue, for Rosalind and for the play, is how to make a civil thing of the wildness of sexual love. The forest is the right place for courtship, which puts lovers in the state of nature. By the same token it is the right place to transform "mad" lovers, if they wish, into grownup lovers fully prepared for the marriage rite with which the play ends. By the end of the play its "self-covered" villains also have been transformed: Oliver by becoming the conscious and grateful beneficiary of his brothers courage and forgiveness, and Duke Frederick by his encounter with "an old religious man" in "the skirts of this wild wood," Jacques even has resolved to go and learn from "these concertizes," Duke Senior and his fellow exiles, as we know from act 2, will return from the forest to a domestic world far better than the one they fled, for they too have been changed.

One of the essences of romantic love in literature is that it must remain unrequited. The lovers are separated by distance, class, fate or whatever, and never fulfill the relationship. This type is seen in Silvius and Phebe, but clearly ridiculed in the way they are presented. Generally believed to have been written and first performed sometime between 1598 and 1600, *As You Like It* is largely a dramatic adaptation of Thomas Lodge's pastoral romance *Rosalynde* (1590). Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* is an unwieldy pastoral, over laden with classical allusions and Latin aphorisms for courtier and shepherd alike. The romance is thick, heavy, and conventional. Yet when Shakespeare took it in hand, to rework the tangled web of disguise and romance into *As You Like It*, he changed much of the emphasis, by both altering and adding characters.. *Rosalynde* is a celebration of love; *As You Like It*, a philosophical discourse on love, for Rosalind does not so much woo Orlando as educate him in the proper way to love. But some critics also view Shakespeare as a non-romantic dramatist. Henry flauchere writes: “to call Shakespeare ‘romantic’ is as meaningless as to talk of the ‘romanticism of the classics’.”(6) Despite some comments, Shakespeare is highly admired for his romantic features of his comedies, which the greatest success of plays, including *As You Like It* as a romantic comedy, asserts.

2. Pastoralism in literature

Pastoral Literature is a type of literature which has for its setting a countryside inhabited by shepherds and shepherdess. It was originated in the third century B.C. by the Greek poet Theocritus, whose works contain pastorals elements, which later became fixed convention of writing of Sicilians shepherds, or “Pastorals”. Theocritus depicted an ideal life removed from the complexities of civilization:

“Pastoral Literature is a class of literature that presents the society of shepherds free from the complexity and corruption of city life. Many of the idyllic written in its name are far remote from the realities of any life, rustic or urban. Among the writers who

have used the pastoral convention with striking success and vitality are the classical poets Theocritus and Virgil and the English Poet, Spenser, Herrick, Milton, Shelly and Mathew Arnold.”(Pastoral 792)

The pastoral convention sometimes uses the device of “single matches” between two or more shepherds, and it often presents the poet and his friends in the disguises of shepherdess.

Themes include, notably, love and death. Both tradition and themes were largely established by Theocritus, Greek poet, who was the creator of pastoral poetry. “Thirty idyllic poems and 24 short epigrams have been preserved under his name, although authorities question the authorship of some. Ten of the idylls are pastoral, dealing with shepherd life. Others are about city life or mythological subjects.”(Pastoral 792) Theocritus was a skilled literary craftsman, and his style is vivid and graceful. Among the Greek poets, he was imitated by Moschus and Bion; his most successful follower was the Roman poet Virgil, who, in his *Eclogues*, introduced the pastoral form into Latin poetry. During the 16th century, Theocritus influenced European poets, particularly the English poet Edmund Spenser. Theocritus, whose *Bucolics* is the first examples of pastoral poetry. The tradition was passed on through Bion, Moschus and Longus, from Greece to Rome. In 37 B.C. Virgil completed his first major work, the *Eclogues*, a collection of ten pastoral poems modeled on the Idylls of Alexandrian poet Theocritus. Virgil preserved the pastoral style of his predecessor, such as the good-natured banter of the shepherds and their love songs, dirges, and singing matches, but he gave the *Eclogues* an original and more national character by introducing real persons and events into the poems and by referring through allegory to other persons and events. Paul Alpers frankly admits that Virgil's first eclogue is about, or is framed by, the threat to pastoral pleasures and the pastoral domain, but he stresses that the poem concludes with an invitation from Tityrus to spend the night in this precious albeit vulnerable milieu. The final line speaks of lengthening shade falling from the lofty hills:

“These umbra are the foreboding shadows of night but also, as the pleasurable sound of the line suggests, a remembrance of the umbra in which Tityrus, in Meliboeus's first description of him, fills the woods with song-as these lines, with their lovely and haunting music, more elusively and ambiguously fill out the landscape of evening and its intimations for the human beings at its center.”(Alpers 168)

The famous fourth *Eclogue* celebrates the birth of a child who is destined to lead in a new golden age of peace and prosperity. This tale may have been Virgil's allusion to an expected child of Mark Antony and Octavia, the sister of Augustus, or the child in the poem may simply have been a symbol for the dawning age. During the later Roman Empire (3rd century ad to 5th century A.D.) and Middle Ages (5th century to 15th century A.D.), the poem was regarded as a prophecy of the coming of Jesus Christ. Virgil transferred settings from Sicily to Arcadia, in the Greek Peloponnese, the symbol of pastoral paradise, used the device of alluding to contemporary problems- agrarian; political and personal in the rustic society he portrayed. His ‘*Eclogues*’ exerted a powerful effect on poets of the renaissance, including Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio (Italy), Pierre de Ronsard(France), and Garcilaso de la Vega in Spain. These were further influenced by medieval Christian commentators on Virgil and by pastoral scenes of old and New Testaments (Cain and Abel, David, the Bethlehem Shepherd’s, and the figure of Christ as a good shepherd).

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, too, Pastoral romance novels (by Jacopo Sannazzaro, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra) appeared, as in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did the pastoral drama (by Politian, Beccari, Tasso and Guarini). In English literature the pastoral is a familiar feature of Renaissance poetry. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590) is an epic story in pastoral dress, and in *The Shepherdes Calender* (1579) Edmund Spenser used the pastoral as a vehicle for political and religious discussion. Many of the love lyrics of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Michael Drayton have a pastoral setting. Christopher

Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* is one of the most famous pastoral lyrics, and Milton's philosophical and deeply felt *Lycidas* is a great pastoral elegy. In drama well-known examples of the pastorals are Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *A Winter's Tale*, and Milton's *Comus*.

Although poets, novelists, and dramatists of the 19th and 20th century have used pastoral settings to contrast simplicity and innocence with the artificiality of the city, they have seldom employed the pastoral conventions of Theocritus and Vergil. Outstanding exceptions are Shelley's *Adonais* and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*, both splendid pastoral elegies. Poets such as Wordsworth and Robert Frost, because of their rural subject matter, have also been referred to as "pastoral" poets. In 1935 the English poet and critic William Empson published *Some Versions of Pastoral*, in which he defined the pastoral as the putting of the complex into the simple, treating the conventionalized bucolic setting as superficial; he then designated various literary works, from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to the proletarian novel, as offshoots of the pastoral.

The climax of this phase of the pastoral tradition was reached in the unique blend of freshness and learned imitation achieved by the poetry of Herrick and Marvell. Later seventeenth century work, apart from that of Milton, was more pedantic. The eighteenth century revival of the pastoral mode is chiefly remarkable for its place in a larger quarrel between those neoclassical critics who preferred "ancient" poetry and those others who supported the "modern". This dispute raged in France, where the ancient sympathy was represented in the pastoral convention by Rene Rapin, whose shepherds were figure of uncomplicated virtue in a simple scene. The "modern" pastoral, dwelled on the innocence of the contemporary rustic (though not on his miseries). In England the controversy was reflected in a quarrel between Alexander Pope; and Ambrose Philips, though the loveliest pastorals of the period were by John Gay, whose mode was burlesque and whose *Beggar's*

opera is ironically subtitled as *A Newgate Pastoral* (Newgate being one of London's Prisons).

