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PATTERNS AND THEMES IN SHAKESPEARE'S EARLY COMEDIES

BY

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DEDICATION

To all those who made this research possible,  
and especially for my mother, and my wife.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of abbreviated titles of books and periodicals referred to throughout.

- Berry: Ralph Berry, Shakespeare's Comedies: Explorations in Form ( Princeton, University Press, 1972 ).
- Bonazza: Blaze O. Bonazza, Shakespeare's Early Comedies: A Structural Analysis ( The Hague: Mouton, 1966 ).
- Brown: J.R. Brown, Shakespeare and his Comedies ( London: Methuen, 1962 ), 2 nd. edn.
- Brown &
- Harris: J.R. Brown and Bertrand Harris (eds.), Early Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 3 ( London: Edward Arnold, 1961 ).
- Bullough: Geoffrey Bullough (ed.), Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, Vol. 1, Early Comedies, Poems, Romeo and Juliet ( London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957 ).
- Carroll: William C. Carroll, The Great Feast of Language in Love's Labour's Lost ( Princeton: University Press, 1976 ).
- Castiglione: Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Leonard Eckstein Opdycke

- ( New York: Horace Liveright, 1929 ).
- Charlton: H.B. Charlton, Shakespearian Comedy  
( London: Methuen, 1938 ).
- Evans: Bertrand Evans, Shakespeare's Comedies  
( Oxford: Clarendon, 1960 ).
- Farley-Hills: David Farley-Hills, The Comic in Renaissance Comedy ( London: Macmillan, 1981 ).
- Godshalk: William Leigh Godshalk, Patterning in Shakespearean Drama: Essays in Criticism ( The Hague: Mouton, 1973 ).
- Gordon: George Gordon, Shakespearian Comedy and other Studies, ed. E.K. Chambers  
( London: OUP, 1944 ).
- Hamilton: A.C. Hamilton, The Early Shakespeare  
( San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1967 ).
- Huston: Dennis Huston, Shakespeare's Comedies of Play ( London: Methuen, 1981 ).
- Leggatt: Alexander Leggatt, Shakespeare's Comedy of Love ( London: Macmillan, 1974 ).
- Morris: Brian Morris (ed.), The Taming of the Shrew, Arden ( London: Methuen, 1981 ).
- Nevo: Ruth Nevo, Comic Transformations in Shakespeare ( London: Methuen, 1980 ).
- Parrott: T.M. Parrott, Shakespearean Comedy  
( New York: OUP, 1949 ).
- Phialas: Peter G. Phialas, Shakespeare's Romantic Comedies: The Development of their Form

- and Meaning ( Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966 ).
- Salingar: Leo Salingar, Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy ( London: CUP, 1974 ).
- Sen Gupta: S.C. Sen Gupta. Shakespearian Comedy ( London: OUP, 1950 ).
- Talbert: E.W. Talbert, Elizabethan Drama and Shakespeare's Early Plays: An Essay in Historical Criticism ( Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963 ).
- Tillyard: E.M.W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's Early Comedies ( London: Chatto & Windus, 1965 ).
- Traversi: Derek Traversi, William Shakespeare: The Early Comedies ( London: Longmans, 1960 ).
- Wright: Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England ( Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935 ).
- ES: English Studies
- E&S: Essays and Studies
- JEGP: Journal of English and Germanic Philology
- MLN: Modern Language Notes
- MLR: Modern Language Review
- MP: Modern Philology
- PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association
- PQ: Philological Quarterly
- RES: Review of English Studies

<u>SJ</u> :	<u>Shakespeare Jahrbuch</u>
<u>SQ</u> :	<u>Shakespeare Quarterly</u>
<u>SSt</u> :	<u>Shakespeare Studies</u>
ShS:	<u>Shakespeare Survey</u>
<u>SEL</u> :	<u>Studies in English Literature</u>
<u>SP</u> :	<u>Studies in Philology</u>

#### Other Abbreviations

Arden:	New Arden Shakespeare
Cambridge:	New Cambridge Shakespeare
<u>OED</u> :	<u>Oxford English Dictionary</u>
Penguin:	New Penguin Shakespeare
Yale:	Yale University Press

## Synopsis

The Dissertation is a two-part study of Shakespeare's Patterns and Themes in the Early Comedies. Its motive arises from the belief that the plays have not as yet been assigned sufficiently high value in spite of the numerous interpretations so far advanced. The emphasis throughout has been on close reading and explication.

The First Part is concerned with the diversity of intellectual construction revealed by the plays seriatim.

Chapter 1 focuses on the Quest Pattern in The Comedy of Errors, and its function in clarifying the play's thematic complications as well as in manifesting its integral whole.

Chapter 2 takes a close look at the Pattern of Classical Allusions in The Taming Of the Shrew, primarily to make the feat of Petruchio, or rather the metamorphosis of Katherina, acquire a special dramatic significance.

Chapter 3 examines four integrating structural elements in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, which contribute both individually and collectively to the total meaning of the play; special stress is placed on the all-round Pattern of Reconciliations.

Chapter 4 explores the Morality Pattern implanted in Love's Labour's Lost, behind the barrier of artifice which separates Navarre from the outside world.

The Second Part centres on the plays' versatile thematic preoccupation.

Chapter 5 discusses the Debate about Marriage in The Comedy of Errors, a play written at a time when the controversy over women and their position in marriage particularly, had reached its apogee.

Chapter 6 examines The Taming of the Shrew as an academic drama set in Renaissance Italy, in which an experience of Education is provided for the benefit of its characters and audience alike.

Chapter 7 analyses the literary theme of Alienation in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and shows how it is ultimately resolved in a state of social communion at the end of the play.

Chapter 8 deals with the Religious Dimension in Love's Labour's Lost - the Christian view which emerges from the play and which is based on the teaching and imagery of Holy Scripture.

The Conclusion emphasises the overall argument that it is only when the Early Comedies are seriously treated, their intrinsic values explored, that these plays impart as much interest as can be found elsewhere in the Shakespeare canon. The intellectual construct of these plays is indeed as interesting and intriguing. From the fantastic and mythic quest of the Errors, we pass in the Shrew, into a realm of wonders with an appropriate class-



ical background. And after the renaissance of romantic love in The Two Gentlemen, we move on to a more original vein of regeneration pulsating with Medieval Morality blood in Love's Labour's Lost. The plays' thematic content, too, is fascinating. Again, we are transported across the domestic channels of the Errors and the Shrew, where characters endeavour assiduously to navigate their lives safely to the shore by sorting out individual differences. And, going through the more worldly preoccupations of The Two Gentlemen, we end up in Love's Labour's Lost with an intelligible view of love, life, and indeed death - one checked by and tempered with religion.

The plays become more interesting when the link between their respective patterns and themes is probed. The associations of home enhanced by the journeys of the Errors bear a strong relationship to the male/female attitudes to domesticity and household stability. Similarly, the Shrew's wonders, achieved against all odds by Petruchio, are doubly stressed by the process of education. The pattern of reconciliations in The Two Gentlemen complements its theme by conquering the alienations. Likewise, the Morality element in Love's Labour's Lost overlaps the play's Christian connotations.

It is high time the Early Comedies of Shakespeare should be welcomed into the circle of his later ones, as worthy guests if not true members of an honourable family.

## Introduction

Two different approaches have always characterised the debate about Shakespeare's early comedies in the critical arena, very often with the same depressing outcome - embarrassment. The plays have either been studied in isolation and dismissed as meritless early products, or set against their other sister-comedies and dismissed again as immature pieces. In a recent book-length study of one of these plays, William C. Carroll makes the point that the early plays of Shakespeare 'share a liability in their earliness.'<sup>1</sup> Dennis Huston produces an interesting volume in which he argues that these plays are normally judged deficient because they are measured against maturer works such as As You Like It, works which are 'richer in characterization, more sophisticated in language, and more complex in world view.'<sup>2</sup>

A quarter of a century ago, J.R. Brown expressed the general feeling and attitude of critics prior to him on approaching the same plays. He noted how they were often embarrassed when they came to consider Shakespeare's early comedies, which they cautiously described as 'natural,' 'true to nature,' and 'good-natured,' and tentatively praised for gaiety, variety, and humanity, stopping there without even trying to delve deep into them to explore their intrinsic values. Brown further deplored the fact that while some plays of the dramatist had been revalued,

such as those now termed the 'problem plays,' the early comedies had not. <sup>3</sup>

Shakespeare's early comedies were for a long time regarded as 'apprentice' plays. In his book on Shakespearean Comedy, the first book on the subject to follow the pioneering work of Charlton and Gordon, <sup>4</sup> T.M. Parrott puts the reader under the impression that the earliest comedies of Shakespeare (except The Taming of the Shrew) come from an 'apprentice' playwright who was only learning his art. Patrick Swinden gives a similar impression in his Introduction to Shakespeare's Comedies, when he comments on the early comedies (Love's Labour's Lost excluded) saying that 'it took Shakespeare three plays apprenticeship before he hit on his distinctive comic manner.' A.N. Kaul's approach to The Action of English Comedy expresses the same feeling - 'The earliest comedies of Shakespeare ... are immature - a combination ... of pastiche and prentice work.' <sup>5</sup>

Shakespeare's early comedies have also been looked at with the sole purpose of revealing in them the elements which Shakespeare further develops in his later plays. <sup>6</sup> Derek Traversi proposes one way in which these plays can be considered. 'We may look at them,' he suggests, 'principally with an eye to later developments.' This tendency is pointed out yet again by G.K. Hunter who informs us how critics 'normally judge Shakespeare's early plays as preparations for his later achievements,' and by Huston who asserts that the same critics view the same plays primarily as 'preparations for the future.' Blaze O. Bonazza who

attempts a structural analysis of Shakespeare's Early Comedies puts it explicitly that he intends to 'follow the steps in [Shakespeare's] progress from tentative experimentation to full competence in the craft of fashioning popular dramatic entertainment for an Elizabethan audience.' <sup>7</sup>

We should not be surprised then if the early comedies are obscured, their inner qualities undervalued, and looked at on the whole as preliminary drafts for the superior plays that were to follow. Nor should we be surprised if they are often slighted or treated superficially. A handful of modern critics, however, have begun to set this right by writing some excellent commentaries on the plays in essays as well as in introductions to editions of the texts. <sup>8</sup>

There is no standard critical commentary on Shakespeare's early comedies. Traversi's Shakespeare: The Early Comedies is too brief to be considered as one. Bonazza's Shakespeare's Early Comedies excludes one of the plays (The Taming of the Shrew), and takes the rest, as already established, as merely pointers. With the exception thus of Tillyard's Shakespeare's Early Comedies <sup>9</sup>

(which was, nevertheless, initially designed as a general essay on Shakespearian comedy, but left unfinished at the author's death <sup>10</sup>), much of what has been written on these plays treats them briefly in books surveying the whole sequence of Shakespearian drama in general;

Shakespearian comedy in particular; or even in books illustrating the Shakespearian canon, with a special or polemical purpose.<sup>11</sup> In none of these works do the early comedies appear to impart particular interest or original thought.

Recently, the plays have started to rouse critics whose admiration for Shakespeare's later achievements has not made them prejudiced against the early ones. Not only have these critics dedicated careful consideration to the plays,<sup>12</sup> but they have also managed painstakingly to explore the plays' long-ignored strengths and creative energies. One of these interesting areas - the exuberant experimentation with dramatic convention and joy in the act of play-making - is fully explored by Huston in his Shakespeare's Comedies of Play.

My endeavour in the present thesis is to extend this modern critical interest in the early comedies by taking them as extraordinary achievements in their own right. In the process, it will be suggested that these plays are not merely prophetic, but unique too. Admittedly, such an approach is not original: it has been propagated by a few critics in connection with Shakespeare's early work. A.C. Hamilton argues in The Early Shakespeare that it 'appears worthwhile ... to explore the hypothesis that each of the early works is perfect in its kind.' It has been adopted in connection with Shakespeare's early tragedies. Nicholas Brooke who studies these plays is in no doubt about his objectives - 'my first, and strongest, aim,' he

initially declares, 'is to look at these plays for what they are, in themselves, ... I mean individually; I want to look at what each is uniquely as a single play ...' And so has the same approach been recommended for the early comedies. Exhibiting wider aims than in his previously quoted suggestion (supra, p.x), Traversi tells us that perhaps 'we may take these plays on their own merits.' Carroll, in his turn, asserts in The Great Feast of Language in Love's Labour's Lost that this play and the other early comedies 'deserve to be measured on their own terms.' 13

The early comedies of Shakespeare that are discussed in the body of this dissertation are The Comedy of Errors, The Taming of the Shrew, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Love's Labour's Lost. The rationale of this choice is simple. These four particular plays have scarcely, as far as I am aware, appeared together in any major volume or section of a volume on Shakespeare's early comedy. It so often happens that one of these plays or another, for instance the Shrew, is excluded with merely a passing reference, on the pretext that it does not illustrate a particular pattern set by its sister-comedies. Brown and Bertrand Harris exclude the Shrew from their volume of the Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, Early Shakespeare, explaining that the central focus of their collection is a few plays written around 1595 and 1597. Bonazza, as already noted, ignores the same play, because, for him, it does not reveal any significant development towards

a distinct Shakespearian pattern of construction. Hamilton offers a similar explanation for his omission of the same play - 'I exclude The Taming of the Shrew because the other comedies sufficiently show the pattern set up by these early plays.' John Arthos excludes the same play from his Shakespeare: The Early Writings, whereas Huston omits The Two Gentlemen which he believes to lack 'the creative energy and exuberant playfulness' of the other works discussed in his book.<sup>14</sup> Unlike these - Huston being an exception - Parrott does not leave out the Shrew, yet he still separates it from its other early sister-comedies. He puts it a step ahead of them in an area which Shakespeare enters after his graduation, as it were, 'from the rank of a prentice to that of a master playwright.' Swinden does exactly the same thing, yet with Love's Labour's Lost to which he assigns Shakespeare's discovery of a distinct comic mode.<sup>15</sup> It is hoped that the task here undertaken will show that the effort of setting the four comedies beside and against each other can after all be worthwhile.

It may, however, be asked why A Midsummer Night's Dream is not included in this volume; and the question is of course reasonable enough to require an answer. Any major study of the early comedies does not fail to devote some space to this play (or alternatively to The Merchant of Venice). The most notable examples are already mentioned - Brown and Harris's Collection (which also in-

cludes The Merchant of Venice), Bonazza's book and Huston's work. In these works, the last two being the more interesting, A Midsummer Night's Dream appears to ascend to a very high place hardly aspired to by the other early comedies. Bonazza perceives in this play 'the first successful fusion of the structural elements the playwright had experimented with earlier...', and Huston a wonderful demonstration of 'the act of writing a successful play.'<sup>16</sup> A Midsummer Night's Dream is generally regarded as 'the play in which Shakespeare achieves full mastery of his art;' it is in fact a play that 'has recently been established as one of the profoundest of the comedies.'<sup>17</sup> Having had thus the lion's share, as it were, of critical attention, A Midsummer Night's Dream seems to me to go far beyond the area of the still unfavoured early comedies.

Besides their undisputed earliness and the relative critical underestimation, the comedies I am here concerned with possess other characteristics which provide a further reason for my choice of this quartet of plays. They experiment with different patterns and themes, all imparting dramatic interest. They may be closely related in date,<sup>18</sup> but they are far apart in so far as their literary ancestries are taken into account. Surely, this particular feature of diversity holds the key to the sort of pleasure that we hope to find in the comedies, in line with Dr. Johnson's acute remark - 'The great source of pleasure is variety.'<sup>19</sup>



A major problem in any study of Shakespeare's early comedies as a group comes from the need to determine the works to be included on the basis of an uncertain chronology. Hunter comments - 'The order of composition of Shakespeare's early comedies is a vexed question, and to argue the meaning of the details which constitute evidence in this field would take space quite disproportionate to the value.'<sup>20</sup> Since the facts that can make the chronology of the early comedies definite are lacking, one must assume an order that does not contradict the facts that are already available. Hamilton observes that any chronology 'is no more than a hypothesis that is upheld by the sense it makes of Shakespeare's early period. It should be reasonable, ... and as simple as possible. It must not be rejected because we cannot confirm it, but only because we have found another hypothesis that makes better sense.'<sup>21</sup>

For my purposes I have adopted the most commonly accepted hypothetical chronology - the one which puts the 'popular' plays first with the view of showing the transition in the early comedies from the 'popular' to the 'literary' traditions. According to this chronology the plays are arranged in this order: The Comedy of Errors, The Taming of the Shrew, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Love's Labour's Lost. This order 'need not be set up even tentatively as the actual order in which Shakespeare wrote' his early comedies, 'but it is one that allows us to understand them.'<sup>22</sup>

The task now at hand employs two distinct but still related methods of literary criticism - structural anatomy and thematic analysis. Both approaches are well-established, particularly the thematic trend which has now become so common and wide-spread that it has practically attained the status of a new critical orthodoxy. It should not, however, escape our attention that this approach has lately been attacked by a notable scholar of Renaissance drama - Richard Levin. Professor Levin has raised many objections in a series of articles extended over a period of three years between 1972 and 1975, culminating four years later in a whole volume which extends the challenge to the ironic and historical approaches.<sup>23</sup> Although Levin's protests were voiced by only a few critics<sup>24</sup> before him, he does not at all look vulnerable, much of what he says making good sense. Although again his opposing views as he himself admits 'have quite inexplicably failed to produce any discernible decline'<sup>25</sup> in the thematic trend, he is never discouraged nor are his beliefs shaken.