A growing reaction against the artificialities of this genre, combined with new attitudes to the natural man and the natural scene, resulted in a sometime bitter injection of reality into the rustic scenes of such poets and novelists as George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, George Sand, and Emile Zola. Only the pastoral elegy survived, through Shelley and Matthew Arnold. "In the modern usage the term may refer to the setting of a work with no reference to the classical conventions. Thus Robert Frost is sometime called a 'pastoral poet'." (Beckson 116)

The affectation of rustic life in pastoral poetry is a purely artistic device; it creates a distancing effect which allows the poet to step back from and critique society. The artificiality of pastoral poetry is most explicit in the courtly language and dress of the "shepherds," which better fit the drawing rooms of polite society than the hills, swamps and sheepfolds of real rustic life. Thus, *As You Like It* contrasts the corruption of the court with the idealized Forest of Arden, in which the banished Duke Senior and his followers live a decidedly courtly existence. Boas writes:

"The pastoral background is the simple greenery of the forest glades, such as the writer of the ballad and his hearer had themselves known. But in the Elizabethan age this homely native product became associated in the hands of Lodge with a completely different literary growth- the conventional renaissance pastoral. In contrast to the mediaeval English folk-poetry this was the outcome of a superfine and 'decadent' culture". (276)

While Rosalind and Celia play at being shepherds, they never seem to spend any time taking care of sheep (no more than do Corin, Audrey, Silvius and Phebe). But while *As You Like It* is clearly pastoral in setting and themes, it transcends pastoral conventions, inviting the

audience to a meditation on serious issues such as what constitutes "natural" behavior, or the connection between language and truth. "The 'Golden World' is, accordingly, set in an ideal past, as a compound of legendary antiquity, of the reign of the god and goddess in Arcadia, and of the original timeless innocence which existed in the Garden of Arden before the fall"(Traversi 286). On one level, *As You Like It* is about the power of language: it explores the ways in which figurative language or poetic conventions can help or hinder communication.

Chapter-3

Elements of Pastoral Romance in *As You Like It*

3.1 *As You Like It* and Pastoral Romance

William Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* clearly falls into the Pastoral Romance genre; but Shakespeare does not merely use the genre, he develops it. Clearly *As You Like It*, hits some key requirements of the Pastoral genre, both thematically and dramatically; the forced leaving of the major characters to the forest, sweet songs of Amiens, the wedding masque featuring Hymen of the goddess/god of marriage, the restoration of both social and gender order and the use of the supernatural are the important features of the Pastoral genre.

In the play, following the tradition of the pastoral, the protagonists are shown to be forced to flee from the court of Duke Frederick to the shelter of the Forest of Arden, due to the corruption of family and court. Thus the characters of Rosalind, Orlando, Oliver, Duke Frederick and Duke Senior, become funnels through which questions of nature, nurture and nobility are discussed. Charles memorably characterizes the Duke and his courtiers' life in exile as one in which they "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world" (I.I.108-110)

Another important feature, the songs, has made the play more romantic and memorable. The play has the most songs of any of Shakespeare's plays; performed mainly by the character Amiens. His most famous song celebrates the pastoral happiness:

Under the greenwood tree
 Who loves to lie with me,
 And turn his merry note
 Unto the sweet bird's throat. (II.V.1-4)

Cross-gender disguise is used on many levels; particularly by Rosalind/Ganymede, allowing the character the freedom to engage in open discussion with Orlando. The wedding masque

featuring Hymen the goddess/god of marriage, and the use of the supernatural are important features of the Pastoral genre. The Hymens are quite sweet which seems eulogizing the pastoral romance:

Wedding is great Juno's crown:
 O blessed bond of board and bed!
 'Tis Hymen peoples every town;
 High wedlock then be honoured:
 Honour, high honour and renown,
 To Hymen, god of every town! (V.IV. 136-41)

In the wedding masque, the three sets of lovers (Rosalind and Orlando, Celia and Oliver, Phebe and Silvius) are united through marriage; with Rosalind casting away her male alter-ego, Ganymede, and the freedom of discourse that came with that role. Social order is also restored, with Duke Senior resuming his rightful place in the court, and the reunion of Orlando and Oliver.

Central to the pastoral vision of *As You Like It* is the contrast between the Duke's court and the Forest of Arden. In the former, there is a powerful political presence which creates dangers. Deception lurks behind many actions, brothers have secret agendas against their brothers, and people have to answer to the arbitrary demands of power. The exiled Duke himself attests to the advantages of living far from the court, free of the deceits of flattery and double dealing and welcomes Orlando to the feast without suspicion. In the Forest of Arden, however, life is very different. For one thing, there is no urgency to the agenda. There are no clocks in the forest, and for the exiled courtiers there is no regular work. They are free to roam around the forest, prompted by their own desires. There is plenty of food to eat, so the communal hunt takes care of their physical needs, and the absence of a complex political

hierarchy creates a much stronger sense of communal equality hearkening back the mythical good old days:

“After Orlando’s complaints and bitter exchange with Oliver, and after the negative remarks concerning the banishing of the old Duke, the very first positive statement in the play, tells of the Duke’s retreat to the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.”(Knight 2)

The play admirably celebrates the love relations between the characters. The action of the play moves back and forth among these couples, inviting us to compare the different styles and to recognize from those comparisons some important facts about young love. This is a world turned topsy-turvy, a state signified supremely through ‘role reversal’, a notable feature of the Robin Hood games:

“In *As You Like It*, there are similar role reversals: the inexperienced youth, Orlando, out-wrestles the seasoned professional, Charles; the lady, Rosalind, dictates the progress of the love affair; Touchstone, the satirical jester, gets married; and so on. Here the role of Rosalind is decisive, and much of one’s response to this play.”(Wiles 58)

Rosalind is Shakespeare's greatest and most vibrant comic female role, and there's an old saying to the effect that in any successful production of *As You Like It*, the audience members will all leave the theatre in love with her. Verity writes:

“She is literally radiant with youth, imagination, and the joy of loving so passionately and being so passionately loved.”(xxvi)

She is clearly the only character in the play who has throughout an intelligent, erotic, and fully anchored sense of love, and it becomes her task in the play to try to educate others out of their false notions of love.

The main themes of *As You Like It* are the pastoral ideal and the ideal of romantic love. Forest of Arden is the primary setting where these themes develop. Nature serves as a refuge from society where we can find solutions to injustice and unhappiness. This play is a comedy and thus has a happy ending but it is not a fairy tale. Shakespeare highlights the difference between reality and illusion. Rosalind embodies the sensibility, the humor and the kind of love that leads to a happy, harmonious living. She brings the plot to a resolution when four contrasting romances end in marriage. The focus of the play is her romance with Orlando. *As You Like It* would appear to be the perfect Pastoral Romance; but Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is not a Pastoral utopia. The Forest of Arden, is also a dangerous place 'poised carefully on a razor's edge, separating fantasy with harsh reality'; Dukes have been usurped, brothers can still be deadly enemies, starvation can be close, lions and deadly snakes can hurt, can kill; for all of its idyllic qualities, Arden is still a dangerous place.

3.2 Romance between the Lovers in the Pastoral Backdrop

The most obvious concern of *As You Like It* is love, and particularly the attitudes and the language appropriate to young romantic love. This is obviously clear enough from the relationships between Orlando and Rosalind, Silvius and Phebe, Touchstone and Audrey, and (very briefly) Celia and Oliver. The action of the play moves back and forth among these couples, inviting us to recognize from those comparisons, some important facts about young's love. Though, the play revolves around the heterosexual romantic relation, we see also other forms of love; the love of two girls for one another; between Celia and Rosalind. In the play the love between Rosalind and Celia is really praiseworthy. In spite of the enmity between their parents, they show their intimate friendship. Celia declares herself ready from

the very first to acknowledge the wrong which has been done to her friend's father's and even to offer such restitution as may be in her power in the future. She says:

'My father hath no child but I, nor none is like is to have: and truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir; fro what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection: by my honour, I will' (I.ii.18);

Rosalind falls in love with Orlando at first sight (as is standard in Shakespeare), becomes erotically energized, and remains so throughout the play. She's delighted and excited by the experience and is determined to live it to the full moment by moment. One of the great pleasures of watching Rosalind is that she is always celebrating her passionate feelings for Orlando. She does not deny them or try to play games with her emotions. In her, emotion and intellect are equal powers:

"O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded: my affection hath an unknown bottom, like the bay of Portugal." (*As You Like It*, IV.I.173-5)

"The self awareness here is unflinching and brilliant. She is conscious of meaning of love, of her love- its inescapable absurdity, its irresistible grace."(Harowitz 38) She's aware that falling in love has made herself the subject of Celia's gentle mockery, but she's not going to pretend that she isn't totally thrilled by the experience just to spare herself being laughed at (she even laughs at herself, while taking enormous delight in the behavior which prompts the mockery). Craig writes that "the climax of the play is in the scene (iv. ii), in which Rosalind disguised as a man compels Orlando to woo her as if she were Rosalind, as indeed she is."(123)

In a similar way Orlando, in the very moment of his trial, has fallen in love with Rosalind and received from her token of true faith which he will carry with him into exile. His view of love requires him to write drippy poems and walk through the forest hanging

them on trees. He sentimentalizes the experience (that is, falsifies it), so that he can luxuriate himself in his feelings of love rather than focusing sharply on the reality of the experience:

From the east to western Ind,

No jewel is like Rosalind. (*As You Like It*, III.II.75–76)

When, the entire characters move to the jungle then the romance begins more interestingly:

“Rosalind: but what talk we of fathers, when there is such a man as

Orlando?”(III.IV.33-34)

Rosalind, Celia, and Orlando leave the court in search of ‘liberty’, freedom from restraint and corruption. Traversi writes:

“They will find this in the forest, and with it what is even more important, a degree of self-knowledge, a fresh understanding, itself expressed within the limits that their author has chosen to accept, of what life really is; but at the end of the action they, and with them the insights they have acquired in the course of their adventures, to the social and civilized world, the distinctively human order of life with which the play is finally concerned.” (286)

They get complete liberty in the forest which encourages them to extend their romance.

In this play, other characters are also falling in love with one another at first sight:

“Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might,

Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?” (*As You Like It*, III.V.78–9)

This is the cry of Phebe when she sees Rosalind, and thinks she is a man. Rosalind is smitten the moment she sees Orlando and Orlando when he sees Rosalind. When Oliver and Celia meet, they ‘no sooner saw on another but they loved.’ We know from *The Tempest* that Shakespeare kept this belief to his early life to his later days:

“It was like naturalness to believe in love at first sight, like a man who lived in that swift and underlying time, like his reverence for passion as a native goodness in human nature”(Brooke 157).

And love, in his work, even when it breaks at once into the full-blown rose, is always modest, chaste, true, faithful, and full of fire and joy.

Shakespeare has used the Pastoral genre in *As You Like It* to ‘cast a critical eye on social practices that produce injustice and unhappiness, and to make fun of anti-social, foolish and self-destructive behavior’; most obviously through the theme of love, culminating in a rejection of the notion of the traditional Petrarchan lovers. Petrarch was a 14th century poet, whose collection of poems to a lady named Laura formed the basis of the Renaissance love rhetoric. For the Renaissance, the Petrarchan lover ‘worshipped and idealizes a woman who is inaccessible to him, either because of her rank or because of her cold heart. He burns with passion, he wastes with despair, she does not respond’:

“Petrarchan poetry was masculine poetry. The woman’s part was seen from outside; either as the fair warrior who inflicted cruel wounds, the saint to be worshipped, the divinity to be appeased or finally the relenting mistress to be hymned. Though Shakespeare is careful to keep his woman’s part within the compass of the boy actor’s, he makes a virtue of the restriction’s which this imposed upon him.”

(Bradbrook 223)

In *As You Like It*, Orlando and Silvius both try and occupy the role of the Petrarchan lover, and in the role of Petrarchan lover are both rejected by Rosalind and Phebe. In the extract below Silvius is taking on the role of the Petrarchan lover pining for love, and he is also trying to put upon Phebe the role of an idealized woman who is inaccessible to him because of her cold heart. Phebe’s reaction to Silvius is a violent rebuttal. The extract below that Silvius attempt to woo Phebe in the role of the Petrarchan lover will not work:

Act III: V: 1-19

Enter SILVIUS and PHEBE

Silvius:

Sweet Phebe, do not scorn me; do not, Phebe;

Say that you love me not, but say not so

In bitterness. The common executioner,

Whose heart the accustom'd sight of death makes hard,

Falls not the axe upon the humbled neck

But first begs pardon; will you sterner be

Than he that dies and lives by bloody drops?

Enter ROSALIND, CELIA, and CORIN, behind

Phebe:

I would not be thy executioner;

I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.

Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye:

That are the frail'st and softest things,

Who shut their coward gates on atomies,

Should be call'd tyrants, butchers, murderers!

Now I do frown on thee with all my heart;

And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee;

Now counterfeit to swoon; why, now fall down;

Or if thou canst not, O, for shame, for shame,

Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers! (III.V. 1-19)

Silvius is pursuing Phebe, but she seems to be cruel to his love.

Orlando's attempts of taking on the role of the Petrarchan lover are no more successful than Silvius, although he has the added advantage to his cause that Rosalind is also in love with him. Orlando's attempts at poetry are greeted by Rosalind with derision, when they are read to her by Touchstone and Celia. Of course at this point, Rosalind does not realize who the author of the 'lame' verses are, and when she realizes it is Orlando who has written them, she is overcome with a very feminine passion:

“Alas! The day, what shall I do with my doublet and hose? What did he when thou sawest him? What said he? How looked he? Wherein went he? What makes he here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? How parted he with thee? And when shalt thou see him again? Answer me in one word.”(III: ii: 195 – 201)

But Rosalind is still a very strong character, strong enough to challenge and test Orlando's love through the guise of Ganymede, which gives Rosalind the freedom to both ridicule and expose the artifice of Orlando's Petrarchan lover and discover the true feeling beneath. Rosalind/Ganymede repeatedly questions Orlando's love, and highlights the ridiculous nature of the Petrarchan lover:

‘Men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love’ (IV: i: 86-87).

Rosalind can engage in this open dialogue with Orlando because, the Forest of Arden and her male Ganymede disguise, both features of the Pastoral genre, have presented an arena where she can be free from the constraints of her social situation, and instruct Orlando to woo her; and correct him when he does it wrong, as she could never do as Rosalind:

Orlando: My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

Rosalind: Break an hour's promise in love! He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts, and break but a part of the thousand part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him that Cupid hath clapped him o' the shoulder, but I'll

warrant him heart-whole.

Orlando: Pardon me dear Rosalind.

Rosalind: Nay, and you be so tardy, come no more in my sight. I had life be wooed of a snail. (IV.I.38-47)

Rosalind wants to find a lover without losing her sense of self in the process.

Rosalind answers the questions about love, which arise during the play. She is a lovesick maiden and yet she remains an intelligent, witty, and strong character. She cleverly uses her disguise to know Orlando and educate him about love. She determines to test Orlando, actually to see if his clichéd poetry proceeds from a form of self-love; from his being in love with love. We learn later to discover that time has reopened Orlando into a mature, clear sighted lover. "By playing the role of shrew under her disguise as Ganymede, she hopes to purge him homeopathically of any egoism concerning love" (Hassel 136).

The meeting of Orlando and Rosalind is the most important event in Act 1 of the play; it is love at first sight. Celia and her cousin talk about falling in love just before the wrestling match:

From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports.

Let me see, what think you of falling in love? (I.II. 20-1)

Her words indicate that Rosalind is ready to face the danger of falling in love. She infers that her father would approve of Orlando because her father approved of his father Sir Rowland. Their meeting reveals a vulnerable side of the Rosalind as she gives him a chain, says, "Gentleman, wear this for me" and waits for him to continue the conversation. Soon after entering the Forest of Arden Rosalind discovers love poems that Orlando hangs on the trees. She loses self-control as she reads them one after another. When she finds out that Celia has seen Orlando she is very excited and cannot stop asking her questions:

"What did he when you thou saw'st him? What said he? How looked he..." (III.II. 218-20).

For a brief period of time, she becomes a victim of infatuation. She is betrayed by something she feels and finds it difficult to admit the truth in love. Shakespeare thus illustrates that she is not ideal, that she has flaws like all other human being.