To reflect on Levin's demurs in detail would take me away from the purpose of my present task. Sufficient, however, it is to point out that the thematic approach is not dismissed by Levin as entirely unreliable. The approach was and still is one of the most advantageous methods of analysing an Elizabethan or Shakespearian play. Even Levin himself is aware of that. What, therefore, he protests against is the practitioners of this approach, their at-

titude, frame of mind, and excessive confidence in their methods of interpretation. These thematists, for instance, suggest that a drama is always about some thematic idea in which they become interested even more than in the dramatis personae or the dramatic live experience. Worse than that they pretend to take their methods for granted as the sole valid means of interpretation. <sup>26</sup>

In the process of my thematic elucidation, I shall bear in mind the objections which Levin raises. I shall also avail myself of the interesting suggestions which he offers to promote this dominant school of criticism.

The structural approach upon which I partly rely for my examination of the plays has not confronted any major or minor opposition. Justification for this approach is readily available in authors such as Hereward T. Price, Emrys Jones, and Mark Rose. <sup>27</sup>

The argument of my thesis is in two parts. The first part examines the structural patterns employed individually by the four comedies, to show how each of them functions as the architectonic principle of construction that converts the play into 'a living organism or machine.' <sup>28</sup> The second turns to the general themes recurring throughout the plays with a purpose to point out how these themes emerge spontaneously from the plays' actions and relate directly to their characters and settings. My argument, in other words, is that the plays care not only for their form by utilising intellectual structures, but also for the

characters by presenting them with live experiences. This, I hope, will suggest that a close and careful study of the early comedies of Shakespeare can display still much greater profundity than generally assigned to these plays.

The patterns that are anatomised in the first part of this study stem from the belief that even from the beginning of his career as a playwright, Shakespeare's 'sense of structure and his ability to unite the diverse elements of a play into a well-knit whole is unique.'<sup>29</sup> It is believed that this structural competence begins with his earliest extant plays and continues (in spite of changes in artistic technique) to the last.

The term pattern<sup>30</sup> is used here in a general, extended sense to underscore a particular principle of construction, or organising factor that may serve as the groundwork for the study of the play or hold together the play's disparate components.

William Leigh Godshalk, to draw upon a useful 'structuralist,' makes the point in his Patterning in Shakespearean Drama that 'patterns' are 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive,' and that they may include images and actions and can be parts of the characterisation and the scenic layout. He comments - 'In theory, there is no limitation to the elements which may be included in an intellectual construct,' proceeding to explain his view -

It may, for example, be introduced as an image and in the course of the

play become a reality in the play's action. In turn, patterned action may be supported by a discernible pattern in the play's scenes ... In the play, patterns unite to form an organic whole. One might use the comparison of an oriental rug, where recurring patterns - sometimes with significant variations on the basic design - are joined into symmetrical unity. <sup>31</sup>

The themes that are discussed in the second part of the thesis can be indicated by such words as: 'The Debate about Marriage,' 'The Theme of Education,' 'Alienation and Communion,' 'The Religious Dimension.' Such themes are not simply general ideas that may occur to us while experiencing the plays whether in the theatre or in the study. They are not merely abstractions that may have no relationship whatsoever to the plays. They are, to the contrary, representatives of the profoundly moving experiences of the plays' characters. I shall be mainly thinking of and writing about these dramatic experiences in all their concrete particularities.

My thematic interpretation will, therefore, be intended to exhibit that the plays are simply about what they obviously seem to be about - namely, particular human characters undergoing particular experiences through particular actions, and not about some general, abstracted ideas which may not at all be obvious. <sup>32</sup> It is interesting in this context to refer to L.C. Knights's book - Some Shakespearian Themes, in which the emphasis seems to fall on general ideas rather than on dramatic characters as

differentiated individuals. <sup>33</sup>

It is noteworthy that the themes brought under focus are not only confined to the early comedies; some of them (e.g. Alienation and Communion) are taken up by the dramatist and discussed in larger contexts in the middle and late comedies (not to mention the rest of his work). Again, the themes are not confined to Shakespeare; they are indeed extendable to almost every important product of the Elizabethan age, from Bacon's Essays to Sidney's Arcadia, and from Lyly's complimentary comedies to Greene's romantic dramas. These themes have, therefore, been selected (focus being on how Shakespeare uses them rather than what they are) not only to project the early comedies on the screen of the later ones, but also to reflect them on the wider screen of the Elizabethan literary achievements. This may hopefully enhance our admiration of these earlier comic works.

A word now about the presentation of the thesis. Throughout, I have sought to follow the diachronic approach, that is to deal with only one play at a time, to move from it on to another, until the quartet of plays have been analysed. This method does not, in fact, depart from the major received scholarly work on Shakespearian comedy, <sup>34</sup> not even from works that may promise a synchronic approach. <sup>35</sup> One of a few synchronic approaches to Shakespeare's comedies can be found in Larry S. Champ-

ion's The Evolution of Shakespeare's Comedy.<sup>36</sup>

My study, as already indicated, is partly structural, partly thematic. Patterns and themes are, as generally accepted, inseparable. However, for my own convenience, I have sought - but only in theory - a principle of separation, to distinguish between the Shakespearian patterns and themes which I intend to tackle. My argument, therefore, falls into two parts, each, in turn, containing four chapters, one on each of the four plays. In this order, the first four chapters will repeatedly be concerned with the plays' patterns, whereas the second with their themes. The thesis will then be concluded by a general essay in which the basic arguments and findings are drawn together.

#### Notes to the Text

All specific examples of direct dependence that I am aware of I have indicated as they occur in the main body of the study, but like all students of Shakespeare's comedies, I am deeply indebted to the works already cited in this introduction. If other equally definite obligations go unacknowledged, the fault is one of memory and not of intention.

Quotations from Shakespeare embodied in the text of this thesis have been drawn regularly from the text edited by Peter Alexander, William Shakespeare: The Complete Works (London & Glasgow: Collins, 1978).

## Introduction: Notes

- 1 Carroll, p. 3.
- 2 Huston, p. 2.
- 3 Brown, pp. 11 ff.
- 4 I refer to Charlton and Gordon.
- 5 See Parrott, pp. 100-25; Swinden, p. 22: London: Macmillan, 1973; and Kaul, p. 54: New Haven & London: Yale, 1970.
- 6 Shakespeare's early tragedies, too, 'have been viewed critically as prentice work, and examined for handy comparisons to illuminate the quality of later achievements.' Nicholas Brooke, Shakespeare's Early Tragedies (London: Methuen, 1968), p. 3.
- 7 See Traversi, pp. 7-8; Hunter, John Lyly (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 300; Huston, p. 151; and Bonazza, p. 9.
- 8 E.g. Harold F. Brooks, 'Themes and Structure in The Comedy of Errors,' in Brown & Harris, pp. 55-71; Stanley Wells (ed.), The Comedy of Errors, Penguin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), introd.; and John Kerrigan (ed.), Love's Labour's Lost, Penguin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982), introd.
- 9 Tillyard.
- 10 See Swinden, An Introduction to Shakespeare's Comedies, p. 180.
- 11 E.g. Peter Alexander, Shakespeare's Life and Art (London: James Nisbet, 1939); Sen Gupta; and E.C. Pettet, Shakespeare and the Romance Tradition (London: Staples, 1949).
- 12 In his introduction to The Comedy of Errors, London: Methuen, 1962, the New Arden editor, R.A. Foakes, makes the point that the early comedies of Shakespeare are well worth sustained critical attention.



- 13 See Hamilton, p. 5; Brooke, op.cit., p. 3; Traversi, p. 8; and Carroll, p. 3.
- 14 See Brown & Harris, p. 7; Hamilton, p. 7; Arthos: London: Bowes & Bowes, 1972; and Huston, p. 11.
- 15 See Parrott, p. 125. Parrott places the play with A Midsummer Night's Dream in his section on 'The Master Craftsmen,' pp. 144-53. See, also, Swinden, op.cit., p. 22.
- 16 See Bonazza, p. 12; and Huston, p. 9.
- 17 See Parrott, p. 134; and Richard Levin, 'Third Thoughts on Thematics,' MLQ, 70 (1975), No. 3, 492.
- 18 It is conjectured that the four plays may have been written within a period of three years, between 1592-5. See Brown & Harris, p. 9.
- 19 See Samuel Johnson: Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968), Vol. 1, Butler, 35, 212.
- 20 Hunter, op.cit., p. 300.
- 21 Hamilton, p. 7.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 E.g. 'Thematic Unity and the Homogenization of Character,' MLQ, 33 (1972), 23-9; 'Some Second Thoughts on Central Themes,' MLR, 67 (1972), No. 1, 1-10; 'Third Thoughts,' 481-96; and 'My Theme Can Lick Your Theme,' College English, 37 (1975), 307-12; New Readings vs. Old Plays (Chicago: University Press, 1979).
- 24 Esp. Arthur Freeman, Thomas Kyd (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), pp. 83-4; and A.S. Knowland, 'Troilus and Cressida,' SQ, 10 (1959), 355.
- 25 'Third Thoughts,' 481.
- 26 See Levin's opening sentences in his articles previously mentioned. See, also, the summary of his objections in 'Third Thoughts,' 481-83.
- 27 H.T. Price, 'Mirror-Scenes in Shakespeare,' in Joseph Quincy Adams, ed. J.G. McManaway (Washington: The

- Folger Shakespeare Library, 1948), pp. 101-13; Construction in Shakespeare, University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology, No. 17 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1951); Emrys Jones, Scenic Form in Shakespeare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971); Mark Rose, Shakespearean Design (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1972).
- 28 Levin, 'Thematic Unity,' 28.
- 29 Godshalk, p. 13. Godshalk has in part influenced my structural interpretation; I am much in his debt.
- 30 'Pattern,' it should be noted, is not used here in the same way as in Walter Clyde Curry or Irving Ribner. Curry defines his 'philosophical pattern' as 'any unified system of philosophy, involving definite relationship between man and an external world of given texture, which the dramatist may allow to serve as active, formative principle of work.' See Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns (Louisiana: State University Press, 1959), 2nd edn., p. ix; see, also, his Appendix A, pp. 203-15. Ribner, on the hand, takes pattern as one tragic action that 'could be used to illustrate a different facet of the life journey of man in conflict with evil.' See Patterns in Shakespearian Tragedy (London: Methuen, 1979), rpt., p. 12.
- 31 Pp. 13, 14.
- 32 See Levin, 'Third Thoughts,' 485.
- 33 London: Chatto & Windus, 1959. See, esp., his explicit statements in the opening pages.
- 34 Evans; J.D. Wilson, Shakespeare's Happy Comedies (London: Faber & Faber, 1962); Berry.
- 35 Thomas McFarland, Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); Leggatt; Nevo; Huston.
- 36 Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970.

PART I: PATTERNS

Chapter 1  
The Quest Pattern in  
The Comedy of Errors

Shakespeare never stereotyped his methods of dramatic construction. 'Every play that he wrote,' Hereward T. Price has taught us, 'is unique in that it has its own particular problem of construction and its own solution.'<sup>1</sup> The early comedies are part of this wonderful variety. Individually, each of these plays has its own organising principle of construction. Collectively, however, they possess structural characteristics which render them members of a family. The Comedy of Errors, for instance, uses the action of Aegeon as 'both the point of departure and the resolution.' The Taming of the Shrew, again, uses a similar device in the Induction of Christopher Sly, which is initially employed to 'lead the spectator into the imaginary world of the play' only to be discarded shortly afterwards. Love's Labour's Lost and The Two Gentlemen of Verona, on the other hand, use as part of their main action a plot which 'turns on an oath and its violation.' The quartet of plays, therefore, exhibits a similar concern in surrounding the main body of their plots by a wider enveloping action.<sup>2</sup> The manipulation of this action takes various forms and is characterised by marked differences. The Errors, to take but one play, manages to envelop and also include its plot from start to finish by

exploiting the potentials of an age-old pattern - the pattern of journeys.<sup>3</sup>

The obvious use of Aegeon as a framing device has now become a commonplace of criticism. The notes of tragedy - or perhaps of romance - which the aged man sounds in the play, have been interpreted in various ways with a view to relating their function either to Shakespeare's principles of dramaturgy in general, or to the comedy's premise, genre and content in particular. The less obvious use of Aegeon and his son of Syracuse as a double traveller, or a double quest hero, on the other hand, has not been pointed out. My intention, therefore, is to focus on the quest pattern utilised by the play for the clarification of its own dramatic plot.<sup>4</sup> This pattern, I shall submit, explicates the play's thematic complications and manifests its integral whole.

Shakespeare could have taken a hint of the quest pattern from his sources of the play, especially Gascoigne's Supposes and Gower's Apollonius of Tyre, two works already available to him and already familiar to the moderately literate member of his audience. From the Supposes Shakespeare could have borrowed a suggestion of the general pattern of a father reunited with his travelling long-lost son(s).<sup>5</sup> In the final stages of the Supposes, a long-lost son - Dulipo, is reunited with his father, Cleander, after his journey from Sicilia to Ferrara -

therby lies another tale, the most  
fortunate adventure that ever you  
heard; wot you what? this, Dulipo,  
other

whomeall this while we supposed to  
 be Erostrato is founde to be the so-  
 nne of Cleander, who<sup>me</sup> he lost at the  
 losse of Otranto, and was after solde  
 in Sicilia too this Philogano: the  
 strangest case that ever you heard:  
 a man might make a Comedie of it.  
Scena Septima. 6

Shakespeare could also have been indebted to Apollonius  
 of Tyre for the pattern of separated parents and child(ren)  
 who are ultimately reunited after many sea-voyages. 7

At any rate, the pattern of journeys is an arche-  
 type; it 'recurs in different periods, cultures, and lit-  
 erary kinds.' It goes back to the Homeric epic of quest -  
 the Odyssey, which takes its hero on multiple journeys to  
 magical and dream lands before his final home return. 8

Greek mythology abounds in the same archetypal quests, as  
 the celebrated one of Jason who journeys in search of the  
 Golden Fleece guarded by the sleepless dragon.

The basic form of the quest is already familiar to us  
 in fairy tales 'where a younger son sets out to seek his  
 fortune in a magic world of adventure, or a princess who  
 lies locked in enchanted sleep until the prince comes to  
 wake her with a kiss.' 9 This form was to be modified as  
 time went by. In biblical mythology, to begin with, the  
 pattern takes on the form of a 'solitary journey involv-  
 ing spiritual change in the voyager.' Jonah, Joseph, and  
 Christ, respectively, undertake 'a night journey' in the  
 belly of a whale, in a cistern, and in a sepulture, to be  
 cast out after that to daylight. In medieval allegory, the

sea or land voyage becomes 'an allegory for the soul's journey through life towards ultimate salvation or damnation.' Dante's hero of the Divine Comedy, 'pursues the quest for salvation from Hell to Heaven.' And in Renaissance literature, the classical form of the journey as 'a descent into the earth followed by a return to light' persists, yet with its dimensions being broadened with the introduction of the 'dream' experience. Cervantes's Don Quixote experiences an illuminating dream in the bottom of a well after which he captures a sense of rebirth. <sup>10</sup>

The pattern of journeys exploited in the Errors corresponds to the essential elements of the typical quest even in its modified forms. The most essential of these are: the precious object and/or person to be found; the young hero who possesses the right qualities of breeding and character; and the long journey usually in lands or seas originally unknown. <sup>11</sup>

The Errors, even before its action properly starts, illustrates these elements especially the journey motif. Being a merchant, Aegeon had had to embark on several journeys between Syracuse and Epidamnum in search of wealth. He tells the Duke, on their first appearance, I.i., how he and Aemilia 'lived in joy; our wealth increas'd/  
By prosperous VOYAGES I often made/ To Epidamnum' (40-2). His business journeys had, however, separated him temporarily from his wife when 'the great care of goods at random left,/ Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse'

(43-4).

But while Aegeon travels as a merchant seeking prosperous business, Aemilia journeys in the hope of rejoining her husband -

my absence was not six months old,  
Before herself, almost at fainting under  
The pleasing punishment that women bear,  
Had made provision for her following me.

45-8.

Having settled in an alien town with the size of her family enlarged by the twin sons and their intended twin male servants, Aemilia itches for 'home.' She is so homesick that her husband cannot but reluctantly agree on a homeward journey. The whole family thus put to the sea heading for homeland.

Even before the play's action gets underway, Aegeon and his family have already embarked on sea-journeys. However, in their travels, neither Aegeon nor Aemilia figures as the typical quest hero (or heroine). It is the younger Antipholus (of Syracuse) who figures so. He is thus introduced to us -

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,  
At eighteen years became inquisitive  
After his brother, and importun'd me  
That his attendant - so his case was like,  
Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name -  
Might bear him company in the quest of him.  
125-30; my own italics.

And he thus introduces himself -

I to the world am like a drop of water  
That in the ocean seeks another drop,  
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,  
Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself.  
So I, to find a mother and a brother;  
In quest of them - unhappy, lose my self.  
I.ii.35-40; my own italics.



When the action opens, Aegeon himself figures as the seafaring quest hero who seeks another quest hero already engaged in his own search for the lost members of his family -

Five summers have I spent in farthest Greece,  
Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia.  
I.i.133-34.

Another essential element in the quest is the 'trial' or series of trials to which the hero is exposed before the winning or recovery of his precious object. Normally, a quest story has two fixed points - the starting out and the final achievement.<sup>12</sup> What comes in the interval is a number of adventures involving some risks during which the hero may nearly come to disaster.

As it happens, the play commences with a major trial poised for its senior quest hero. Aegeon is arrested and put in the danger of death in the hostile city of Ephesus.

Proceed, Solinus, procure my fall,  
And by the doom of death end woes and all,  
are his first words, the very first of the play (1-2). Aegeon remains with this all-possessing despair, 'hopeless and helpless' (158), until the concluding scene when he is psychologically rendered even readier to welcome death. At the outset, he wonders whether his wanderings on the sea can guarantee that his long-lost family are still alive - 'Could all my travels warrant me they live' (140), and retains till the last moment some joyful hope of deliverance -

Haply I see a friend will save my life  
And pay the sum that may deliver me.  
V.i.283-84.

Yet, he then discovers that fate has kept another blow in store for him, one stronger and more depressing than Fortune's ordeals. His own son who has departed on his approval denies him in public. This blow is the second and last trial for Aegeon before his quest is finally rewarded. Since he starts as an overall quest hero, the reward in his case is a double success; he is not only destined to find his long-lost son, but the rest of the long-lost family also.

The junior hero's arete is exposed to the traditional trials of a quest, though he does not begin like his father with his life already at stake. The series of trials in the Syracusan Antipholus' case escalates as the action of the play develops, climaxing to a precarious point at which the young man draws his sword. As a quest hero, Antipholus is already cut off from his everyday social relations. The only sustained relation which he has and can enjoy is with his Dromio. About the man who attends on him, Antipholus reports -

A trusty villain, ... that ~~very~~ oft,  
When I am dull with care and melancholy,  
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.

I.ii.19-21.

The first trial experienced by Antipholus concerns this steady relationship, and imposes in the meantime a new structure of domestic commitment on him. On the entry of the resident Dromio, Antipholus of Syracuse is bewildered; he is shocked to see his supposed servant not only jesting freely but also talking about a 'dinner,' a 'mistress,' and a 'home' (44-8). Antipholus is plunged in a mood of

alienation which is aggravated by his remembrance of the reputation of Ephesus as a city of swindlers and magicians and a place of illusions and shape-shifting (97-102). As a result, he thinks, even before considering the sense of purpose in his quest, to flee - 'I will be gone the sooner' (103).

Antipholus' arete is further tried soon afterwards with the result that another comic dislocation of relationship between him and his man is produced. Antipholus is firstly met by his own Dromio who, to the former's amazement, disavows his brother's transactions. Immediately after that, Antipholus finds himself unpreparedly pounced upon by an unknown woman who forces herself on him with strange earnestness and familiarity, backed by another woman calling him 'brother' (II.ii.151). Confounded by both Dromios and by Adriana and her sister (whom he uselessly endeavours to talk out of their misunderstanding), Antipholus is utterly lost in his bewilderment -

was I married to her in my dream?  
Or sleep I now, and think I hear (this?  
181-82. <sup>all</sup>

Failing for the time being to fathom the puzzle, he wisely (if not involuntarily) decides to 'entertain' his 'illusions' so as to achieve an overall and rational apprehension of truth -

What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?  
Until I know this sure uncertainty;  
I'll entertain the offer'd fallacy.  
183-85.

Many of the quest tales are traditionally set in a dreamland, somewhere of no definite place or time, so to speak. Naturally, this 'has the advantage of allowing the use of all the wealth of a dream imagery, monsters, magical transformations and translations, which are absent from our waking life.' <sup>13</sup> Our hero's quest is really happening though; it seems an illusion because Antipholus does not know what is going on. Dromio of Syracuse warns him that

This is the fairy land - O spite of spites!  
We talk with goblins, owls, and sprites,

and utters a (comical) dread of some metaphysical transformation (on a pagan level) - 'They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue' (188-89, 191). To this Antipholus reacts by voicing his suspicion of being caught up in a nightmare in the very land of dreams -

Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?  
Sleeping or waking, <sup>mad</sup> or well-advised?  
211-12.

Contrary to his earlier resolve to move fast out of Ephesus, Antipholus now decides to stay but only to sort out his difficulties -

I'll say as they say, and persevere so,  
And in this mist at all adventures go.  
214-15; my own italic.

It is interesting that Antipholus should refer to his dilemma as a 'mist.' This was a common term in the religious literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Representing 'error' it becomes a significant term given the title of the play.

After this incident, Antipholus duly becomes all the more concerned; Ephesus of which he has had his misgivings has now become a land of nowhere. It is neither 'heaven' nor 'hell' nor even 'earth;' it is populated by none but demons who are capable of transforming him and his man into shapeless creatures. In the dreamland of quest, with all the perils and threats of transformation and failure involved, there is always hope of ultimate happiness and success. But this is not easily obtained: it involves a further trial, one of humility for the quest hero. He should be aware that he cannot solve his enigma alone and so he should be humble enough to take someone else's advice and look for hope and guidance wherever these are possible. One thinks here of Books I and II of Spenser's Faerie Queene where Sir Mordaunt's powers are failing and he needs help from outside (the Bower of Bliss).

In his situation here the Syracusan, knowing that his life is in jeopardy, turns to Luciana imploring humbly for counsel -

Teach me dear creature, how to think and speak;  
Lay open to my earthy-gross conceit,  
Smoth' red in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,  
The folded meaning of your words; deceit.

III.ii.83-6.

Antipholus' supplication to Luciana to learn at her hands the arts of speech and thinking is appropriate to his present circumstances. He has not as yet been able to establish reasonable and logical communication with those whom he has met in Ephesus nor even to think in their apparently

peculiar way.

Submitting to the woman whom he takes for an enchantress (like Homer's Circe), Antipholus wonders why Luciana is deliberately trying to lead him astray instead of guiding him out of his predicament -

Against my soul's pure truth why labour you  
To make it wander in an unknown field.  
37-8; my own italic.

The word 'wander' justifies the curious name given to Antipholus of Syracuse by the Folio - Erotos. But 'wander' means the same as Latin errare which can also mean to make mistakes. Antipholus intimates to Luciana that without her guidance he is bound to go wrong. If thus she is a 'goddess' and he believes her to belong to a higher sphere of existence ('more than earth, divine'), he (unlike Odysseus in his attitude towards Circe) is prepared to be metamorphosed under the spell of her power -

Are you a god? Would you create me new?  
Transform me, then, and to your pow'r I'll yield.  
32,39-40.

In the course of his sojourn in Ephesus, Antipholus of Syracuse endeavours to find a way out of the intricacies of his tangle through his genuine fascination with 'the most attractive person in ~~a~~ land.'<sup>14</sup> Recalling the situation of Odysseus with the sirens, Antipholus calls Luciana 'sweet mistress,' 'sweet mermaid,' and 'fair sun' (29, 45, 56). Suddenly the woman becomes the sole end of his quest -

Mine eye's clear eye, my dear hear<sup>t</sup>'s dear<sup>-er</sup> heart,  
My food, my fortune, my sweet hope's aim,  
My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim.  
62-4.

She becomes his alter ego - 'for I am thee' (66). In a word, Antipholus is distracted from his original mission.

However, through this sudden shift of intention, Antipholus is apparently able to set up some basis for coping with the Ephesian enigma, in what he thinks is a straightforward attraction - his love for Luciana. But this instantly proves to be one more facet of the enchanted land. He becomes convinced, especially after his Dromio goes through a nightmare of transformation (into 'a curtal dog') at the hands of the 'spherical' 'kitchen wench,' that 'There's none, but witches do inhabit here' (144,113,94,154). Thereupon he decides to put to sea resisting the very temptations of love -

And therefore 'tis high time, that I were hence ..  
But lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,  
I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.  
155-62.

Antipholus' attitude here and his reference to the 'mermaid's song' recall, on the whole, Odysseus' attitude towards the sirens.

In tales of quest, 'precious' objects such as diamonds, gold, etc., appear a great deal. Sometimes a 'precious stone' or a 'golden apple' is an end in itself, in search of which the hero sets sail. And sometimes gems and gold are in themselves a means to an end, a way of scrutinising the authenticity of the quest hero's claim before marrying his princess.<sup>15</sup> The following trials, undergone by Antipholus of Syracuse, involve some 'thousand marks' in gold denied by his brother's Dromio (I.ii); a 'gold chain'

thrust upon him by Angelo (IV.ii); and a 'diamond' supposedly bestowed upon him by a 'Courtesan' (IV.iii). Commenting on each of these, the travelling Syracusan betrays his reactions to the place of his quest. Stunned by the wrong Dromio's denial of the 'money,' he instantly recalls the infamous background of Ephesus in which he thinks his man has been robbed of the money -

Upon my life, by some device or other  
The villain is o'er-raught of all my money.  
I.ii.95-6.

The gold chain, Antipholus interprets in his amazement as a precious gift which he would be stupid to refuse. He takes it, however, as a kind of gift that is given so freely only in a fairy land -

I see a man here needs not live by shifts,  
When in the streets he meets such golden gifts.  
III.ii.180-81.

Nevertheless, when his own Dromio approaches him with a 'purse of ducats' - 'Here are the angels that you sent for to deliver you,' Antipholus' suspicions swell even more - 'The fellow is distract, and so am I' (IV.iii.36,37). At this point, he turns his eyes to the sky praying for a rescuing angel, pointing out still the associations of his name as Erotes -

here we wander in illusions:  
Some blessed power deliver us from hence.  
IV.iii.38-9.

But no sooner does he finish his prayer than a Courtesan appears, asking for a 'promised chain' or alternatively for her 'diamond' (ring) which she claims to have earlier



given to Antipholus. Talking about a 'diamond' allegedly bestowed on him and claiming his chain, the Courtesan takes the Syracusan by surprise. He turns to her, airing his now crowning fear but echoing Christ - 'Satan avoid. I charge thee, tempt me not' (43). Antipholus believes she is 'the devil' himself, just as his man takes her for 'the devil's dam' appearing to them 'like angels of light' (45,46,50).

These further trials involving gold basically strengthen the Syracusan Antipholus' resolve to go on board. To the Courtesan's accusation of 'dishonesty' for denying her alleged 'gift,' Antipholus merely replies - 'Avaunt then witch' (74), flying from one who has according to him added to the accumulated enchantment and witchcraft.

A short while elapses after this narrow escape. Antipholus is then encountered by two other people - one apparently familiar to him as a goldsmith and another entirely strange, a Merchant. These, renew the Courtesan's imputation of dishonesty. Angelo accuses Antipholus of cheating in not acknowledging receipt of the chain hanging 'about his neck' (V.i.10), which the Merchant endorses, heaping a further charge of villainy -

'tis pity that thou liv'st  
To walk where<sup>any</sup> honest men resort ...  
I dare, and do defy thee for a villain.  
27-8, 32.

These successive accusations of dishonesty and misdemeanour amplify the Syracusan's feeling of oppression, already generated by the previous trials. He is, in effect, led to

draw his sword again (he has already drawn it at the end of IV to protect himself from the Courtesan just as Odysseus does to avoid Circe's charms) in defence of his dignity, reputation, and above all his menaced life, shortly before taking refuge in a neighbouring 'priory.'

One further element in a typical quest is the 'helpers' 'who with their knowledge and magical powers assist the hero, and but for whom he would never succeed.'<sup>16</sup> These helpers may appear in human form as magicians, or in the form of fairies. Unwittingly, Antipholus runs into the arms of his very 'helper' - Aemilia, when he has been seeking shelter from the apparently turbulent outside world. As a 'helper,' Aemilia's role is christianised possibly to fit an Elizabethan rather than a Roman audience. From the pagan enchantment, therefore, Antipholus of Syracuse finds his goal in a Christian 'miracle.' The Abbess rejoices in achieving this miracle, referring to it in very Christian terms - 'After so long grief, such nativity' (V.i.405; my own *italic*). The ultimate success which both Aegeon and Antipholus as quest heroes achieve is not indebted to their own powers; they obviously owe that success to their christianised 'helper' - Aemilia.

Aemilia is by no means simply a Christian figure who, without knowing it, offers her services to a quest hero. The very fact that she herself is 'found' after being shut in a convent from the outside world for many years, strikes me as parallel to the captive princess of quest who is

rescued by the quest hero after her long confinement. This is how Aemilia expresses her whole-hearted relief -

Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail  
O you, my sons; and till this present hour  
My heavy burden ne'er delivered.  
399-401.

Interestingly, Aemilia's lines especially the 'nativity' to which she refers, suggest the sense of a new life. This explicitly links the play with such Renaissance works as those which broaden the classical form of quest through the introduction of the motif of rebirth (supra, p. 4).

Before the action of the play has actually started, we have heard of Aemilia's journeys: from Syracuse to Epidamnus to recover her absent husband; and back again, a journey never completed. Separated from half of her family on the sea, and robbed of the other half (also on the sea), Aemilia shuts herself within the walls of a priory in Ephesus. When, however, the action starts she turns out to be a partial goal of her younger son's quest. Thus although Aemilia is initially introduced as a possible quest heroine, she becomes during the action a precious person of a quest as well as a useful helper to a helpless quest hero. This amalgamation of roles is balanced by another - one of intention. Aegeon has initially voyaged to seek a son, yet he finds himself face to face with the very people whom his son has sought in his travels. 'Speak, old Aegeon,' his very wife addresses him -

if thou be'st the man  
That hadst a wife one call'd Aemilia,  
That bore thee at a burden two fair sons -

O, if thou be'st the same Aegeon, speak,  
 And speak unto the same Aemilia!  
 340-44.

While Antipholus of Syracuse has been wandering in what seems to him a land of marvels and terrors, his elder brother of Ephesus is forced to go through a near fatal adventure - a journey 'inland,' ending up in a dark vault. Interestingly, this 'inland' voyage in which the Ephesian Antipholus is put through his paces is originally instigated by the advent of his brother.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly again, the Ephesian's subjective experience of social reality comes to be seen as simultaneously running on lines contrary to the progression of his brother's fantastic illusion. While, for instance, Antipholus of Syracuse is entertained and made to enjoy a pleasurable but illusory state in his supposed house and with his supposed wife, Antipholus of Ephesus is initiated into an ordeal of domestic exclusion unexpectedly by his own wife and servants. Although we are asked to recognise the fortunes of both brothers as sharply contrasted, we can still see that both are similarly dissatisfied with the general state of affairs. Yet whereas the Syracusan Antipholus resorts to finesse (except when he draws his sword) to sort out his difficulties, the Ephesian one - obviously of a different mettle<sup>18</sup> - resorts to physical force. Although again we are made to sympathise with Antipholus of Ephesus all throughout, we can still see that it was to his own advantage to have been forced on some sort of psychic quest.

This, as we later discover, indirectly resolves his unhappy domestic imbroglio. His wife is trapped into confessing her nagging jealousy, reprimanded for it, and pressed hard for a reconsideration of her domestic responsibility. <sup>19</sup>

The Ephesian's inland journey which is externally motivated is in three stages. Initially, Antipholus moves from his own house after being denied admittance, mocked by his brother's Dromio, and railed at, taunted and scorned by the kitchen maid and his own wife, into the Courtesan's quarters to find open doors, hearty welcome, and tender attendance. Coming out into the street on fire after his dinner to brood upon vengeance, he is seized upon and carried over to his house where he is recommended by one Doctor Pinch to 'be bound and laid in some dark room' (IV.iv. 91). Shortly afterwards, he breaks loose and comes out again into the street seeking justice from the Duke on his wife.

Each of these stages is in broad terms a further advance in the dramatic action. Yet, specifically, the physical movement reflects the spiritual change undergone by the voyager. Antipholus' (symbolic) journey, for example, to the Courtesan's house illustrates his 'physical' reaction to domestic (and moral) disorder; whereas his (forced) movement into the dark vault - a variant, to my mind, of the archetypal descent into the earth or the depths of the sea in classical quest - implies a descent into the 'unconscious' aiming at the understanding of the

ego.<sup>20</sup> In his movement, therefore, out of the dark, Antipholus recites his own previous achievements by way of convincing the Duke to be equitable towards him -

Justice, most gracious Duke! O, grant me justice!  
 Even for the services that long since I did thee,  
 When I bestrid thee in the wars, and took  
 Deep scars to save thy life; even for the blood  
 That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.  
 V.i.190-94.