Rosalind's clever idea to dress up as Ganymede enables her to have a double identity, which will give her the opportunity to test Orlando's love. Her disguise probably prevents their immediate marriage:

"I will speak to him like a saucy lackey, and under that habit play the knave with him", (III.II.271-73).

She does not however merely play games; she also teaches Orlando how to love her. He must keep his promises and respect her thereby proving that his love is real. She takes a cynical view of romantic love to tease Orlando. Rosalind begins to tire of acting after the momentary drop of her guise when she faints at seeing Orlando's bloody handkerchief. When Orlando proves himself to Ganymede and saves the life of his brother, Rosalind is ready to make a commitment to him. She does not dispose of her disguise until then because she realizes that only time will show if they are really in love. Time refines their passion for one another.

"Rosalind is the brightest of Shakespeare's bright heroines", (Evans 92). She has been highly admired for her wit and nature.

Rosalind is a philosopher like Jaques. Her practical love-filled perceptions of the world contrast with his cynical views. Jaques likes to disagree with everyone else. Both Orlando and Rosalind challenge his ideas. In the third act Jaques tried to persuade Orlando that loving Rosalind is not worth while:

Jaques: "The worst fault you have is to be in love."

Orlando: "'Tis a fault I will not change for your best virtue. I am weary of you."

(III.II. 258-60)

Rosalind tells Jaques that he is sad and melancholy because he chooses to stay detached from the real life. She says: "I Fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's... I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad", (IV.I.20-5) Thus Jaques loses in this brief exchange. Touchstone is the fool whom Rosalind would prefer to Jaques. She understands his wisdom: "Thou speakest wiser than thou art ware of" (II. IV.52). Touchstone tells her a story about being in love with a girl. He gave the girl something and said "wear these for my sake", which are almost the same words that Rosalind said to Orlando in the beginning of the play.

The love between Orlando and Rosalind is portrayed as superior to the other romances. Touchstone and Audrey's romance represents physical passion. He wants to marry her out of church so that the marriage would be invalid. Silvius, who is hopelessly in love with Phebe, represents pastoral love. The diversity of characters' romantic sentiment creates a balance in the play and makes one appreciate their silliness, spirituality and extremities. Compared to Silvius' silly infatuation, Orlando's is more of a courtly lovesickness. Rosalind outshines everyone else in the play with her intelligence, wit and depth of feeling. Her humanity and sense of fun make her an ideal romantic heroine. She seems to be centuries ahead of her time. She is a woman who is absolutely the master of her own destiny and she remains in control most of the time. Shakespeare has created almost an ideal heroine who brings the play to its conclusion.

There is not a word of this which might not be proved from the love-play of Orlando and Rosalind. That is one of the gayest things in Shakespeare. It is the natural bubbling up of the fountain of happy youth into gracious gaiety of the temper, into self delighting joy. The

humor of Rosalind in the disguise of male, have led the play in a more romantic direction.

We, who listen, cannot enjoy the humor of the situation as Rosalind herself, when dressed as a gallant hunter Rosalind meets Orlando and plays with him as a kitten with a ball. Her love develops, but does not check or dim her humor:

“As to her natural intellect, it is the same with that. Love has not impaired it. It is as swift and various as summer lightning; and though it flashes here and there and everywhere, it always strikes the point at issue. Yet all the time this clear eyed intellect is working on life, she is so deep in love that it cannot be sounded”(Brooke 158).

The forest, accordingly, is to be seen all as a place where basic human attitudes are put variously to the rest; these concerns more particularly love and its reflection in friendship. First and outstanding among the various pairs who meet in these new surroundings are Orlando and Rosalind, who find in Arden the love which they sought at court, but which they were debarred from the begging's to its natural consummation there:

“Their relations in the forest became the occasion, in the first instance, from the criticism which Rosalind, taking advantage of her disguise as the page ‘Ganymede’, passes upon which calls the ‘quotidian,’ the feverish excesses, of romantic love” (Traversi 191).

Orlando, speaking of the qualities of love, asks her ‘what are his marks?’ she replies by cataloguing the conventional signs of the love-sick devotee which she is happy not to find in him:

“A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not... Then your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned,

your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation.”(III.ii. 341)

Orlando’s love is of the same quality, full of gaiety, even though he cannot find Rosalind; amusing himself with delightful verses hung on happy trees, ready to play with the pretty youth he is pleased to call his Rosalind. Brooke writes:

“Love with him, is no mournful, depressing companion. It kindles into brightness all his powers, as it does, with Rosalind. There is no fading in its rose, no false sentiment, none of the marks of a dying lover.” (158)

Rosalind sees this, and would be inwardly pleased with it. In both, their love enkindles not only itself to finer loving, but all their natural qualities.

Rosalind’s own attitude to love, to which these exchanges lead and, which is more directly developed in the fourth act in which still speaking as ‘Ganymede’ she discusses the matter with Orlando, is a characteristics compound of humorous detachment and frank acceptance. Unwilling to romantic love at its tragic suffering of separation, she remarks that ‘the poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, videlicet in a love cause’, and goes on to comment sharply enough of the most illustrious literary examples of this excessive passion:

Troilus had his brain dashed out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year, though Hero had turned nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went but forth to wash him in the Hellespont and being taken with the cramp was drowned; and the foolish chronicles of that age found it was ‘Hero of Sestos’.(IV.i.78-85)

The love of Celia and Oliver is of a different kind, a swift, mutual passion, more of the senses. They not only falls in love with each another in the first meeting but also excited to be

of each other. In the story of shepherd Silvius and Phebe who is object of his reasoning and servile devotion. Silvius is the romantic lover personified in all his excess, who is content to see his disdainful mistress as his 'executioner' (III.V.3) and who, by the very fact of doing so, ensures that this; an 'executioner', is precisely what she shall continue to be for him. Silvius want for Phebe reminds us the medieval romances in which heroes eulogizes their beloved without unrequited love. Courtly love, which was the main feature of the medieval romance, has been also adopted in this play:

“Silvius and Phebe, the shepherd and shepherdess of pastoral, have all the marks of courtly love upon them. They come straight from Lodge's *Rosalinda*, where however they are not different whether in manners or speech from the noble lovers.”

(Bradbrook 224)

When Phebe, however, in her disdain for this object follower, aspires beyond him to none other than 'Ganymede', Rosalind exposes the tyranny that Phebe exercises over Silvius, stressing equally both to the human desire of love and the human need for self and mutual respect in its conduct. To Silvius she urges the claim of a proper self-respect, based upon a genuine and necessary realism, against the excesses of sentimental self-abasement in all its forms:

'tis not her glass, but you, that flatters her;

And of you she sees herself more proper

Than any of her lineaments can show her; (III.v.52-4)

Whilst to Phebe, on her side, she lays stress upon the positive human good of marriage, and upon the need to found this central relationship upon a true knowledge of the self and of its accompanying limitations. “mistress know yourself”(III.v.55), she says, and goes on to add what amounts to a command to sanity and a proper sense of proportion:

Down on your knees,

And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love. (III.V.55-7)

To end more sharply still, with a call to realism in self-assessment and in the estimate of what life may really offer her:

Sell when you can: you are not for all markets:

Cry the man mercy: love him: take his offer. (III.v.58-9))

“The mercantile form of this advice is deliberate, represents an emphatic call to realism and a proper sense of truth; but it is significant that it falls, as far as the recipient is concerned, upon deaf ears”(Traversi 294). Entrapped, little though she is prepared to recognize it, in the illusion of her supposed ‘love’ for ‘Ganymede’, Phebe ignores this advice to content herself with the considerable good which is hers for the having, and even seeks to use her victim, Silvius, to convey her impossible message to Rosalind. The novelist, Thomas Lodge, had censured Phebe for her excessive scorn, and had emphasized the retribution in kind that falls upon her head, in his book *Rosalinda*. But his picture of the self-forgetting devotion of Silvius was, on the whole, sympathetic, and neither of the characters moved in a different plane from the remaining figures of the story. But in the drama this is exactly what they do, for, by a number of minute's touches, Shakespeare transposes them into the region of caricature. Unlike the other lovers, they speak uniformly in verse instead of prose, and this itself gives a distinctively idealistic flavor to their sentiments:

“Silvius’ recital in strophic form to Corin of the signs of true love, ending with the triple invocation of the name Phebe, prepares us for the pageant played between him and his disdainful mistress.”(Boas 283)

Phebe's beauty has enraptured Silvius in such a way that he becomes ready to face all the insults in the hope of ultimate victory over his love romance. Phebe has all the charms of pastoral nymph—ink brows, black silk hair, bugle eyeballs, and cheeks of cream; but these are turned into burlesque by the addition of ‘a leathern hand, a free stone-colored hand’. Silvius,

who is satisfied to live upon a 'scattered smile' loosed now and then by his mistress, and who bears her letter to Ganymede in the fond belief that it has an angry tenor, is a parody of that true loyalty of his heart which as seen in Orlando, is no enemy to either cheerfulness or self-respect. At the end of the comedy, when they have served the dramatist's purpose, they are united in marriage like the other lovers.

"The forest becomes such an important place where character finds them in more dearly environment than of the city. It becomes the place where everything becomes as the heart wants" (Brooke 167). Rosalind does not allow her common sense or her sadness in this first act to interfere with the affairs of love. There she lets nature have her way, and slips into her love with delight; silent at first, but silent from inward pleasure. The joy of it uplifts her into a new created world. And Orlando enters the gates of it along with her. And with the joy comes, of course, the sweet and tender melancholy of love which not yet that it is returned, but is all but sure it is; and which in puffs of alternate painful pleasure and pleasurable pain makes its own drama in the heart. A charming little dialogue tells the story:

Rosalind: O, how full of briers is this working-day world!

Celia: Hem them away.

Rosalind: I would try, if I could cry 'hem' and have him.

Celia: Come, come, and wrestle with thy affections.

Rosalind: O, they take the part of a better wrestle than myself! (I.III.11-21)

We Feel, through the light melancholy, her innate gaiety; and then out of the gaiety arises her serious fidelity to love:

'Yet', says Celia. 'I hate not Orlando.'

Rosalind: No faith, hate him not, for my sake.

Celia: why should I not? Doth he not deserve well?

Rosalind: let me love him for that; and do you love him, because I do. (I.II'.32-5)

It is a mingled skein; serious mirth, mirthful melancholy. But it is only untoward circumstances that weigh her down. when she is free in the forest where life and summer are wed, sure of Orlando whose verses she has found, in attire in which she can play with his love and go further in speech than a maiden can; her brightness, joyousness, her happy nature, mount and sing like a bird let loose from a cage.

With this grave, gay girlhood, with this beauty, she has also intellect and its charm. Celia has quite enough, but Rosalind overbrims with it. When she gets to the forest, is warmed by meeting Orlando. It develops into sparkle of wit, into power, insight, and good sense. And it adds to her grace, beauty and entangling charm a gaiety that never makes mistakes, a clearness of atmosphere in which what is foolish or merely fantastic, and undone. When Jacques, attracted by her brightness, airs his melancholy before her, she puts him to flight with a luminous good sense:

Ros: A traveler! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad. I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's; then, to have seen much and to have nothing, is to have rich eyes and poor hands.(IV.I.19-22)

And he leaves her in a huff of vanity, while Rosalind cries after him:

Farewell, monsieur traveler! Look your lisp, and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide god for making you that countenance you are, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola.(IV.I.30-34)

Thus her good sense unveils him. Again, when Silvius crouches under Phebe treatment of him, Rosalind is ashamed for the man, and she has no sympathy with the woman. She protects Silvius because he is faithful, for she sees good when it is there; but she despises him for his weakness, and strikes hard on the weak spot. Celia pities him:

'Alas, Poor shepherd!'

Rosalind: Do you pity him? No, he deserves no pity. 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.63-70)

These are the kind of things, her wit, charm and joyousness, add respect for her mental power to our pleasure in her naturalness, which make us, think, with satisfied faith in its strength, of her womanhood in contest with the future, and in triumph over it.

In third act she meets Orlando, and that is the center of the play. Meantime in the second act we are inside the forest, and meet its indwellers. Rosalind, Celia and touchstone have found their way there and meet Corin and Silvius. Corin is the honest laborer, old, tired, and practical, but who has had his day of love in youth and remembers it. This hallows his age, and makes it sweet with thought, for Shakespeare was too kind to leave the old unblessed. Silvius seeks Corin's sympathy, for he has known the game tenderness of love.

Brooke writes:

“To ask such sympathy from a shepherd, whose greatest pride now is ‘to see his ewes graze and his lambs suck,’ who is ‘a true laborer,’ seems strange, but in Shakespeare’s affectionate regard, Corin, whenever he remembers that he was young, and that he loved, is another man in the sweet air”(170).

And than both these lives of his, thinking together makes him say- ‘that he had learned no wit by nature nor art may complain of good breeding, or comes of a very dull kindred.’ Such a one is ‘a natural philosopher,’ says touchstone, who, while he plays his mocking wit on Corin, respects his honesty and sense. And Rosalind likes the old laborer, and he understands Rosalind. When he talks with her, he rises above his natural level thought, so greatly does her presence heighten and kindle whomsoever she touches. It is the Corin whom love plagued of old, who makes this speech when he calls Rosalind to see Silvius and Phebe meeting:

If you will see a pageant truly play’d,

Between the pale complexion of true love
 And the red glow of scorn and proud disdain,
 Go hence a little, and I shall conduct you,
 If you will mark it. (III.IV.48-52)

Corin is breathing the poetic air of his youth. The years of long labor are forgotten in his presence.

Yet another aspect of romantic love, in some sense marginal to the main action but not on that account less relevant to it, is provided by Touchstone who is brought, albeit with more than a touch of unwillingness, to recognize the place of marriage in any truly 'natural' scheme of life:

As the ox hath his bow, sir, the horse his curb, and the falcon her bells, so man hath his desires. (III.iii.67-68)

For Touchstone this uneasy compulsion presents itself in the forest in the ill-favored form of the country wench Audrey. Unwilling as he is to accept even the possibility of a permanent commitment to this grotesque partner-who, however, responds adequately to his own nature. Touchstone at first sets his mind upon an uneasy and evasive compromise. He will 'marry' her; but when Jacques points out that this attitude cannot lead to any true or valid marriage-'this fellow', he says, 'will but join you together as they join wainscot' (III.iii.73). He ends by agreeing, with some unwillingness, to seek a 'true priest' to carry out the appropriate offices to unite them. In this way, he accepts the necessity of marriage. Traversi writes:

"For Touchstone, too, marriage presents itself with a social, a distinctively human of challenge, and by the end of the play he will be ready to take his Audrey as she is, recognized in her 'an ill-favored thing', indeed 'but mine own', and living in the hope that he too may yet find, when he returns to real world in the company of his incongruous bride, the 'pearl' concealed in his 'foul oyster'."(295)

In the play, Audrey neither is worthily drawn, nor is her simplicity humorous except in contrast with Touchstone's cynical cleverness. The worst side of Touchstone appears in his relation to her, and it was a pity to lower his character. According to Brooke:

“Perhaps Shakespeare felt that Touchstone – who is quite out of place in the forest – needed some pursuit, some amusement to vary life which bored him, and supplied elsewhere quite sufficiently and agreeable him with a rustic lover to outrival. But the story is unnecessary. Touchstone is elsewhere quite sufficiently and agreeably drawn.” (172)

Love is equally unmercifully ridiculed in Touchstone's narrative while his wooing of Audrey, of whom he hopes shortly to get rid, is a parody upon Silvius' protestations of eternal fidelity to Phebe. Though he makes mock of courtly etiquette, yet in the intercourse with Audrey and the other natives of Arden, Touchstone can be less entirely supercilious towards a shepherd's life, as when he declares, “in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respects that it is private, it is very vile life. Now, in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious.”(III.II.15-21)

Boas writes:

“This may be, only sublime nonsense out of which Shakespeare did not intend us to draw any moral, yet it is none the less one of the cases in which Touchstone is wiser than he is ware of, and it expresses, however grotesquely, the truth that every fashion of life has its balance of pleasures and of pains.” (285)

Touchstone is the professional humorist, the court jester, the fool of medieval society, who uses his folly as a stalking horse and under the presentation of that shoots his wit of Rosalind and is conquered by it. In his encounter with her, he is reduced to silence; but he expresses his defeat with charm:

‘You have said; but whether wisely or no, let the forest judge’ (III.II.105)

Outside of his profession, he is a 'human person.' He is gentle with Rosalind:

"Sweetest nut hath sourest rind,

Such a nut is Rosalind" (III.ii.94-95).