It is from his recitation of his glorious past history that we come to see Antipholus of Ephesus as a further quest hero. He had already made a journey some years before from Corinth to Ephesus to serve as a brave soldier in the Duke's army. This service has won him a precious person - a rich heiress, to whom he was engaged by his patron, the Duke. But this external quest of Antipholus of Ephesus seemed to be over until he was forced to go on the metaphorical or internal one. What, however, we have heard of him and become aware of since the beginning of the action, indicates that he is nothing other than the precious person sought in another quest undertaken by his younger brother. Like his long-lost mother Antipholus of Ephesus is also found.

The recovery of both characters does not stop at reuniting members of a family after their long separation. Nor does it stop at resolving the misfortunes of Aegeon and his son of Syracuse. The successful quest assimilates the play's outstanding thematic complications<sup>21</sup> into a 'gossips' feast' (404). One of these has been the dichotomy of appearance and reality which results in a

disruption of the normal order clearly discerned in the vagaries of characters alienated from each other, the dislocation of human relationships, and the loss of domestic happiness. On the brink of the dénouement, however, the recognitions followed by the reunions engender a restoration of order, when alienations are healed and relationships re-established. The note of this cosmic order is struck when all the characters of the comedy are invited by Aemilia to celebrate a new beginning, a new life, a baptismal feast from which no one will be debarred.

A good deal of what happens in The Comedy of Errors is motivated by the pattern of journeys. This pattern concerns itself with the characters' present lives just as with their past. It serves primarily to supply the play with a useful framework enveloping its dramatic plot. But it also illustrates the play's structure as a whole. This structure depends largely on the elements of the quest for its unity.

However, were it not for the way in which the play conducts itself, the quest pattern could not have been obvious. Take, for instance, the play's subtle use of the classical allusion to 'Circe's cup' <sup>22</sup> made in the moment before the action is ultimately resolved. At a moment of sheer confusion, the Duke turns to the assembled characters voicing his suspicion that they 'all have drunk of Circe's cup' (V.i.270). This reference is dramatically functional for it serves two ends. Thematically, it accounts for the

aggravating sense of wonder, the shady reputation of the Ephesians and the prevailing sense of eerie transformations. Circe was a sorceress celebrated for her knowledge of witchcraft and venomous herbs; she took as her principal activity the transformation into beasts of all men and women who drank of her cup. This is recalled in Antiphilus's (of Syracuse) wish to be transformed by Luciana whom he deliberately calls a 'mermaid.' In structural terms, the reference furnishes a background in which any exploration of the pattern of journeys can properly be conducted. On his homeward journey, Odysseus came to Circe's island. There, the journey was thwarted by the enchantress who transformed at least half of his soldiers into swine. Odysseus, however, was able through Hermes's aid to resist the effect of Circe's drugs and demand the restoration of his men. And after the lapse of a year, he was sent on his way with good advice for his homeward journey.

The Circe-Odysseus background provides some vital clues for the pursuit of the motif of travel. It derives directly from the classical epic of quest - the Odyssey, and in it we see Odysseus on his way home after a long absence. His journey is thwarted but Hermes, the god of travellers offers to help. It was the god's basic function to give assistance to voyagers human and divine. Odysseus spends most of the epic away from home while Penelope impatiently awaits his return which she exhorts in her vari-



ous epistles. <sup>23</sup> These clues explain the play's recurrent allusions to 'home' which comes to be seen as a key-word in the quest. They explain also the play's method of distinguishing its characters, making the men go away from home while linking the women with home where they provide sanctuary. The same clues, above all, explain the impediments which the travelling characters encounter especially in Act IV which upset their intended journeys.

The word 'home' keeps being repeated in the reference to the characters who have gone away from home and are being awaited. At the beginning of the play, the Duke asks Aegeon - 'Why thou depart'st from thy native home?' (I.i. 30). Normally, one would have expected the Duke to use the term 'land' rather than 'home.' The term 'home' is thus early established as important.

In his narrative, Aegeon makes a clear distinction between himself and his wife. He reports how Aemilia could not bear to stay alone at home and chose to join him in Epidamnum where he had been detained 'six months' by his business (42-9). He reports also how Aemilia incessantly wished to return 'home' until he 'unwillingly' agreed - 'My wife ... /Made daily motions for our home return; /Unwillingly I agreed' (59-61). Aegeon cherishes active, adventurous, and even wearisome life; his wife quiet, stable, and comfortable living. Aegeon can stand to stay away from home for as long as his business requires him to; Aemilia cannot endure his absence, nor can she

forbear from homesickness. This point of distinction will soon be made even more explicitly in the situation of the fidgety Adriana who cannot tolerate the very thought that her husband is being kept away from home while her sister advises - 'They'll go or come,' 'their business still lies out o'door' (II.i.9,11). Before concluding his narrative, Aegeon reveals how he spent at least 'five years' (I.i. 133), travelling throughout the world in search of his younger son whom he had reluctantly permitted to leave home. Yet he eventually felt a need for home and changed the course of his journey homeward -

And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus;  
 Hopeless to find yet loath to leave, unsought  
 Or that or any place that harbours men.

135-37.

Aegeon's longing for home after a five-year travel presumably comes as a result of his getting old.

Like his father Antipholus of Syracuse is also introduced at the moment of his arrival at a new town. There, his voyage is destined to be hindered by some external forces. Like his father again he seems to cherish roaming about, but only to satisfy his 'inquisitiveness' (I.i. 136). He tells the Merchant who accompanies him to Ephesus how he intends to 'wander up and down to view the city,' despite the fatigue caused by his travel - 'with long travel I am stiff and weary' (I.ii.31,15). But unlike his father who has been interrogated about travelling so far away from 'homeland,' Antipholus is told that he has been ex-

pected 'home' and that he is already late for 'dinner.' Dromio of Ephesus puts it to him - 'My charge was to fetch you from the mart/ Home to your house, the Phoenix, sir, to dinner -/ My mistress and her sister stay for you' (I. ii.74-6). Although Antipholus of Syracuse has actually been kept away from 'home' for 'seven years' (V.i.308), the 'home' references (especially because of their involvement of a 'wife' and a sister-in-law) apply more appropriately to Antipholus of Ephesus and his wife. This becomes evident from the insistent repetition of 'home' in the first scene set in the 'Citizen's' house (II.i).

The character and domestic situation of Adriana provide a good example of women who want to be home and have their men home. On her first appearance, one senses Adriana's anxiety about her husband - 'Neither my husband nor the slave return'd.' She suspects that 'His company must do his minions grace,/ Whilst I at home starve for a merry look,' and goes on to conclude - 'I know his eye doth homage otherwise;/ Or else what lets it but he would be here' (1,87-8,104-05). When, however, Adriana comes out in person to 'fetch' her husband 'home,' she provides but prison for the wrong Antipholus. That, in fact, is what is wrong with Adriana's home until the end of the play. Contrasting with the sanctuary Aemilia eventually provides for the same character, Adriana's 'prison' is yet shut from the outside world behind closed doors.

Once she has her 'husband' in, Adriana commands the wrong Dromio to 'keep the gate' - 'if any ask you for your master,/ Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter' (II.ii.205,208-09). Contrasting still with Aemilia's sanctuary, Adriana's 'prison' leads naturally to an interesting complication. His brother's home becomes a further problem in the Syracusan Antipholus' quest; he reluctantly accepts it as some navigator going into a 'mist' (215). Meanwhile, Antipholus of Ephesus is perplexed to see that he is denied his 'lawful' sanctuary - 'What are thou that keep'st me out from the house I own?' especially when the one who denies him it is his own wife -

Ant. E. Are you there wife? You might have come before.

Adr. [within] Your wife, sir knave! Go, get you  
from the door. 63-4.

He is, therefore, resolved to seek 'unlawful' sanctuary in a Courtesan's house - 'Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me/ I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me' (120-21). Soon, he ends up in the very opposite of sanctuary - 'prison,' interestingly in some 'dark room' within his own home (IV.iv.91).

In the same way that the resident's passage into his home is incommoded, the passage of his Syracusan brother out of the Ephesian community is also embarrassed. The Syracusan Antipholus is chased by different people who confuse him; some seem amiable, some oppressive, and some aggressive. They all stand between him and his journey back to

Syracusa. It is in this respect that Antipholus as a be-lated traveller can be view<sup>e</sup><sub>L</sub>d in parallel terms with his father. His father's voyage, too, is obstructed yet by the law against Syracusans (I.i.4ff).

There is yet a minor instance of blocked journeys which helps to reinforce the motif of obstructions. This can be traced in a minor voyager in the play whose passage out of Ephesus is shackled by a stumbling block. I refer to the 'Second Merchant' whose departure is made difficult just at the time as Antipholus of Syracuse is having problems leaving. But the Second Merchant cannot leave because he has not received his money from Angelo -

You know since Pentecost the sum is due,  
 And since I have not much importun'd you;  
 Nor now I had not, but that I am bound  
 To Persia, and want guilders for my voyage;  
 Therefore make present satisfaction,  
 Or I'll attach you by this officer.

IV.i.1-6.

Angelo is aware that the Merchant 'is bound to sea, and stays but for it,' and that 'Both wind and tide stays for this gentleman/ And I, to blame, have held him here too long' (33,46-7). The 'Merchant' himself stresses how pressed he is with time - 'The hour steals on; I pray you, sir, dispatch;/ My business cannot brook this dalliance' (52-9).

In the final stage of the dramatic action, the spectrum of internal disturbances reaches its ultimate development where the complications associated with 'home'

are happily resolved. The men who have gone away from home and had their journeys thwarted are after all enabled to go aboard. This is suggested in Angelo's line addressed to the 'Merchant' - 'I am sorry, sir, that I have hind'ered you' (V.i.1). And the women who have wanted to stay at home are apparently able to do so and to have their men home too. Unknowingly, Adriana addresses her mother-in-law, implying in her words (98-101) that once the husband is delivered up to her, her home will provide nothing but proper sanctuary. Aemilia provides sanctuary for her son whom she could not as yet have recognised -

No, not a creature enters <sup>in</sup> my house;  
 he took this place for sanctuary,  
 And it shall privilege him from your hands.  
 92, 94-5.

She actually provides sanctuary for her husband and her whole family after the recognition takes place. She invites the Duke to 'take the pains/ To go with us into the Abbey here' (392-93). The climax of the play's happy resolution is in the ultimate reconciliation of quest and sanctuary.

The quest pattern clarifies and is clarified by the play's plot. The Circe reference and the recurrence of key-words such as home are a good example of the play's positive reaction to the prevailing quest motif. Odysseus' quest is delayed by Circe (just as it is delayed by Poseidon) for a whole year; Aegeon's, Antipholus' (the Syracusan), and the Second Merchant's for a day; Ody-

sseus spends most of his epic away from home; Aegeon and his son of Syracuse (not to mention that of Ephesus) spend the whole play away from home; Penelope has to wait ten years before Odysseus returns to Ithaca, Adriana only for a day, whereas Aemilia for 'thirty-three years' (the reunion of her family, however, occurs far away still from their 'native home').

The quest pattern in The Comedy of Errors is thus close to the classical epic quest. But there is a suggestion of rebirth at the end of it, stress being on sanctuary. Involving spiritual voyagers this quest leads to renewal rather than return. It is obvious, however, that in developing his pattern Shakespeare subverts the serious nature of the quest's elements. By so doing the dramatist points out the value of structure in relation to the comic theme.

We have seen how the characters are not very keen on achieving the objectives of their quests. Aegeon has almost changed his mind and sailed 'homeward' a short while before landing in Ephesus. His younger son forgets all about his quest and falls for Luciana making of her the sole objective of his entire life. Antipholus of Ephesus is obliged by his brother's quest to become a different quest hero himself. The Courtesan provides sanctuary for one brother and yet causes confusion for the other. All this points to Shakespeare's ironical treatment of the traditional quest, a treatment which tones in with his

comic theme of mistaken identity.

Despite this ironic treatment of the pattern whether from the point of view of character, or speech, or event, Shakespeare adds his own distinct contribution to the tradition. He humanises the objective of the quest by making a whole family the precious object of this quest. Moreover, he christianises the end of the quest, substituting an oasis of spirituality (in the character of the Abbess) for the pagan background of witchcraft and enchantment. Shakespeare, above all, infuses a set of wonders with his reconciliation of quest and sanctuary the thing that grants the pattern of journeys its essential fantastic and mythic features.



## Chapter 2

## The Pattern of Classical Allusions in

The Taming of the Shrew

An abiding concern of dramatists has always been the transference of audience from a world of make-believe into a disillusioned reality. In comedy, particularly, 'by its nature more artificial than history and tragedy,' an author has to court subtly the problem of easing his audience at the finale from 'the self-contained comic world onto a level of naturalism more appropriate to the reality the audience will confront on leaving the theatre.'<sup>1</sup> In The Taming of the Shrew, Shakespeare carefully handles this transition. The audience, listening to Katherina a few moments away from the end, will surely reflect upon the social connotations of the woman's argument. (These I will discuss in full when I come to dwell upon the debate about marriage as The Comedy of Errors' overriding theme; infra, Chap. 5.) And so on leaving the auditorium, it will have mentally been conveyed to an intellectual area that treats of its contemporary life. If we think particularly of an Elizabethan or Jacobean playgoer, we will realise how successful the play is in achieving the required transition from illusion to reality. Katherina's speech sonorously expresses the social views that were current at the time. If, for instance, she talks about a wife's submission to

her husband, that is because at the time, in 'social theory and legal practice, woman ... was subservient to man.' The play itself, though only tentatively, approaches the genre of 'social comedy' by reflecting and commenting on contemporary social views on women and marriage.<sup>2</sup> Especially the spectator of today cannot fail to recognise the play's kinship with the everlasting debate on the relations of the sexes and the controversy over women and their position in marriage.

It is not only Katherina (nor is it her homily) who effects the play's transition to normality by evoking 'a strong audience reaction through the allusion to contemporary life.'<sup>3</sup> After all, she is not the only female character involved in the closing episode. Bianca and the Widow who are also involved contribute in their own way to the same transition. They do so by remaining silent after Katherina has finished her lecture on the 'subordination' of wives. The two women have already protested about whatever Katherina, as a spokeswoman of her sex, has to say, even before the latter delivers her public speech (V.ii.123-24, 125, 129, 132, 134). Yet Katherina has through her eloquent speech silenced them completely. The fact that Bianca and the Widow are both rendered speechless and incapable of uttering either a word of acquiescence<sup>e</sup> or one of objection strikes me, in the circumstances, as close to real life.

It is obviously left to Bianca's and the Widow's husbands to make up for the taciturnity of their wives. However, these in their turn clinch the transition to the normal world by uttering the closing lines of the play. Hortensio and Lucentio address themselves to us, significantly after the 'exeunt' of triumphant Petruchio and Katherina, as 'ordinary' married men eulogising the prospects of an 'extraordinary' couple. Hortensio comments on the fortunes of Petruchio - 'Now go thy ways; thou hast tam'd a curst shrow;' and Lucentio on Katherina - ''Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tam'd so' (188-89).

Hortensio's reaction here is not only induced by Petruchio's winning of the wager contest, but also by the latter's previous victories in the marital battlefield, which Hortensio has witnessed and to which he has already reacted ('this gallant will command the sun'), followed by 'Petruchio, go thy ways, the field is won' (IV.iii.192, v.23). Lucentio's reaction, on the other hand, is induced by his comic frustration at his wife's failure to comply with his good-will, in contrast to the incredible compliance of Katherina with her husband's outlandish commands.

Hortensio and Lucentio both regard Petruchio's triumph with esteem, admiration, and amazement. But it is Lucentio who particularly emphasises the miraculousness of the Petruchean achievement. Katherina's unexpected emergence when summoned by her husband has astounded the

the multitude: her father is bewildered - 'Now, by my holiday, here comes Katherina;' Lucentio stunned - 'Here is a wonder, if you talk of a wonder;' and Hortensio perplexed - 'And so it is, I wonder what it bodes' (V.ii.99, 106, 107). Words expressing the possible and the impossible, the probable and the improbable, do not accumulate so rapidly until the action is nearly over. But they recur throughout in such instances as 'possible' (I.i.141); 'never ... possible or likely' (144); 'impossible' (I.ii.120); 'incredible to believe' (II.i.298); 'that's a wonder'(401); 'you never heard of' (III.ii.31); 'wondrous monument' (91); 'unusual prodigy' (92); 'never was before' (178); 'no wonder' (187 ); 'never was the like' (238); 'miracles' (V.i.110); etc., building up to a sense of miracle, which culminates in Lucentio's line - ''Tis a wonder ... she will be tam'd so,' the very last of the play.