He loves Celia, and would go over the world with her. He is faithful to her and Rosalind.

When he is alone, he basks in the sun, and rails at fortune to amuse himself. Then Jaques comes upon him, and he detects Jaques as quickly as Rosalind, and without saying anything about what he detects, plays on him, parodies his melancholy, and laughs at him.

And now, in conclusion, we get back to the romantic nature of Rosalind and Orlando or indeed to Rosalind alone. With her arrival in the forest, her discovery of Orlando's presence, and the freedom to play with him, which her man's garb gives her, all her sadness vanishes, all her nature expands. She opens like a rose in the sun. The forest is her fitting home. Its wild-wood freedom is in her heart, its beauty in her eyes, and its summer in her temper. Gay delights in life, enraptured girlhood, made tender by love, are at their height in her; the bubbling spring is not mere happier. In this exalting of her nature, her wit and wisdom are also exalted. Witty manner of Rosalind had made the play more romantic and had led the entire play to a harmonious situation far from earlier problem. The wit which flashes through their conversation does not lessen its clean brightness from the begging to the end; neither does the pleasant humor which plays innocuous comment over every circumstance, and over the natural world. Nor is the humor forced or conventional or derived from others. Orlando's reply, "A man that had a wife with such a wit, he might say 'Wit, whither wilt?'" eulogizes the beauty and intelligence of Rosalind. David Bevington writes that the phrase:

"The phrase 'Wit, whither wilt?' is "a common Elizabethan expression implying that one is talking fantastically, with a wildly wandering wit". This sense of the phrase harmonizes with the theme of self-renunciation: not as I like it, but as you like it.

(323)

Thus Orlando's rejoinder is not simply a clever, punning rebuff, a verbal check as the disguised Rosalind chooses to treat it. Orlando's playful reply, cloaked in the language of raillery, glances at a possible loving, trusting future in which Rosalind will enjoy freedom within the bonds of love. Rand writes:

“Orlando's play on the word ‘wit’ depends on Rosalind's preceding words; the passage constitutes a momentary merging of the competitive, combative masculine world and the cooperative, collaborative feminine world” (144).

No wonder at the close of the scene Rosalind confides:

“[. . .] let him [Cupid] be judge how deep I am in love.

I tell thee, Aliena, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando” (IV.I.184–85).

Her wit is more brilliant every hour; her wisdom glances more brightly through her wit; and she uses both, in her sportiveness, to heighten the romantic love with which she adorns the passing hour.

When she thinks he is wounded, she swoons; and then, having had play enough, she brings her love to full fruition. She knows when to stop:

Rosalind: why then, to-morrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?

Orlando: I can live no longer by thinking.

Rosalind: I will weary you then no longer with idle talking. (V.II.45-48)

And she winds up her own love, and all the loves of the play, and dissolves the entire quarrel, by disclosing herself to her father and Orlando:

To you I give myself, for I am yours. (V.IV.112)

Nor can one put in better words her charm, her nature; the resolver of all tangles, the up lifter of all that is best in each character, the queen of wit and love, then in the romantic love poem Orlando wrote of her:

Upon the fairest boughs,

Or at every sentence' end,
 Will I Rosalinda write;
 Teaching all that read to know
 The quintessence of every sprite
 Heaven would in little show.
 Therefore heaven Nature charged
 That one body should be fill'd
 With all graces wide enlarged:
 Nature presently distill'd
 Helen's cheek, but not her heart,
 Cleopatra's majesty,
 Atlanta's better part,
 Sad Lucretia's modesty.
 Thus Rosalind of many parts
 By heavenly synod was devised,
 Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
 To have the touches dearest prized.
 Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
 And I to live and die her slave. (III.ii.108-137))

What we have witnessed through the central part of the play has been, in essence, asset of variations on the theme of romantic love and of true sociability which accompanies it and confers meaning upon personal relationship. By the time these variations have been fully worked out in the Forest of Arden, we are ready for the final resolution which will be contrived by Rosalind in her understanding, now deepened by the effect upon her of her recent experiences, of the true nature of love as a cementing and positive influence, at once

central and salutary, upon human life. To Orlando, she speaks, “I will content you, if what pleases you, and you shall be married to-morrow” (V.ii.124). On the verge of this resolution, of the complaints of the still unsatisfied lovers strike her comically as ‘the howling of Irish wolves against the moon’ (V. ii.121), residues of an excess of romantic self-centeredness which can achieve only its own madness. To each of those thus situated she offers her help, in appropriate but still enigmatic form. Rosalind ends by calling each of those who hear her to the appointed place of meeting:

(To Orlando) as you love Rosalind, meet: (To Silvius) as you love Phebe meet: and as
I love no woman, I’ll meet. (V.ii.111-113)

The artifice of the real resolution, founded in this way upon the recognition of natural instinct of human realities, is set in turn against the spirit of the Page’s song, with its emphasis upon the order of the seasons as the appropriate setting for love:

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and hey nonino,
That o’er the green corn field did pass
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring. (V.iii.15-20)

And so, as the play is drawn to its harmonizing close, still in the forest, but with an eye now clearly directed to the reality, human and social, which lies beyond these Arcadian limits, Rosalind and Celia make their solemn entry, appropriately accompanied by Hymen, in its mingling of joy and gravity, the order of nature itself: for, as the song which announces their entry puts it:

Then is there mirth in heaven
When earthly things made even

Atone together: (V.iv.104-106)

And again, when the various coupling are at last complete in the 'atonement', the resolution, the restoration of unity which has made them possible:

Wedding is great Juno's crown:

O blessed bond of board and bed!

'tis hymen peoples every town:

High wedlock then be honoured:

Honour, high honour, big honour and renown,

To Hymen, god of every town! (V.iv.138)

This hymen leads to an end of the play with the harmonious ending of the pastoral romance, after the group marriage ceremony. No sooner have these celebrations of marriage been sanctioned by this note of due solemnity, than the time comes for all those concerned to leave Arden for the last time: to leave it in order to make their necessary return to the world of social and civilized realities to which they are at last ready to be incorporated.

3.3. The Pastoral Life of Exiled Duke and his Followers

Duke Senior and his followers, Jaques, Oliver, Charles and others are exiled into the forest due to the greedy and intriguing nature of courtly life demonstrated by the usurper Frederick. As soon as the scene shifts to the Forest of Arden there is a change, and we feel that the air of this sylvan retreat has a subtle effect on all who breathe it. There is no elves playing tricks on mortals with wonder working herbs, but there is evidently some mystic influence present in the wood which, along with the flora and fauna of a more temperate climate, produces the lions, serpents, and palm-trees of the tropics, which gives great relief and happiness to forget the city life:

“This influence steals with soothing balm into troubled hearts, and bathes then once more in the dewy freshness of their prime. Its effect is most clearly seen in the banished duke and his—co-mates and brothers in exile” (Boas 278).

“They are completely amused by the ‘Robin Hood pastoral life’ which represents idyllic folk tradition. The king fraternized with his subjects in the greenwood, and all were good fellows together. Lovemaking and deerstalking were the main occupations” (Bradbrook 226). Professor Stephen Knight has confidently asserted that ‘Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* is “a consciously Robin Hood play” (Knight 2), and of course in a literal sense, this is true. Yet after Orlando’s complaints and bitter exchange with Oliver, and after the negative remarks concerning the banishing of the old Duke, the very first positive statement in the play, tells of the Duke’s retreat to the Forest of Arden, and many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. The note struck by the Duke is indeed is indeed graver at times:

Are not these woods

More free from perils than the envious court? (II.I.3-4)

Exiled Duke, his followers and others are living completely satisfying life than in the courtly life. To lie beneath the greenwood tree, turning a merry note into sweet bird’s throat, or to kill the deer and to bear his body with a lusty chorus to the festal board—these are the occupations with which the Duke’s followers living with romantic feeling as they were in the golden world. Bradbrook writes:

“All the detail of these delightful scenes in Shakespeare’s, with scarcely a hint from Lodge, and their spirit, as has been said, is that of the old English popular poetry. The sentimentality of the orthodox pastoral is entirely absent, and in its place we have the ruddy vigor, the leaping pulse and play of the open air life that ‘loves to live in the sun.’” (278)

The contrast between an ideal world, which those who desire can only seek in the forest, which they will ultimately find there and the remembered experience of the real world to which, as human beings, they belong is one which dominates the entire presentation of the action in Arden:

“The forest is like the ‘golden world’ in partaking of a kind of timelessness, which seems indeed, to those who have recently escaped from the anxieties and mutual distress of their corrupted social world, to be a necessary condition of the ideal.”

(Traversi 287).

‘There’s no clock in the forest’, as Orlando points out to Rosalind. He goes on however, to speak himself, of that time which ‘travels in divers paces with divers persons’ and which necessarily accompanies the lover’s awareness of his condition (III.II).

Likewise, Duke Senior feels as if he has recovered the Golden Age by leading the Pastoral life in his eloquent. The duke implies that he has recovered an Edenic time. Charles memorably characterizes the Duke and his courtiers' life in exile as one in which they "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world" (I.I.118-19). Time, however, is not experienced "fleetingly" in the pastoral world; a place of great antiquity, the Forest of Arden measures the slow passage of time and the four seasons necessary for the pastoral exiles' enlighten. The Duke claims that:

Here we feel but the penalty of Adam
 The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
 And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
 Which when it hits and blows upon my body
 Even till I shrink with cold. I smile, and say
 “This is no flattery. These are counselors
 That feelingly persuade me what I am.” (II.I.5-11)

The regular appearance of "the winter wind" that "feelingly persuades" Duke Senior of his mortality depends upon the temporal revolution of the seasons, whose "difference" (decorous natural working) cannot be rushed:

“These images contradict the idea of time’s fleeting passage for pastoral mankind. Since the swift experiencing of time has been the only imagined trait of the golden age explicitly evoked, it proves difficult, if not impossible, to maintain that Duke Senior has recovered either heroic or Edenic time.”(Haunt 119)

The woods are said by old Duke, who has sought refuge in them from the trials to which he has sought refuge in them from the trials to which he was subjected by the unnatural action of his brother, to be ‘freer from peril than envious court’. This is true, and important; but the very statement implies that the memory of ‘peril’ and ‘envy’ are still very much alive in his hand as he speaks. If he is able, in his new state, to say, somewhat sententiously, that he can find complete harmony in woods:

Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.’(II.I.16-7)

And to declare that he feels no desire to change his condition, there is at least equal meaning in his recognition that:

Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head. (II.i.12-4)

The reality of the ‘jewel’, though we are asked by the very rules of the comic game to accept it, need not lead us to neglect the ugliness and poison of the toad which bears it; and the duke’s courtly companion Amiens was fully aware during his enforced sojourn in the realm of ‘nature’ of what he calls the ‘stubbornness of fortune’ which has brought him there.

According to Raleigh, It was current opinion in Shakespeare’s time, that in the head of an old

toad was to be found a stone, or pearl, to which great virtues were ascribed. This stone has been often sought, but nothing has been found more than accidental or perhaps morbid indurations of the skull (83). More than once, indeed, there are hints of real contradictions beneath the apparent simplicity of the pastoral ideal; for those who have found refuge in the forest from the pressures of a hostile world are still under the manifested necessity of living at nature's expense, of killing the dear. Jaques becomes sentimental at the killing of the deer. There is a situation into which the melancholy observer Jaques reads, with a sense of hatred, a moral which has a certain relation to real life, as he professes to see in his companions:

Usurpers, tyrants, and what's worse,

To fight the animals and to kill them up

In their assigned and native dwelling place. (II.i.61)

“If Jaques is overly sentimental toward the deer, he is no more than the Duke and the lord, and there is no evidence that the Duke regards Jaques' charge as unwarranted or especially excessive.” (Bennett 195) It is indeed upon the animals, the real representatives of ‘nature’ in the forest, that the human intruders are obliged in their extremity to prey simply to keep themselves alive. Whatever else it may be, the forest is not conceived as a place where the laws of life are permanently not conceived suspended in the interests of an effortless and simple existence. It would perhaps be nearer the truth to say that it is a place where each human actor finds what his own nature prompts him to discover. Amiens' song, with its touching expression of the desire to believe that those who are fortunate enough to live ‘under the greenwood tree’ in daily contact with nature are rendered free thereby of the less attractive aspects of life in society finding there:

Under the greenwood tree

Who loves to lie with me

And turn his merry note

Unto the sweet merry note
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he say
No enemy
But winter and rough weather, (II.VI.1-8)

Jaques at once responds with the disillusioned spirit of his parody:

Here shall he see
Gross fools as he,
And if he will come to me. (II.v.52-54)

“Both Amiens and Jaques are partially right, respond in their contrasted reactions to elements genuinely present human situation; but the central issue at stake in Arden, which is not finally resolved there, concerns not these separated fragments of vision, but, in the last resort, the complex and mutually enriching links between ‘nature’ and civilization.”(Traversi 289)

Jaques is so melancholy that he cannot be happy even in the sweet pastoral beauty. He talks about the moment of the every time to the sense of inevitable decay which so persistently accompanies life in the real world:

And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,
And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot;
And thereby hangs a tale. (II.Vii.26-28)

The reality of this ‘tale’ is germane to the entire conception of this comedy, and indeed, to all Shakespeare’s exercises in the comic form now and on, and to declare that he feels no desire to change his condition.

Oliver is described as “a wretched ragged man, ore-grown white hair” who lies “sleeping on his back” near the tree. This is an image from emblematic literature:

“This image is also that of the ubiquitous wild man of the romance tradition who ducks in and out of dozens of medieval and Renaissance stories. He is the usually interpreted as the symbol of humanity without divine grace. He is the image of Dante at the beginning of the *Inferno*, lost in the woods.” (Scoufos 222)

Thus the main actors of the play are presented with their relation to nature, to seek what is in essence a measure of self-clarification. The first person to decide to join the former Duke by taking refuge in the forest is Orlando, who is accompanied in his journey there by his faithful servant Adam, in whose aged person the traditional ideals of fidelity and service, which have been so harshly exiled from Duke Frederick’s corrupt and sophisticated court, are still alive. Adam, strong in the firm and unshakable possession of essential human values, which his subjection to his harsh realities of old age and exile cannot obscure, knows in the act of leaving it that ‘this house’; the court; has become ‘but a butchery’, an abode of deception and treachery upon which he comments without illusion:

Know you not, master, to some kind of men
 Their graces serve them but as enemies?
 No more do yours: your virtues, gentle master,
 Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.
 O, what a world is this, where what is comely
 Envenoms that bears it. (II.iii.10-15)

It is in reaction against the vice nature of the city preferring some better world, as that of the pastoral world, as Rosalind and Celia have abandoned the city for:

Now we go in content
 To liberty and not to banishment. (I.iii.132-133)

What all find in the forest, however, is a reality in some respects very notably distinct from any conception that they, or we, may harbor of merely idyllic peace. All the characters seem

amusing in the forest as the old Robin Hood life. But, finally Rosalind and Celia go through much of the different kind of experience; for they two are reduced to confess their weariness after long hour of wandering through the forest, and the clown Touchstone, whom they have so strangely chosen for their incongruous companion in the adventure of 'liberty' and who clearly has no illusion about the real meaning of the state of nature, has no better idea than this to say of his enforced surrounding: 'ay, now am I in Arden, the more fool I; when I was at home, I was in a better place', and concludes, in a typical mood of detached fatalism, that 'travelers must be content' (II.iv.16). We may think that the best comment on Arcadian illusion is conveyed through the shepherd Corin, when he says of his master, from whom Rosalind and Celia are hoping to get relief in their extremity:

My master is of churlish disposition
 And little recks to find the way to heaven
 By doing deeds of hospitality. (II.iv.81)