As the play closes, the taming of Katherina takes on a sensational, wonderful quality. This renders Petruchio's triumph peerless and unrepeatable. The audience's total impression - now that it has reverted to reality - is that this kind of metamorphosis could never have been possible without a miracle. What prepares the audience for this effect and reinforces the suggestion of wonder is a pattern which the dramatist has pursued even before the business of taming gets underway - the pattern of classical allusions. <sup>4</sup> Such a pattern, which has re-

cently been detected as an effective structural device in Shakespeare, <sup>5</sup> is notably used in the Shrew especially in the earlier part of the play. Douglas Bush has referred in passing to some of the classical references in the play. David Farley-Hills, at the other end of the scale, lingers over the same references but only to point out their intrusiveness and denigration of what he terms the play's 'apparent values.' The point that I want to make is that Shakespeare has significantly employed the pattern of classical allusions to make the feat of Petruchio, or rather the transformation of Katherina rise to a special dramatic climax. I, therefore, agree with the Arden editor in asserting that most of the references to classical mythology do 'have their point indeed.' <sup>6</sup>

The allusions to classical myth are plentiful, and their distribution is only apparently unstrategic. Most of them occur in the first half of the play; there are fewer in the second half and they cease altogether shortly after the taming process is begun. The use of classical myth is particularly concerned with human situations involving men and women, the majority of which end in disappointment. Almost all the classical allusions suggest or even imply unrequited loves, love stories with tragic resolutions, or unworkable marriages. In this manner, the pattern engenders a kind of dramatic tension, which tantalises our expectations of the lovers' efforts especially Petruchio's. The allusions may, therefore, build

our expectations and point our emotions in one direction - generally of disappointment and failure - but these are superseded by the play's comic design which points unequivocally to a happy conclusion. This enhances the ultimate sense of wonder especially in Petruchio's triumph, tremendously.

The first cluster of classical allusions appears in scene ii of the Induction (33, 37, 48-51, 52-4, 55-8). They are obviously utilised by the Lord and his attendants to transport drunken Sly into luxury to make him think when he comes round that he is in elevated circumstances. And, appropriately enough, they are taken from Ovid's Metamorphoses,<sup>7</sup> with its special relevance to the transformation of the drunkard. However, Sly identifies with none of the mythological figures mentioned before him, nor does he, thanks to his illiteracy<sup>8</sup> which is apparent from his vague historical references (e.g. 'we came in with Richard Conqueror,' Induc.i.4), decode the secret messages transmitted by the different myths. Sly does not, for example, see himself through the legendary Adonis, Zeus or Apollo, nor does he appreciate either the tragic outcome of the Venus-Adonis love story; the disruption of Zeus' love affair with Io, Princess of Argos; or the broken heart of Apollo and his adoration of the laurel.

Obviously, the common denominator of these legends is transformation into one form or another: Adonis'

blood into anemone; Io into a heifer then back into her human form (to bear a son to Zeus); and Daphne into a laurel; but these transformations do not reflect significantly upon the situation of Sly. They do reflect upon the other transformations encountered in the play. For example, the situation of Io who is changed into a cow, chased, and tormented before recovering her form, may shed some light on the way Katherina is handled until she is completely tamed.

Classical allusions in this scene of the Induction, ii, may not illuminate the meaning of Sly's transmogrification; yet they contribute in two ways to its achievement. Firstly, they will sound in Sly's ears, with the accompanying Apollonian music and the songs of the 'twenty caged nightingales' (34), like voices from the past, unrecognised as they are but charged with enchantment. This has precisely been the objective of the Lord's sophisticated device - to evoke a sense of the past, of the remote, the alien. Such a sense, the Lord has expected, can render the experience of the tinker as something that does not belong to the 'here' and 'now' of his everyday life, something mythic, something that happens only in a 'dream' if not in an Ovidian poem or a Homeric epic. Hence the incantation of the 'ancient ... thoughts,' the 'echoes from the hollow earth,' and the 'waning age' (29, 44, 61), and more importantly the resort to the business of the

stretched backward looking 'dream' and the 'fifteen years' (77). Unwittingly, Sly becomes legendary, his life story an epic. Hence the references to him as a 'mighty man of such descent/ Of such possessions and so high esteem' (13-4); the references to his horses' 'harness' as 'studded all with gold and pearl,' and his hounds as 'hawks' soaring 'Above the morning lark' (39, 40, 41, 42); and the reference to his supposed 'lady' as another Helen - 'the fairest creature in the world' (64). The Lord has not been mistaken to perceive that Sly can best experience the transformation through a poetic reconstruction of the remote past; only this can effectively work on the mind of a person like Sly who is pertinaciously particular about his present (5 ff, 16 ff). The process is carried through in a gentle, kind, and luxurious manner, which makes it ring clear in our mind when we come to watch the harsh, cruel, and paltry treatment of Katherina.

Secondly, the same allusions flow so seductively that Sly cannot but be sexually aroused. While Apollo plays in the background, the Lord and his attendants dexterously initiate Sly into an 'erotic entertainment.'<sup>9</sup> The Lord, to begin with, provides Sly's imagination with a 'lustful bed' which has already been prepared for some sexual indulgence. This bed happens to be 'softer .. than' that of 'Semiramis' (36, 37), the Assyrian queen,



later identified with Ishtar. The latter was not only the embodiment of the female principle but also the great nature goddess whose rites provided occasion for sexual licence. From the voluptuousness of Semiramis the Second Servant moves on to the sensuality of Venus, then the Third Servant to the bare legs of Daphne. Having so erotically excited their victim, the Lord instantly observes how Sly has 'a lady far more beautiful' (60) with the implicit suggestion that some sexual satisfaction can after all be obtained. To this Sly appropriately responds by inviting his 'madam' to the bed already available for the occasion - 'undress ... and come now to bed' (115; my own italic), unashamedly referring to his now erect phallus - 'it stands, so that I may hardly tarry so long' (123; my own italics).

Although Sly does not absorb their full significance, the classical allusions create an atmosphere of eroticism in which any man, and Sly is no exception, will be quite willing to change himself for a taste of pleasure. (The fact that Sly asks his 'wife' to go with him to bed after accepting his own metamorphosis may anticipate Petruchio's invitation to Kate - 'Come, we'll to bed' - after proving her transformation.) The allusions also raise the dramatic tension by bringing to our view so early in the action love stories with curious transformations and tragic resolutions, implying in the meantime

that both love and marriage will inevitably end up in disaster. But when we recollect the 'coming together' of Zeus and Io on the latter's restoration of her human form following her long sufferings, our tense feelings become less so, just as our comic expectation of the transformation of Katherina on her taming (stimulated at this stage by the play's title) is reassured in advance by the lines of the Page disguised as Sly's 'wife' -

My husband and my lord, my lord and husband;  
I am your wife in all obedience.

104-05.

In its first occurrence, the classical allusion is not shown to impart any special significance to the type of transfiguration imposed on Sly; instead, it is used merely to lead up to this transfiguration. Although Sly is not aware of the allusions (except perhaps the one to Venus), the Lord and his attendants are, and so is the Elizabethan playgoer especially he 'who attended grammar school'<sup>10</sup> and acquired some average knowledge of classical myth and legend.

Classical allusions recur in the first scene of the play proper which includes an open reference to Ovid (I.i. 33). Here the characters identify and are identified with mythological figures so superficially that their view of themselves is blurred and our view of their circumstances is rendered uncertain. Taken in by Bianca's apparently moderate conduct, Lucentio immediately identifies her with Athena (84), that is Minerva as the

goddess was generally identified by the Romans. Minerva was the goddess of wisdom and patroness of art and the skills of war. Already, classical allusions are opposed by what actually happens in the play. The qualities of wisdom, intelligence, and skilfulness apply but superficially to Bianca. Indeed she exhibits these qualities especially in finding herself a husband whom she rather than her father has chosen, and yet she proves herself foolish when she is readily equated with the snobbish Widow. The reference to Minerva is, anyway, made ineffective by the fact that it is the gross exaggeration of a love-sick young man, a smitten lover.

Some lines later, Lucentio identifies himself, oddly enough, with Dido and identifies his man, Tranio, still oddly, with Anna, the queen of Carthage's sister <sup>11</sup> -

And now in plainness do confess to thee -  
That art to me as secret and as dear  
As Anna to the Queen of Carthage was.

147-49.

'This odd inversion of sexual roles,' Farley-Hills asserts, 'does in fact turn out finally to be realised when Bianca shows that she most probably will wear the marital trousers.' <sup>12</sup> Indeed it does; yet the association with Dido is far more complicated mainly because it connotes an unfulfilled love affair which concludes in tragedy. When Aeneas leaves for Italy despite Dido's persuasions, the latter utters a curse against the Trojans and stabs herself with her sword. To consider these implications

cannot at all be complimentary to Lucentio nor to Bianca nor to the ultimate meaning of their comedy.<sup>13</sup> The reference to Dido collides with our comic expectations of the lovers' intrigues, paving the way for the play's miraculous conclusion where we see the lovers coming together rather than drifting apart. But these two lovers, Lucentio and Bianca, as we shall unexpectedly see come together only to disagree at the end, contrary to Petruchio and Katherina who apparently drift apart only to end up in harmony.

Lucentio carries on his odd hints by identifying himself with the mythological 'bull' which manages to make a husband for Europa. The bull was of course Zeus to whose initially desperate love for Io mention was made in the Induction. His despair, arising basically from his wife's suspicious nature, made him change his beloved into a cow and marry her in Egypt. Here, falling in love again, this time with the daughter of Agenor, he changes himself into a beautiful bull to abduct her on his back and swim towards Crete. This is how Lucentio alludes to the legend -

I saw sweet beauty in her face,  
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,  
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand  
When with his knees he kiss'd the Cretan strand. 14  
162-65.

To be sure, there is no sexual inversion this time.

Lucentio sees himself in Zeus and Bianca in Europa. He even justifies this identification -

'let me be a slave t' achieve that maid  
 Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye.  
 214-15.

It is interesting that in wooing the man, as exemplified by Lucentio here, is the one who humbles himself. Later on, this will significantly contrast with Katherina's action of setting her hand under her husband's foot.

The equation with Zeus and Europa is very appropriate. According to the legend, Europa is so delightfully charmed by Zeus's gentle looks even in his disguise that she feels safe with him and acquiesces in being lured away from her father's watchful eyes. The result, already known to her, is that Zeus and herself are married. Here, likewise, Bianca is so attracted to the disguised Lucentio that she endorses his plan of deceiving her father and getting married surreptitiously. The Zeus-Europa reference ensures thus the happy ending of the love affair and reduces the feelings of anxiety which may have arisen from the previous allusion to the distressing love story of Dido and Aeneas. More importantly, the allusion tells us something about Lucentio's attitude as a lover. He uses the conventional language of servitude ('made ... humble,' 'with his knees,' 'a slave,' 'thrall'd,' 'wounded eye'), and thus sets up a mistress/servant situation which looks as if it will continue after marriage. This is going to be dramatically set against the attitude which Petruchio as a wooer takes and emphasises in his use of classical reference. Contrarily, Petruchio will set up a

master/slave situation from his first meeting with Katherina.

The next reference to classical myth made in connection with the lovers comes from Tranio. Tranio, now Lucentio, intrudes into the suitors' competition over Bianca by referring to the legend of Helen in justification of his right to woo Bianca -

Fair Leda's daughter had a thousand wooers;  
Then well one more may fair Bianca have;  
And so she shall: Lucentio shall make one,  
Though Paris came in hope to speed alone.

I.ii.240-43.

The legend reveals how at least twenty-seven Grecian princes seek the most beautiful creature of the age. Helen chooses Menelaus and bears him a daughter, only to elope afterwards with Paris, on falling for him. Tranio's allusion to the legend has naturally sprung from the comic situation of the Paduan suitors wrangling over Bianca's hand. Bianca figures thus in Padua as Helen had done in Troy. Farley-Hills is worth-quoting - 'Tranio ... can see Bianca as the cause of disruption when he compares her to Leda's daughter not only evoking Helen's role, but in the reference to her as Leda's daughter reminding us of the violence in which she was engendered.' <sup>15</sup>

Although Tranio does not literally identify Lucentio with Paris as he clearly does Bianca with Helen, the implication of his reference is still that it is Lucentio alone of all Bianca's suitors who will

ultimately win the woman's heart and secretly abduct her to become his wife. The disastrous connotations of the Helen-Paris legend are irrelevant since they do not spoil the way we look forward to that pleasant conclusion which will resolve not only the Lucentio-Bianca love affair but the marriage of Petruchio and Katherine also.

In his next classical allusion, III.i.28-9, Lucentio emphasises the same implications intimated in Tranio's previous reference. For reasons more significant than the obviously ironical one of instructing his pupil-sweetheart how to 'construe' from a Latin text, Lucentio quotes passages from a Penelopean Epistle. In this Epistle, Penelope is imagined to address absent Odysseus, when beset with numerous suitors whom she treated with coldness and disdain. By so doing, Lucentio subtly suggests to Bianca to identify herself with Penelope, since she is also a centre of attraction in Padua and surrounded by many unwanted suitors. He further suggests to her to identify him with the Odysseus who comes back home disguised to free his Penelope from her many wooers and rejoin her as her lawful husband. Lucentio is simply implying to his love that she should not mistrust his disguise since it is intended for their own good - their union after disposing of the competitor-suitors.

By recalling Penelope, Lucentio presents Bianca with what can be regarded as the supreme example of loyalty in marriage. Before rushing into church for

conjugal bliss, Lucentio, wisely enough, confides in Bianca at this crucial stage of courtship his deep desire to see her in the role of Penelope. After all, the latter's name became particularly to the Elizabethans synonymous with fidelity to a husband,<sup>16</sup> though not particularly with total obedience.

Although these implications may seem to have been undermined by the fact that the Penelope excerpt does not fit the person who extracts it, they only seem so for a moment. It is not just Lucentio who quotes Penelope; Bianca, too, recites Penelope's words (40-3). It can, therefore, be unwise to respond to Farley-Hills who wants to take us back to the point where Lucentio indicated a desire for sexual inversion - 'it is not impossible that Lucentio, who has seen himself as Dido, is now seeing himself as the imploring Penelope.'<sup>17</sup> Previously, Lucentio has actually been thinking of Tranio to himself in terms of an Anna to a Dido, that is to emphasise the dimensions of the relationship which binds him to his man. In his view, this relationship ascends to the archetypal relation of Dido and her sister. Now, Lucentio's line of thinking is obviously different.

In any case, the direct citation from Penelope's letter, contrived as part of the study cover-up, may well lose us in a labyrinth from which we can hardly puzzle our way out. That is because the letter in the final analysis is a cry of anguish at the mysterious



circumstances which hindered Odysseus' return to his homeland, and a deploration of the Trojan War. Farley-Hills sums up the contents thus - 'Penelope laments that her husband has not yet returned, while she conjectures that he may have deserted her and curses a war that was started by an adulterous lover.'<sup>18</sup> Penelope's letter does in fact draw our attention to two unfortunate human situations - two lovers whose love affair disrupts both their lives and the lives of many others, and a couple long separated by the forces of hatred and vengeance. The connotations of the Penelope-Odysseus relationship are not, however uncomplimentary to the young lovers of our play or to the two major characters - Petruchio and Katherina who will in the very next scene, III.ii, become man and wife. These connotations are, according to our comic expectations, going to be superseded by the play's celebratory conclusion (though Bianca reverses the very expectation of Lucentio, the rest of the characters, and ourselves, by showing herself far from being another Penelope). Almost all the allusions here suggest trouble of some sort in marriage. The wonder at the end, however, is that of all the husbands Petruchio is the only one to demonstrate an untroubled marriage (whatever one may expect to be the ultimate outcome).

Lucentio's nostalgic thoughts keep reverting to Troy and the Trojan War. As he is surreptitiously making love

to Bianca, trying in the meantime to dissuade her from suspecting his motive ('Mistrust it not!'), he suddenly leaps to classical mythology -

for sure, Aeacides  
Was Ajax call'd so from his grandfather.  
III.i.50-1.

The Cambridge editors provide an interesting editorial detail which helps explain Lucentio's sudden leap from his present concern to Aeacides. They justify Lucentio's action by suggesting that the young man changes both theme and tone of his speech when he 'perceives Hortensio' watching closely.<sup>19</sup> This interpretation is reasonable as it is reinforced by Hortensio's most recent realisation - 'Now, for my life the knave doth court my love;' and his decision - 'Pedasculè, I'll watch you better yet' (47,48).