The exercise of 'hospitality' is clearly under any circumstances a virtue, a distinctively human and humanizing quality; but we are not to assume that it is necessarily more prevalent in the order of pastoral simplicity than in the world of normal social intercourse. "We must surely conclude, at the best, that the original dwellers in the pastoral 'paradise' are scarcely the idealized and gentle 'swains' that a more superficial use of the convention would have made of them."(Traversi 270)

It is worth nothing, moreover, that those who find themselves driven by diverse circumstances to enter Arcadian bring their true, their civilized natures with them. When the Duke reproves Orlando for having so rudely interrupted his rustic feast, the latter replies that he is a man who has 'some nurture', a true measure of civility in his nature, in spite of the circumstances in which he now finds himself and which have driven him to the excess. His

final appeal for understanding is made to those who have known civilized behavior in the real world of human society:

If ever you have look'd on better days,
If ever been where bells have toll'd to church,
If ever sat at any good feast,
If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear
And know what 'tis to pity and be pitied,
Let gentleness my strong enforcement be; (II.vii.112)

For, as he goes on to imply, to 'lose and neglect the creeping hours of time' in the forest may be a temporary necessity which exiles imposes, but can never be a permanent answer to the challenge, essentially sociably human in its nature, of real life.

The play ends with the transformation of the usurper Duke Frederick, in the rustic pastoral setting, and the resolution of all major characters. Whatever times they pass in the forest was quite harmonious to them though the long term rustic life may not be satisfying to them. The pastoral setting imparts an important impact upon them, because of which they forgets all the vices and are amused by the Robin Hood life style.

Chapter-4

As You Like It as a Pastoral Romance

The Forest of Arden plays an influential role upon the characters, whoever enters it; they are filled with the feeling of love and tenderness. Oliver and Duke Frederick are converted from their vices, and restore the respect and property of their brother. Other characters entertain with romantic love; Celia and Oliver, Touchstone and Audrey, Orlando and Rosalind, Silvius and Phebe; all get married at the end of the play. The Romance of those characters, especially of Rosalind and Orlando has been eulogized, giving much time to be fulfilled. The playful role of the Rosalind upon Orlando is quite amusing to the reader as well. Following the tradition of the pastoral literature, the protagonists are shown to be forced to flee from the court of Duke Frederick to the shelter of the Forest of Arden, due to the both corruption of family and court. Thus the characters of Rosalind, Orlando, Oliver, Duke Frederick and Duke Senior, become funnels through which questions of nature, nurture and nobility are discussed. Charles memorably characterizes the Duke and his courtiers' life in exile as one in which they "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world"(I.I.108-110).

Finally, the play proves that the love plays its part in the forest (Pastoral) by healing the 'original breach' between the brothers; Orlando and Oliver, Senior and Frederick; which breaks not only their relations but also drove each of the pair to exile. The forest is presented as a magical place, reaching where, all the vices are changed into love and satisfaction. Seeking out his banished brother in the forest, and thereby exposing himself to the kind of danger to which he had once been ready to leave Orlando, Oliver falls asleep under a tree and is rescued of precisely by a deed of courage which involves the shedding of the same brother's blood-from the dangers represented, in terms which unite the pastoral order to the kind symbolic meaning, by a serpent and a lioness. In other words when Oliver, suitably

repentant, carries to Rosalind a bloody napkin as a sign of his rescue he shows himself, according to his own admission, 'converted' by the kindness, nobler than revenge' (IV.iii.130), which he has encountered in the very person whom he once so grievously wronged. Thus finding reconciliation in the forest, the brothers make their peace and Oliver, restored to true civility as distinct from its false and sophisticated reflection, given 'fresh array' and 'entertainment' by the duke, falls in love with Celia and declares himself content to renounce the 'estate' which now he recognizes that he has wrongfully administered and, furthermore, to 'live and die a shepherd' (V.ii.14). In this way, and in accordance with the conventional pattern of the play, pastoral setting has been eulogized to re-establishment of the natural relationship between the brothers, which is also good for the general good of society. Orlando, bringing with the natural virtues that have always been his, returns to the world of 'nurture' to which he truly belongs, while Oliver, who has previously shown himself so unnatural in his state of worldly sophistication to seek true understanding of the world and of him, in the natural simplicities.

In the wedding masque, the three sets of lovers (Rosalind and Orlando, Celia and Oliver, Phebe and Silvius) are united through marriage; with Rosalind casting away her male alter-ego, Ganymede and the freedom of discourse that came with that role. Social order is also restored, with Duke Senior resuming his rightful place in the Court, and the reunion of Orlando and Oliver. The most obvious concern of *As You Like It* is love, and particularly the attitudes and the language appropriate to young romantic love. This is obvious enough from the relationships between Orlando and Rosalind, Silvius and Phebe, Touchstone and Audrey, and Celia and Oliver. The action of the play moves back and forth among these couples, inviting us to compare the different styles and to recognize from those comparisons some important facts about young love.

No sooner the marriage sanctified, than the time comes for all those concerned to leave Arden for the last time: to leave it in order to make necessary return to the world of social and civilized realities to which they are last ready to be incorporated. Duke Frederick, having declared himself 'converted' to a new and more responsible outlook upon life, restores his crown to its rightful owner and renounces the 'world' which, by his previous perverse acts, he has helped to plunge into confusion; and Duke Senior, taking up his former role, which has always been his right, calls upon those present to join him in the dance of married harmonies which reflects, in its grave and entranced unity, the universal harmony of nature.

Nancy Hayles writes that the opening of the play is marked by male rivalry and competition contrasted with female intimacy and as the scene shifts to the Forest of Arden, "co-operation rather than competition prevails" (64). Through the agency of sexual disguise, Rosalind gradually leads Orlando to give up his unrealistic, Petrarchan vision of women and to accommodate himself to the needs and desires of an actual woman. As Hayles puts it, "In *As You Like It*, fulfillment of desire, contentment and peace of mind come when the insistence on self-satisfaction ceases [. . .]" (66). Upon the whole, *As You Like It* is the sweetest and happiest of all Shakespeare comedies. It has really become successful to give a glimpse of pastoral ideal life and romantic love relation in the pastoral setting. No one suffers; no one lives an eager intense life; there is no tragic interest in it as there is in *The Merchant of Venice*, as there is in *Much Ado About Nothing*. It is mirthful, but the mirth is sprightly, graceful, and exquisite. The wit of Touchstone is not mere clownage, nor has any indirect serious significance; it is a dainty kind of absurdity worthy to be hold in comparison with the melancholy Jaques. And Orlando in the beauty and strength of early manhood, and Rosalind, with the bright, tender, loyal womanhood figures, which quicken and restore our

spirits, as music does, which is neither noisy nor superficial, and yet which knows little of the deep passion and sorrow of the world.

As You Like It would appear to be the perfect Pastoral Romance - but Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is not a Pastoral utopia. The Forest of Arden, is also a dangerous place 'poised carefully on a razor's edge, separating fantasy with harsh reality'; Dukes have been usurped, brothers can still be deadly enemies, starvation can be close, lions and deadly snakes can hurt, can kill; for all of its idyllic qualities, Arden is still a dangerous place.

Shakespeare, when he wrote this idyllic play, was himself in the Forest of Arden. He had ended one great ambition; the historical plays; and not yet commenced his tragedies. It was a resting place. He sends his imagination into the woods to find repose. Instead of the courts and camps of England, and the embattled plains of France, here was this woodland scene, where the palm tree, the lioness, and serpent are to be found; possessed of flora and fauna that flourish in spite of physical geographers. There is an open-air feeling throughout the play. The dialogue, as has been observed, catches freedom and freshness from the atmosphere. "Never is the scene within-doors, except when something discordant is introduced to heighten as it were the harmony" (Brown 263). After the trumpet-tones of *Henry V* comes the sweet pastoral strain, so bright, so tender. Must it not be all in keeping? Shakespeare was not trying to control his melancholy. When he needed to do that, Shakespeare confronted his melancholy very passionately, and looked it full in the face. Here he needed refreshment, a sunlight tempered by forest-boughs, a breeze upon his forehead, a stream murmuring in his.

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