Nevertheless, I wish to elaborate slightly on this apparently incidental reference to show that it carries some additional weight, besides being simply part of the study cover-up. (It is the next line of Penelope's letter - 'illic Aeacides illic tendebat Vlixes.'<sup>20</sup>) The reference to Ajax as Aeacides, being mythologically nicknamed so 'from his grandfather' is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the 'grandfather' referred to here is Aeacus, whose descendants, as Apollo had once prophesied, brought destruction to Troy. And secondly, the name 'Aeacides' given to Ajax was generally attributed to all Aeacus' descendants (Ajax, Achilles, Peleus, and Telamon). Ajax

is already connected with the Trojan disaster. His defeat by Odysseus over a contest for the armour of the dead Achilles connects him with yet another disaster, amounting to his own madness and self-destruction (he stabbed himself with his own sword). Lucentio is not only thinking of Ajax as a guilty party of the destruction of Troy, being a true descendant of Aeacus; he is also probably thinking of the self-destructive Ajax. Both conform to the notes of tragedy and misfortune already played, but neither is appropriate to the mood of courtship and laughter which hovers over the lesson-scene. The reference to Ajax may be charged with tragic innuendos, yet these are bound to give way to the comic mood of the scene as well as to the spirit of celebration expected to conclude the play.

The use of classical allusion in the minor plot of the play is shown to convey the various assumptions made particularly by Lucentio with regard to his relationship with his sweetheart. Generally, this relationship sounds promising despite the tragic undertones attached to it through classical myths of disaster. Somehow we get the impression, especially from Lucentio's attitude as a lover, that Bianca is the one who will after all wear the 'breeches' in marriage.

In the major plot, the classical allusions are consistently used by Petruchio to point out the man's convictions, and to show how he is clear in his mind

about what to think or do with Katherina, even before he catches sight of her. Unlike Lucentio, he is not mistaken in his judgement of Katherina; he is resolved to place Katherina in her proper sphere in the great Chain of Being; and he is all confidence about forcing Katherina to accept that position intended for her.

The first set of classical allusions which involves the characters of Petruchio and Katherina for the first time occurs in Act I scene ii. Petruchio resorts to classical and other allusions by way of proving his undeterred will to woo and marry Katherina -

Be she as foul as <sup>was</sup> Florentius' love,  
 As old as Sibyl, and <sup>as</sup> curst and shrewd  
 As Socrates' Xanthippe, or a worse,  
 She moves me not, or not removes at least,  
 Affection's edge in me.  
 67-71.

Petruchio firstly draws upon a legend told in Gower's Confessio Amantis (The Lover's Confession). This legend shows how a Knight, Sir Florent, goes ahead in marriage with an ageing woman as promised in return for the secret of 'women's desire' being 'a sovereign of man's love.' The legend further shows how the Knight is then surprised by the old woman's transformation on the wedding night into a 'Young budding virgin' (IV.v.36). Subtly, Petruchio cites a story that illustrates 'the deadly sin of "Inobedience," <sup>21</sup> with its relevance to the present condition of Katherina as well as to her possible metamorphosis on marriage. What Petruchio is intimating

here is that Katherina may after all surprise him on the wedding day with an 'I am your wife in all obedience' (Induc.ii.105), with the romantic, fairy tale conclusion of living happily ever after.

Petruchio, however, counterpoints these implications by his next reference to the legend of the Cumaean Sibyl and Apollo. We have already seen Apollo failing to win Daphne who is changed into a laurel tree (55 ff). Here we see him again holding the same unsuccessful record in his love-pursuits. Granting the Sibyl's rash wish for as many years as there were grains in a pile of sand, Apollo offers to grant her youth - without which the first gift would be merely an affliction - if she is willing to become his regular mistress. But the Sibyl proudly spurns his love, knowing that she will live to be a decrepit thousand years old. The allusion to this legend makes the happy resolution of the previous one look as if beyond Petruchio's reach. It both baffles our impression of the impending plan of courting and marrying Katherina (who is not however present in the scene), and raises the question whether Katherina will accept Petruchio's love-pursuit at all, let alone agree to become an ideal housewife.

However, Petruchio's following reference to Socrates' Xanthippe is somehow reassuring. Katherina will accept his love proposal and become his wedded wife,

only to be transformed - so at least Petruchio hopes - from one supposed Xanthippe into an obedient wife. He will not, anyway, admit defeat and will put up with a Xanthippe. The comparison with Xanthippe is of course made of Katherina's present nature; Petruchio, in effect, will change this wayward nature once the woman is his lawful wife. That is why he does not compare himself with Socrates who as we may gather from Plato's Dial-ogues was patient with Xanthippe and silently suffered her shrewishness.

Petruchio is clearly arguing here that he will not be disturbed whatever Katherina is like; that is, even if she surpasses Florentius' love, Sibyl, and Xanthippe in the qualities of foulness, old age, and termagance, she will never shake his resolution of courtship and marriage. Petruchio, in other words, is not preoccupied with Katherina's attitude which he is after all going to tackle. The progress of his analytic mind, moving from 'Florentius' love' to 'Sibyl' and then to 'Xanthippe,' can in the circumstances be seen as a rhetorical climax. This climax is cumulative of the ugly, the old, and the bad-tempered. It builds up to the total impression that however dreadful Katherina may be, he will not be the least disturbed. Petruchio, therefore, identifies Katherina with the women but never himself with the men.

The following allusion made by Gremio in connection

with Petruchio and Katherina holds the key to their situation.<sup>22</sup> Referring to the business of wooing Katherina Gremio guilefully remarks - 'leave that labour to great Hercules' (I.ii.253). Gremio is recalling here Heracles, son of Zeus (by Alcmena), renowned for feats of strength, particularly for the Twelve Labours. The immediate implication would be that it takes a legendary champion like Heracles to woo Katherina, 'wed her, and bed her, and rid the house of her' (I.i.140). Katherina, consequently, becomes at once a mythological, unsurmountable task. It thus follows that Petruchio is identified with the Heracleian Hero, which means that with all its bleak hardships, the metamorphosis of Katherina can after all prove a further Heracleian triumph.

Gremio's second line reinforces this implication immensely - 'And let it be more than Alcides' twelve' (I.ii.254). Explicitly, this suggests that winning Katherina for a wife and changing her after that is even more difficult than all the Labours of Heracles put together. This will naturally heighten the Petruclean feat.

None the less, if one follows through the possibilities that Shakespeare does not raise in this second line of Gremio, one will be astonished to see how the line points out, with even more explicitness, the near impossibility of Petruchio's imminent 'labour.' That is

because the line connotes an implicit reference to what is called by the Greeks to this day the 'thirteenth' and most arduous of the labours of Heracles - namely, the impregnation of the fifty daughters of the King of Thespia. In Classical Mythology in Shakespeare, Robert K. Root claims that this story was well-known, yet he observes that Shakespeare displays no detailed knowledge of the Labours of Heracles.<sup>23</sup>

The legend tells how Thespius decides that his fifty daughters should have children by Heracles, who enjoys the company of forty-nine of these daughters in one night. One, however, refuses and is doomed to serve as a priestess in a temple of Heracles. The implicit identification of Petruchio's imminent task with the thirteenth Labour of Heracles means also that Katherina is implicitly identified with the self-willed Thespiade. Petruchio may find it extremely difficult to subdue Katherina's will; and Katherina may rebuff Petruchio's advances even if he presents himself to her as another Heracles. The whole situation of Petruchio and Katherina may appear through the implicit reference to Heracles' 'thirteenth labour' to be workable only under some wondrous circumstances.

Petruchio resorts again to classical reference twice in Act II scene i, once during his wooing of Katherina and again after he has provocatively courted



her. Already identified with the son of Zeus, Petruchio, in his turn, probably intentionally raises Katherina to his own stature by wishing on her the role of the daughter of Zeus (by Leto), Artemis or Diana as generally identified by the Romans. (Petruchio, here, contrasts with Lucentio who tends to place Bianca on a higher sphere than his own.) This takes place, significantly, on the only occasion in the play when the two characters are on their own, unbothered by the presence of others. Their confrontation opens with 'a wit-bout, or, rather, a fast exchange of fairly crude insults,'<sup>24</sup> whose tone is changed by Petruchio's sudden digression to classical mythology -

Did ever Dian so become a grove  
 As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?  
 O, be thou Dian, and let her be Kate;  
 And then let Kate be chaste, and Dian sportful.  
 251-54.

The lines suggest details of the life and adventures of Diana, the moon goddess and goddess of hunting, which are deliberately wished on Katherina by Petruchio. In a lightly interrogative tone of voice (which is also ironic), Petruchio draws a comparison between the suitability of Diana - being the goddess of hunting and patroness of wild animals - to the grove, and that of Katherina to the chamber or rather the whole household of Baptista. The analogy involves a quality of chastity which Petruchio brings in in his wish - 'Let Kate be chaste,' 'Kate' being 'Dian' after the inversion of

roles intimated in the previous line ('be thou Dian, and let her be Kate'). The analogy also involves a mocking use of the conventional language of courtship already used by Lucentio. In his attitude as a wooer Petruchio contrasts with Lucentio. The fortunes of both characters will be contrasted, too, when the wooer who uses the love language conventionally and seriously is disappointed, and he who uses it unconventionally and sarcastically emerges as a victor. (There is analogy in the reference to Dian but also contrast: Dian/Kate, the mythological grove/the Elizabethan middle-class household.)

Petruchio does not so much deny chastity as wish for 'sportfulness' ('... and Dian sportful,' 'Dian' now being 'Kate' according to the previous inversion), which presumably encourages his wooing. Petruchio's present concern is obviously to court Katherina; this requires him to evoke her amorous spirit especially after stating earlier that Katherina is 'amorous' (212), (implying sexuality). The double entendre of 'sportful' or 'amorous' helps to retain the game of bawdy prolonged on Katherina's responsiveness. <sup>25</sup>

The analogy drawn by Petruchio proves illuminating when the attitudes adopted by Diana in her legendary forest and Katherina in her father's house are taken into consideration. According to one version of the legend Diana was the patroness of unmarried women; she was a virgin and she required her company of nymphs to remain

as virgins as herself. In her father's household as well as in the whole of Padua, Katherina enjoys the same reputation (of formidability) as Diana. She scares away all suitors, thus managing to remain unmarried. This status secures her virginity and enables her to hold her younger sister under her control virgin and unmarried. This explains the peculiar situation of Katherina in which she becomes nothing but an obstacle to her own as well as her sister's advancement in both love and marriage, <sup>26</sup> an obstacle which Petruchio will strive to surmount.

The reference to Diana may conversely be argued to have obscured the prospects of Petruchio's endeavours. The same version of the legend tells how Diana defended her virginal state nearly always with the same disastrous results to her wooers. She shot (often with the aid of her brother, Apollo) her suitors and transformed Actaeon into a stag with the hair-raising result that his own hounds tore him to pieces. Naturally these details justify Katherina's menacing observation to Petruchio - 'I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first,' and leave us in doubt as regards Petruchio's forewarning words to Katherina -

Thou must be married to no man but me;  
 For I am he, <sup>as</sup> born to tame you, kate,  
 And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
 Conformable as other household Kates.

291, 267-70.

But they also confer a sense of miracle on the eventual achievement of Petruchio.

The very fact that Katherina is not actually Diana robs these implications of their full force. Even if we still admit that Katherina is after all compared to Diana, there are other details<sup>27</sup> of the latter's life which could throw some side-lights on the argument. In spite of her reputation as a chaste huntress, Diana was still regarded as promiscuous, as far from being a virginal goddess. Moreover, she was not always successful in holding her nymph-followers to the strict rule of remaining virgins. For example, one of her favourite companions, Callisto, had actually made love with Zeus and became pregnant. Petruchio here, even before he meets with Katherina, regards the woman - contrary to her reputation - as vulnerable to masculine advances. 'Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench' (159), is what he infers from Katherina's repulsion of Hortensio's company. He harps on the less common Elizabethan meaning of 'lusty' as 'lustful'. And he proceeds to assault her femininity, when he meets her, evoking the impression of a psychological rape.<sup>28</sup> Katherina herself does not succeed in holding Bianca to the strict rule of celibacy; for the latter deceives her sister, her father, and the other characters, and willingly marries herself to Lucentio. At any rate, the reference to Diana shows

that Petruchio's efforts have to be exceptionally heroic to be worthwhile. Overcoming Katherina may well at this stage be in doubt and yet when Petruchio overcomes her his feat will be as miraculous as the overcoming of Diana.

If Petruchio has denied Katherina the quality of chastity in private, he publicly assigns that quality to her along with another of wifely patience. Referring to Katherina, he tells Baptista, Gremio, and Tranio, on their re-entry that

For Patience she will prove a second Grissel,  
And Roman Lucrece, for her chastity.

287-88.

The reference to 'Grizel' (originally 'Grisilde'<sup>29</sup>) is understandable; it is clear and straightforward.

Petruchio is submitting that in marriage Katherina will (or may want to) be nothing but 'the flour of wifly patience.'<sup>30</sup>

The following of Grizel by a 'Lucrece' is even more understandable. Petruchio is again suggesting that even after Katherina has become as patient as Grizel she would also need to have the chastity of Lucretia. Petruchio is undoubtedly thinking of the decency generally attributed to Lucretia which made her pass the test set by Lallutinius (her husband) and other Roman husbands to examine the virtue of their wives. Lucretia publicly honoured her husband by proving herself the most seemly of the wives.

This is interesting. It relates directly to our play which concludes with a similar test for the Paduan wives from which Katherina emerges triumphant, publicly thus honouring her 'lord and husband' (V.ii.131). We should not, however, forget that the Lucretia legend does not stop there (though Shakespeare specifically restricts the Lucretia reference to the woman's virtue with no mention of her story's tragic aftermath). It goes on to recount how Lucretia's virtue arouses the resentment of one Sextus Tarquinius as her beauty excites his lust; and how his raping of her causes an all-round tragedy. The Lucretian reference may, for this reason, seem to contribute in a direction completely different from that of Grizel. It may, contrarily, presage trouble rather than peace and order, and suggest, as Farley-Hills is in no doubt, 'the tragic results of love.'<sup>31</sup> But these tragic results are surely going to be superseded by the play's wondrous, untragic conclusion. This is what at least we expect to happen. Furthermore, it is not insignificant that both Grizel and Lucretia are presented in their very strife for self-preservation as the weaker sex. The fact that the men overpower them and effect their suffering points unequivocally to Petruchio's superiority to Katherina. It is possible that Petruchio may be thinking of himself as another Tarquinius who will if he has to rape his Lucrece.

In Petruchio's last reference to classical myths, the earlier motif of suffering at a woman's hands persists yet again. The reference occurs in another lesson-scene, one of a different category from that encountered earlier. This is the scene in Petruchio's 'country house' where Petruchio plays the schoolmaster to the apparently uneducable Katherina in his 'taming-school'

That teacheth tricks eleven and twenty long,  
To tame a shrew and charm her chattering tongue.  
IV.ii.57-8.

No sooner do the couple relax to have some supper after their long, weary journey, than Petruchio shouts angrily - 'Where's my spaniel Troilus' (134).

The reference to Troilus is indirectly relevant to the situation of Petruchio and Katherina in that it points straight back to the theme of love and marriage already explored by Petruchio in his other allusions. Here again the Troiline allusion can hardly be a just comparison for Petruchio, since it (obviously the first allusion Petruchio makes to a male character after his list of female characters) concerns a legendary character whose name happens to be 'that of classic victim of woman's treachery.' 32

It is, however, the character of Cressida, Troilus' love, which matters more here. In Shakespeare's time, Cressida came to be seen as perhaps the worst of her kind; she was as difficult a woman to manage as Katherina, even much worse than her. In short, Cressida

was a kind of woman who needed taming well. This is possibly what Petruchio is trying to imply to Katherina (surely through a joke) from his mention of Troilus. He regards her as another Cressida and himself not as the victimised Troilus who does not tame his beloved but as the victorious Petruchio who will tame his terrible wife. (But there is no doubt that Petruchio's spaniel was called Troilus before Petruchio knew of Katherina.)

With this Troiline reference, the pattern of classical allusions comes to a sudden halt which can however be reasonably explained both thematically and structurally. From the thematic point of view, the references stop because the central business of taming is now underway. There is so much action to come that it is hardly the time for trifling with classical myths. Structurally, the allusions cease after they have already fulfilled their dramatic requirement of generating throughout the action a debate between the impossibility of Petruchio's task and the miraculousness of his potential achievement. In this, the pattern of classical allusions fits the play's plot which has itself been building up to the same debate.

We have seen how from the very beginning Katherina and Petruchio are made to figure as two exceptional people who rise highly above the world of the play. Katherina has been presented as a woman who can 'scold and raise up such a storm/ That mortal ears might hard-



ly endure the din' (I.i.167-68), which renders the prospect of her marriage very unlikely - 'such a life with such a wife were strange!' (I.ii.190). Petruchio has presented himself to us (and so has his man, Grumio, presented him) as a man whose 'imperious will' <sup>33</sup> nothing in the world will deter, a man who will go to any extremes so as to achieve his objectives even if this means his resort to such preposterous pretexts as -

I am a gentleman of Verona, sir,  
That, hearing of her beauty and her wit,  
Her affability and bashful modesty,  
Her wondrous qualities and mild behaviour,  
Am bold to show myself a forward guest  
Within your house, to make mine eye the witness  
Of that report which I so oft have heard;

and as -

I tell you 'tis incredible to believe  
How much she loves me-O, the kindest Kate!  
II.i.47-53, 298-99; my own italics.

The accomplishment of Petruchio's proposal for Katherina brings wonder with it - 'Was ever match clapp'd so suddenly' (317); just as his zany wardrobe on the wedding day creates consternation - 'wherefore gaze this goodly company/ As if they saw some wondrous monument/ Some comet or unusual prodigy' (III.ii.90-2; my own italics). But the truly astonishing thing has not happened yet. It is the actual marriage ceremony which causes the greatest astonishment of all - 'Such a mad marriage never was before;' 'Of all mad matches, never was the like' (178, 238).

Once the classical allusions are over, we move out of rhetoric on the verbal level to rhetoric in action where these allusions are assimilated into the play's overall structure. Lucentio who has already disguised himself as Zeus to win his Europa, is not ready to see his love affair ending in despair like Dido's. He, therefore, broods seriously upon the manner of outwitting his competitors, precisely like an Odysseus who would not allow anyone to vie with him in love for Penelope -

Were it not that my fellow schoolmaster  
Doth watch Bianca's steps so narrowly,  
'Twere good, methinks, to steal our marriage;  
Which once perform'd, let all the world say no,  
I'll keep mine own despite of all the world.

III.ii.134-38.

And thus when the opportunity arises Lucentio goes ahead in his deception and secretly marries Bianca, without causing in Padua a Trojan disaster like the one caused by the marriage of Paris and Helen. (He seems, however, to have caused his own destruction by marrying the opposite of Penelope as he will eventually realise.) In the end, he explicitly refers to his smooth, peaceful and successful effort as a wondrous miracle - 'Love wrought these miracles' (V.i.110). But whatever Lucentio says, the marriage he achieves and unambiguously regards as a wonder does not elicit as much amazement as he would have liked. And the 'miracle' which he talks about will undoubtedly become most unmiraculous when



I will not go to-day; and ere I do,  
It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

IV.ii 188-91.

For this he is rewarded in the end where he emerges with as flying colours as happy Sir Florent at having his own ex-shrewish wife changed into a tractable creature.

There, Petruchio's effort is publicly recognised as a very miraculous feat, almost as one of the wonders of the world - 'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tam'd so.' 34

The way the classical allusions are assimilated into the play's total structure closes our play on a sense of wonder in the characters' triumphs especially Petruchio's. The dramatist has been working for this effect from the very beginning. He has cruelly tantalised our comic expectations through the occasional reference to classic myths. We have thus been made to worry about the prospects of Lucentio and Bianca whose affair is developed in a background of misfortune and tragedy. We have also been made suspicious about the future of Petruchio and Katherina which is set against the hopeless relationships and unworkable marriages of the past. And yet we have been reassured by some allusions as well as by the mood and the dramatic design which point unequivocally to a happy conclusion throughout. When it is finally reached, this conclusion sets our minds at peace for ever, and as it does so, it leaves with us after we leave the

theatre and revert to the normal world a strong sense of wonder and amazement. Our ultimate impression is that such a feat as the one successfully undertaken by Petruchio is something that cannot happen everyday, something exceptionally unrepeatable, in short miraculous.

By so creating, increasing and underlining the sense of wonder, the pattern of classical allusions exhibits its positive role in pointing out and sustaining the dramatic plot of The Taming of the Shrew, and more importantly in raising the comedy highly above the region of trivial farce.

## Chapter 3

## The Pattern of Reconciliations in

The Two Gentlemen of Verona

In a sense, the ending of The Taming of the Shrew resembles that of The Comedy of Errors. Having happily resolved its quest pattern in Ephesus where all journeys end, the Errors suggests an occasion for festivity, one in which a romantic marriage between Antipholus of Syracuse and Luciana<sup>1</sup> is anticipated in the wondrous reunion of Aegeon and Aemilia. The Shrew, in turn, ends with a feast presumably held in belated celebration of Katherina's wedding following her wondrous taming.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona, too, closes with a promised feast in which an immediate double wedding is to take place. 'That done,' Valentine addresses Proteus, referring to the latter's expression of 'penance,'<sup>2</sup> 'our day of marriage shall be yours;/ One feast, one house, one mutual happiness!' (V.iv.172-73). But Valentine and the others should firstly embark upon a short journey, presumably back to the Court of Milan. This is implied at least thrice as the characters prepare to clear the stage - 'Come, let us go,' 'as we walk along,' 'as we pass along' (160, 162, 168). The 'new' journey strikes me as structurally important. On account of it,

the play ends just as it begins - in travel. As earlier in the play, the characters are about to hurry off somewhere. During the action, the journey constitutes an integral element of structure.

On the whole, The Two Gentlemen incorporates four integrating patterns which contribute both individually and collectively to the total meaning of the play. These elements have so far received scant critical attention. The least obvious of them is the pattern of swift expeditions. 'Expedition' occurs repeatedly<sup>3</sup> in the play, and has a double meaning - a journey or voyage<sup>4</sup> and promptness or speed, both meanings being equally significant. The implications of speed and urgency are plentiful and their distribution is strategic, especially prominent in the middle act (III), the turning point of the play. Throughout, the use of this element implies an expeditious outcome for the action, as the characters become partially or wholly characterised by precipitateness and haste. In this subtle manner, the dramatist builds an almost subliminal sense of immediacy, promptness, and excitability.

The earliest suggestion of urgency is infused into the opening banter of Valentine and Proteus. Valentine has come to bid his 'loving Proteus' (I.i.1) a hasty farewell. The former's father, we are informed, is waiting for his son 'at the road' (53) to see him to the harbour where the ship is ready to sail. Yet

both friends indulge in a quick debate in which each attempts to convince his comrade of his own attitude to life and love. As the dialogue occurs under rather rushed circumstances, interrupted now and again by an 'adieu' (11, 53), both friends part with no conviction on either side.

While arguing his philosophical views, Valentine alludes several times to the association between 'time' and 'age,' citing his friend's personality for illustration. In his opinion, a youth should not 'wear out' his time 'with shapeless idleness' (8), should not lose his 'verdure' and 'prime' in 'some fading moment's mirth' (49, 30). Valentine, consequently, diminishes the concept of 'love' making the point unequivocally that 'youth' is the time for study and education. This view is reversed in Love's Labour's Lost, in the opening scene also, where the previous association is made by Berowne but only to give preponderance to the experience of love at the expense of study. Berowne, by contrast, stands strongly for the view that youth is the very time for love. Here, however, Valentine's assertion that love will only ruin and waste the time of a fine young man is seconded by Proteus's confession - 'Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphis'd me;/ Made me neglect my studies, lose my time' (66-7). Valentine's assertion again (2, 7) that



a youth should never stay at 'home,'<sup>5</sup> should, to the contrary, seek preferment of character abroad, is seconded by Proteus's uncle and father shortly afterwards (I. iii.5 ff). Despite that, Valentine is later proved as wrong as are the King of Navarre and his lords in Love's Labour's Lost.

Thus even before the action of the play begins fully to develop, the sense of speed intimates that the course of events is going to move rapidly without any pauses or intervals. And perhaps Valentine's passing allusion to the association of youth and time gains more point and cogency when one learns that Proteus, on account of his 'loss of time' (19), is going to be forced to 'wear out' (I.i.8) his youth in occupations as worthwhile as those of his friend 'youthful Valentine' (I.iii.26). The general impression conveyed through the first part of the opening scene is that the characters are inclined to dally and take their ease in whatever they say or do, but they are compelled to speed things up.

In the remaining part of the scene, Speed enters looking for his master. Proteus breaks the news to him that Valentine 'parted hence to embark for Milan' (I. i.71). Speed, who does not incidentally live up to his name, is not the least concerned. He illustrates the function of servants of his kind in slowing down the

action. 'Twenty to one, then,' he jestingly says to Proteus, referring to Valentine, 'he is shipp'd already' (72). Speed wants to speak deliberately with Proteus to 'overtake [his] slow purse' (120), and get some money for the pains he took in delivering a letter to Julia's maid. Proteus himself, although he has initially asked Speed to catch up with Valentine, attempts to keep Speed as long as it is possible, to check with him what has become of his message<sup>6</sup> to Julia. Nevertheless, on learning that Speed has misdirected the letter, Proteus firmly asks the page to 'Go, go, be gone' (138).

The same inclination towards dalliance is brought out more prominently in a scene during which an important decision concerning Proteus's career is made rapidly and executed soon afterwards. Antonio, Proteus's father, convinced that a youth's experience is normally 'perfected by the swift course of time,' decides to send his son 'Even with the speediest expedition' to the Emperor of Milan's Court, adding firmly -

To-morrow be in readiness to go-  
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory.  
I.iii.23, 37, 38, 70-1.

Politely but uncertainly Proteus objects -

My lord, I cannot be<sup>so</sup> soon provided;  
Please you, deliberate a day or two.  
72-3.

But his father's reply comes firmly, finalising the whole conversation -

Look what thou want'st shall be sent after thee  
No more ~~of~~ stay; to-morrow thou must go,

and dictating urgent instruction -

Come on, Panthino; you shall be employ'd  
To hasten on his expedition.

74-7.

Proteus is left to wonder at this harsh decision; but  
Panthino reappears to ask him to hurry, precisely as  
Proteus has, only a moment ago, done with Speed -

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you,  
He is in haste, therefore I pray you go.

88-9.

Although the complete force of the sense of exigency  
is held in abeyance until Act III, there is still a  
very strong shade of it in another scene of parting.  
This is scene ii of Act II where one sees Proteus and  
Julia alone for the first and only time in the play  
while exchanging parting rings and a kiss. (Proteus  
and Julia are seen alone later in the play, IV.iv, but  
Julia happens to be then disguised as Sebastian, a boy-  
servant.)

Even before Proteus departs, Julia asks him to  
make a hasty return - 'you will return the sooner' (II.  
ii.4). It is as if Julia had anticipated what was going  
to happen on Proteus's arrival at a strange place. Julia  
is so distressed that Proteus has to leave urgently  
( 'Have patience, gentle Julia' ), that she speaks only  
three times and utters only four lines (1; 2, 4-5, 7),

and even goes 'without a word' (16). This provides a good example of how women in our play of 'gentlemen' are associated with silence at moments of emotion. Silvia, as will be argued later on, will provide a still better example of the same feminine attitude. As to Proteus, before he can pull himself together after this quick farewell to his love, he is summoned by his father. 'Sir Proteus,' Panthino accosts him, 'you are stay'd for' (19). Proteus desperately responds - 'Go; I come, I come' (20). The fact that Proteus's father is staying for him recalls the earlier situation of Valentine in the opening scene.

After Valentine's departure, we saw Speed trying to challenge Proteus's wit in a leisurely fashion, knowing that his master is already 'shipp'd.' Here, too, after Proteus has left, his page, Launce, endeavours by a funny narrative to slow down the tempo of the action - and is momentarily successful. But Panthino soon comes back to send Launce along - 'away, away aboard! thy master is shipp'd ... You'll lose the tide, if you tarry any longer' (II.iii.30-3). Characterised by the same idiosyncrasy as the others especially his fellow-servant, Launce attempts to decelerate the rush by entering on a wit-combat with Panthino. However, the latter reminds him - 'Come, come, away, man; I was sent to call thee ... Wilt thou go?' (50, 52). Having no

option but to obey, Launce retorts (somehow similarly to Proteus earlier) - 'Well, I will go' (53).

As the action of the play is moving so rapidly to the third act, the characters, pressed by the need for speed, become more tense and less patient; they become willing to speed things up rather than slow them down. Valentine, almost instantly falls in love with Silvia and starts composing love-letters (II.i.60, 77, 81). Silvia, too impatient to allow time to work out her love affair with Valentine, bids the latter to write to some unnamed third person whom she loves, and asks him to take the letter for his labour. On this Speed does not hesitate to comment - 'O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible' (124).

It is not only Valentine and Silvia who act quickly. The other important couple of the play, Proteus and Julia, take to hasty actions too. Proteus forgets all about his Julia as soon as Silvia is introduced to him -

now my love is thaw'd;  
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire  
Bears no impression of the ~~thing~~ it was.  
II.iv.196-98.

And although he is initially resolved to reconsider the whole situation ('If I can check my erring love, I will'), he almost decides to take action and foil Valentine's intrigue with Silvia - 'Now presently I'll give her father notice' (209, II.vi.36).

Ironically, as Proteus entreats 'Love' - 'lend me wings to make my purpose swift' (42), Julia dreams of flying to him on 'Love's wings' (II.vii.11). In justifying to curious Lucetta the promptness of her decision, Julia significantly uses the same imagery as Proteus of 'fire' and how it quickly melts whatever is near it. However, she uses the metaphor in a different context. Proteus regards 'love' as something that can be melted when set against 'fire.' Julia, conversely, takes 'love' to be itself the 'fire' that cannot be extinguished; her lines to Lucetta make the point -

Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow  
 AS seek to quench the fire of love with words.  
 19-20.

Seeing no reason for the hurry, Lucetta counsels forbearance until Proteus returns to Verona. She attempts not only to hold Julia's quickness in check but also to slow things down (21-3). Nevertheless, Julia must go on her journey at once; 'let me go, and hinder not my course,' she says to Lucetta, adding -

And presently go with me to my chamber,  
 To take a note of what I stand in need of  
 To furnish me upon my longing journey ...  
 dispatch me hence,  
 to it presently.

33, 83-9.

Previously, Antonio suddenly decides to dispatch his son to Milan with the 'speediest expedition,' telling Proteus that what he needs will soon be sent after him. Here, Julia, knowing in advance that she is not going to



Having achieved Valentine's expulsion, Proteus is not yet completely satisfied. He endeavours to impel the action more rapidly. He orders Launce to find Valentine - 'Run, boy, run, and seek him out' (188). Then he approaches his friend with an apparently friendly advice -

Here if thou stay thou canst not see thy love;  
 Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.  
 Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that ..  
 Regard thy danger, and along with me.  
 244-56,

and offers to see Valentine off promptly - 'Come, I'll convey thee through the city gate' (252). Valentine turns to Launce and asks him to send Speed instantly - 'Bid him make haste and meet me at the Northgate' (258). In the opening scene of the play, Proteus, though aware then that he has to send Speed after Valentine, keeps the boy to inquire about his letter to Julia. Here, Launce's attitude is not much different from his master's. Upon Speed's entry, he hides the banishment news to make the former stay and hear his ridiculous letter of love. This done, he turns to Speed, like Proteus again, with an urgent advice - 'Thou must run ... for thou hast stay'd so long' (367-68).

As soon as Valentine is exiled, Thurio decides to press his suit anew, preparing first for a concert to please his lady-love - 'sweet Proteus, .../ Let us into the city presently/ To sort some gentle men well skill'd in music' (III.ii.90-2). Proteus, taking advantage



also of Valentine's banishment, serenades Silvia, but she dismisses him immediately after the song is over - 'my will is even this,/ That presently you hie you home to bed' (IV.ii.89-90).

Proteus, as we saw, was at least able to exchange a few words with Julia before his departure. Here, however, the urgency of Valentine's situation does not allow him even to have a farewell glance at Silvia. Julia, as we saw also, was 'impatient' with her 'tarriance' and decided to 'fly' to her love. Here, Silvia, similarly touched by the sense of urgency, broods upon 'flying hence' (IV.iii.29), in, as Eglamour is aware, a speedy 'expedition' (V.i.6).

Silvia, of course, wishes to seek Valentine in Padua where she believes he 'makes abode' (IV.iii.23). While she is separated from Valentine, Julia joins Proteus but only as his man. Judging Julia-Sebastian by her outward looks to be trustworthy (IV.iv.63 ff), Proteus accepts her services and employs her at once for an errand - 'Go presently, and take this ring with thee,/... to Silvia' (67). This parallels the rapidity with which the outlaws appoint Valentine their leader on account of being 'beautified/ With goodly shape' and 'such perfection' (IV.i.55-6, 57). The action moves rapidly from the middle to the closing act, where a sorting out of the characters misfortunes is more or less predictable.

The pattern of swift expeditions implies that the complications will be rapidly resolved. In part, this implication is reinforced by the next two patterns I will consider - the patterns of triangular relationships and oppositional parents. By triangular relationship I mean the young man and woman who are mutually and equally in love but are thwarted by an outsider, normally an authoritative or witty person. In the main plot there are at least three obvious phases of this pattern which occur at different times, forming an intricate scheme of balance, contrast, and comparison, and they in turn are satirised in the subplot by Launce's strange love affair. Because of triangular relationships, the dramatic personae are alarmed and involved in a series of confusions which compel them to take to hasty actions.

The pattern is first encountered at the end of Act I. Upon the unsatisfactory reports which reach Antonio (not of his son's love affair of which he knows nothing but of Proteus's lack of proper edification) the father immediately decides to force his son on a journey to Milan. Ironically, Proteus appears at the side of the stage reading a letter from Julia which has (unlike his own letter to her) reached him without hindrance, and exclaiming in an apparently desperate tone -

O that our fathers would applaud our loves,  
 To steal our happiness with their consents!  
 I.iii.48-9.

But as soon as he exclaims 'O heavenly Julia!' (50) his father appears and catches sight of the letter (51). Having expressed a dread of his father's intervention, Proteus is forced to lie that the letter is indeed from Valentine (52-3), and that he, Valentine, has expressed the wish that Proteus join him in Milan (59). Whole-heartedly, Antonio concurs with Valentine's supposed wish (63), and insists that Proteus travel to Milan. Succeeding in betraying Proteus to his own decision, Antonio transforms his frolicsome attitude to one of authoritative-ness, forcing Proteus to leave in a hurry. (The same witty-and-then-authoritarian technique will also be demonstrated by the Duke later on in the play.)

The first phase of triangular relationship vanishes with the disconnection of its sides. Another phase appears towards the middle of the play. This one embraces new lovers - Valentine and Silvia - and keeps changing the obstructive characters, from Thurio to the Duke and finally to Proteus. Before the Silvia-Valentine/Thurio triangle is introduced, there is an elucidatory scene (II.ii) in which Silvia shows signs of love for Valentine. One is thus prepared to recognise the nature of the triangle. Silvia loves and is loved by Valentine, and both abhor Sir Thurio but cannot help his presence since he is the father's choice. Both lovers, therefore, as it appears from the opening lines of scene iv (the same act) attempt to rouse jealousy in unwanted Thurio (1-2).

This triangle is thus initially light-hearted and humorous. It runs counter to the previous one which was slightly charged with serious undertones. When, however, the Duke substitutes for Thurio, the triangle becomes even more serious. It leads to the expulsion of Valentine, the most crucial point, to my mind, in the whole drama. There, not only does this triangle overshadow the previous one, but it also strengthens it by creating a proper mood of exigency and suspense.

There is yet another phase of triangular relationships - Silvia-Thurio/Proteus - which is partly different from the previous two in that it does not involve a state of mutual love. This phase is, nevertheless, dramatically functional, for it leads to an important development of the action beginning with Silvia's flight. Proteus is involved; he disrupts Thurio's love affair just as he has previously damaged Valentine's. Curiously enough, Proteus regards Thurio as the intruder whom he should remove. Thus having a courtship permit to woo Silvia on Thurio's behalf, Proteus decides at once to make a cat's-paw of his client to gain opportunity to press his own suit.

Earlier, Julia, unable to endure the absence of her lover, decides to follow and join him (II.vii.34-8). Silvia, similarly, cannot put up with the absence of Valentine; she decides to escape under cover of darkness to be reunited with him in his exile. Although both

women mean by their escape to overcome a barrier standing between them and their loves, each is in turn disappointed. Julia is aggrieved at the realisation that there is another woman taking her Proteus from her, and Silvia is stricken dumb on hearing that another man may take her from her lover by the latter's permission.

Triangular relationships, thus, involve the characters, precisely like swift expeditions, in a state of confusion, tension, and grief, where one looks forward to a happy resolution. There is still a minor love affair in the low-comic action, which is deliberately situated in the middle act immediately after the triangular relationship has brought its most serious consequence. Valentine has hardly lamented his bad luck at the Duke's intervention, wishing to hear an 'ending anthem of my endless dolour' (III.i.240), before Launce reveals his love story which he has been cautious to keep away from any 'malignant power' - 'He lives not now that knows me to be in love; yet I am in love' (238, 264-65). Launce's love affair is not triangular. The reason it is not so is due to the slave's precaution not to allow any external force to interfere between him and his love - 'but a team of horse shall not pluck that from me' (265). Coming after Valentine's elevating 'tragedy,' this brief and strangely sketched love affair mirrors the whole pattern of triangular relationships and shows a possible way of avoiding it. This is through

circumspection, apparently lacking in the lovers of the high-comic action as a result of their tense imbroglios. Launce, to be sure, is telling Speed of his love affair just as Valentine told Proteus. But Launce does not reveal the name of his beloved, insuring in this way that she will remain unknown.

Triangular relationships have partly been influenced by the obstructive attitude of a parent towards his child. This attitude, in fact, is the third structural element to which I turn now. The whole play, too, has been influenced from the beginning by the element of oppositional parents. This element thus serves as an enveloping action, enclosing the other elements so far examined: it strengthens their implications and gives shaping form to the entire comedy.

Disapproving fathers were traditional in Greek, Roman, and Italian comedy.<sup>8</sup> These conventions were the stock-in-trade in which Shakespeare and his contemporaries were to invest. But the extent of Shakespeare's investment, as I see it, was larger than that of his fellow-playwrights, in that he dedicated space in several of his plays to the comic types of intervening fathers. Generally, this tradition of opposing parents overcome, rouses certain expectations in the audience. We always wait for parents to break up their children's love affairs; but we also wait to see how the young people get round their difficulties.

Parental intervention is planted in the play's opening scene, and from then on it propels almost all the ensuing action. Before Antonio informs his son of his decision to dispatch him on his journey, Proteus, in an *aside*, has hoped that his father will not stand between him and Julia. There is little doubt that we will be less responsive to Proteus's 'solo' than, for instance, to Juliet's soliloquy - 'O Romeo, .../ Deny thy father and refuse thy name;/ Or, if thou wilt, be but sworn my love,/ And I'll no longer be a Capulet' ( Romeo and Juliet, II.ii.33-6). In Proteus's case, we have already been made to appreciate the good intention of the young man's father, whereas in Juliet's, it is indisputable that the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets will more probably compel both heads of the families to oppose the lovers' alliance. (It is noteworthy that in Romeo and Juliet a simple parental intervention occurs later in the play when Capulet - ignorant of the marriage to Romeo - insists his daughter should marry Paris.) We may even burst out laughing when Antonio accosts Proteus - 'How now,' as soon as the latter finishes his exclamation - 'O heavenly Julia!' ( The Two Gentlemen, I.iii.51, 50).

Parental intervention is, therefore, intended from the beginning to be understood as a little harmful. This makes us look forward to a comic reversal near the end





daughter's plan of elopement, by banishing her lover and locking her up. It is then and there that we can but recall the gravity of fatherly intervention in the tragedy of the Italian pair in Romeo and Juliet. The implications of the Duke's interposition are rightly the opposite of Antonio's earlier, in that the latter's interposition in his son's love affair was unintentional. The contrast serves to keep the audience in suspense as regards the happy resolution. Just as Proteus has voiced a dread of his father's potential opposition to a marriage to Julia (slightly before Antonio decides on his son's instant voyage), Silvia expresses similar emotions (but only after Valentine's extrusion).

Parental intervention drives the characters into taking journeys which, in turn, take the action of the play to various locations.<sup>9</sup> Proteus's father's obstruction causes the young gentleman to move to Milan, followed shortly by disguised Julia; and Silvia's father's opposition to her love-match moves first with Valentine, then second with Silvia (and Eglamour) to the forest, chased by the rest of the characters.

In the woods a spirit of reconciliation brims the heart of the Duke, quickly changing his oppositional frame of mind. Turning to his daughter's lover, he applauds Valentine's character and cause, calling to mind Proteus's wish expressed earlier ('O that our

fathers would applaud our loves') -

I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,  
 And think thee worthy of an empress' love.  
 Know then, I here forget all former griefs,  
 Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,  
 Plead a new state in thy unrivall'd merit,  
 To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,  
 Thou art a gentleman, and well deriv'd:  
 Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserv'd her.  
 V.iv.139-47.

The Duke's confession of his previous 'grudge' now transformed into parental consent, may seem to emerge suddenly; but this has - though only subliminally - been prepared for. The swift expedition has conveyed a sense of urgency. Triangular relationships, too, have involved the characters in hasty actions. The Duke's withdrawal of his opposition is, in effect, characterised by instantaneity. Quickly thus discords lift from the lovers' world and harmony takes over. The parent and his child are also quickly reconciled.

This brings me to the fourth and last structural element to be considered - the pattern of reconciliations. The pattern is not a recurring element; settlements are brought about at the end by the four lovers of the play coming together. Again, the pattern is not simply a unifying element that illustrates the practical manner in which the preceding elements<sup>n</sup> are resolved. It is a key-element in Elizabethan romance<sup>10</sup> of which The Two Gentlemen is designated as 'the earliest positive achievement.'<sup>11</sup> It is necessary, I believe, to briefly

show how the closing scene of the play has fared with the scholarly and critical opinion, before discussing the final reconciliations.

The plot construction of the play in the last scene has almost unanimously been recognised as faulty. This feeling is well exemplified by Parrott - 'Within the compass of about twenty lines Proteus tries to force Silvia; Valentine rescues her and denounces him as a "ruffian;" Proteus begs forgiveness, Valentine is satisfied and renounces his lady in favour of his friend.' Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch takes the closing scene to be morally and dramatically monstrous - 'there are, by this time, no gentlemen of Verona.' This is how he reacts before proceeding to condemn the scene as a 'piece of theatre botch-work patched upon the original.' Ashley H. Thorndike brings forward the same objection - 'The dénouement is badly hurried and Valentine so forgets his part as to offer Silvia to the penitent Proteus. Perhaps this fine gesture might be in accord with the code of honor for sworn friends, but it could scarcely be justified on a stage devoted to romantic love.' Tillyard produces a similar but more interesting reaction when he relates 'speed' to the 'comedy' in the play - 'to hand over a girl to the man who has just proposed to rape her revolts our moral sense ... the perfunctory speed with which these staggering events are recounted can only provoke our laughter.' 12

As they stand, these objections are basically to the swiftness and brevity of the action. Phialas sums up - 'Proteus' repentance is ... sudden ... [and] Valentine's forgiveness is ... too swift and perfunctory.'<sup>13</sup> I have already explained how speed is characteristic of this comedy. Expedition has rendered the action fast moving and made the characters tense and less patient. It has built a sense of promptness and urgency throughout. It has, above all, mounted with the drama to such a climactic point that there is hardly a chance of turning back. As a result, a pattern of speedy reconciliations has to be introduced to sort out the embroilments accumulated so far and draw the action to a close.

The character of Valentine constitutes the canvas upon which this pattern is woven. Studying the Prince-role in Shakespeare's comedies, Salinger notices how often this character presides over the final settlements. Here the Duke plays no such role. It is true he causes the essential complication (in line with Salinger's general remarks<sup>14</sup>), yet his contribution to the comic resolution comes in a later stage after the major issues of the play have been settled.

It is Valentine who supervises the final settlements, his character forming the foundation upon which all reconciliations are erected. Shakespeare, obviously, intends us not to see Valentine's behaviour here as odd or wrong as the 'no gentlemen of Verona' viewpoint

claims. After all, the least that can be said about Valentine is that he sees to it that all wrongs are set right, with a prospect of a happy comic unity. And this is, by no means, ungentlemanly. The Duke's sudden realisation - 'Sir Valentine,/ Thou art a gentleman' (145-46) is not without significance.

The dominance of Valentine in the closing episode is established earlier when he opportunely becomes the captain of the brigands. As Valentine is associated (in the audience's mind) especially in the pastoral setting with Robin Hood <sup>15</sup> (who had by then a romantic stature), so he becomes eligible for the task at the end. The transformation gives Valentine a prodigious position and a form of power from outside the court - from the wilderness. According to the laws of this environment, Valentine is then grander in stature than everybody including, naturally, the Duke. Charismatically, Valentine dominates the run of the final episode. He gives an order here, and directs an action there, forgiving one moment and intimidating another.

Valentine is juxtaposed with other characters, who, by comparison, become inferior. The first of these is Proteus, the friend who early in the play pointed out the demarcation line between the two (I.i.63-5). Undispirited by Silvia's reproofs, Proteus has proceeded a step ahead in his violation of friendship and love, to

ravish the woman who has criticised him on both scores.

His words (V.iv.55-7) -

Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words  
Can no way change you to a milder form,  
I'll woo you like a soldier, at arms' end,

do not simply justify his rape attempt. They are more interesting, because they illustrate the subtle difference between Silvia and Julia, as will be argued in a short while. Valentine, who has been watching in concealment, steps out to interfere between Proteus and Silvia, his disappointment in his friend being too gross -

treacherous man,  
Thou hast beguil'd my hopes; nought but mine eye  
Could have persuaded me.

63-5.

Proteus suddenly realises his own instability in love and friendship. Yet he cannot articulate the sudden conversion of his mind. 'My shame and guilt,' he simply says, 'confounds me' (73). Then he proceeds to seek Valentine's forgiveness. To this speedy repentance, Valentine reacts exactly as we would expect him to under the circumstances. 'Then I am paid!/ And once again I do receive thee honest' (77-8), he says, being the nobler friend. Then in a manner and tone of voice both derived from high-flown theories of friendship (which are still difficult for modern Western audiences to grasp <sup>16</sup>), Valentine reassures Proteus that their bond of friendship is not, after all, torn -

And, that my love may appear plain and free,  
All that was mine in Silvia I give thee.

82-3.

However, just before Proteus reacts to Valentine's whole-hearted generosity, something happens that even more rapidly affects the ensuing reconciliations. Julia swoons. 'O me unhappy!' she reacts (84), setting herself in sharp contrast with Silvia. The latter's lack of reaction underlines the sterner stuff of which her character is made. (An actress would have to react somehow.) Again Proteus quickly exhibits a penitent conscience. previously, he repudiates Julia immediately after seeing Silvia, in spite of the rhetorical comparison he makes. 'She is fair,' he says about Silvia, but only to add - 'and so is Julia that I love-/ That I did love' (II.iv. 195-96). Now, with the use of the same comparison, he renounces Silvia - 'What is in Silvia's face but I may spy/ More fresh in Julia's' (V.iv.114-15). This surely pleases Julia, though, contrary to Valentine, she does not have a word to say by way of reflecting her reaction. It is left to Valentine, who now lives up to the associations of his name <sup>17</sup> ) to emphasise Julia's acceptance of Proteus's pardon -

Come, come, a hand from either.  
Let me be blest to make this happy close.  
116-17.

Playing false with Valentine, Proteus has betrayed not only Julia but Sir Thurio and the Duke also. Julia and Valentine, respectively, discover his perfidy, but the other two characters remain blind. Thus before Thurio and the Duke are brought on the stage, the first

triad are reconciled, with harmony prevailing, thanks to Valentine's magnanimity of spirit. In this way the dramatist avoids monotony and tautology. Had Thurio and the Duke detected Proteus's treachery, the latter would have sought their pardon too. Julia's swoon, on the other hand, has saved, by diversion, both Proteus and Silvia from an impending predicament. Proteus is saved by the woman who has been in pursuit of him. And Silvia is given a fair chance to recover her composure, realising that she has not disappointed Julia.

Once Valentine has settled the claims of friendship in the restoration of Proteus, resolving in the meantime Julia's entangled love story, he sets out to settle the claims of romantic love raised in his relationship with Silvia. When the Duke arrives and Valentine frees him from the outlaws, Thurio renews his claim of Silvia - 'Yonder is Silvia; and Silvia's mine' (125). Valentine objects -

Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy death;  
Come not within the measure of my wrath;  
Do not name Silvia thine; if once again,  
Verona shall not hold thee. Here she stands  
Take but possession of her with a touch-  
I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.

126-31.

Valentine's threat emerges from the ideals of chivalry which Thurio (just as Eglamour earlier) has but only superficially represented. Thurio backs down - his earlier words of love remaining unimplemented by his deeds. He abandons all claim (on Silvia) on the



apparent ground that he holds him but a 'fool' who 'will endanger/ His body for a girl that loves him not' (133-34). This cowardly reaction brings his removal from the lovers' world. More importantly, it causes the Duke to reconsider his attitude towards his daughter's lover.

Acting in the heat of the moment while still in a position of power, Valentine confidently turns to the Duke asking him to pardon the then 'reformed' and 'civil' bandits (156). Reconciliation, here, moves from the individual to the social level, with subjects reintegrating with their ruler. This is implicit in the Duke's -

Come, let us go; we will include all jars  
With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.  
160-61.

Yet the initiator of this inclusive reconciliation is, as we are made to see, Valentine.

It is at this point that a major criticism is very often directed at Valentine. Samuel Asa Small, for example, cannot tolerate the fact that Valentine 'should have acted so thoughtfully about every character present, and yet not have acknowledged an affront to Silvia.'<sup>18</sup> As we have seen, an affront has already been acknowledged by Proteus to Julia, the woman whom he has offended. But these two characters, as we have also seen, are contrasted with Valentine and Silvia. Valentine has established himself in a position of superiority over Proteus. Silvia, too, has shown, by not swooning like

Julia or bursting into tears, the latter's inferiority to herself, in character as well as in attitude. So to repeat the same pardoning procedure as between Proteus and Julia would be - if not tedious - destructive to the good impression that Silvia and Valentine particularly are intended to make.

To let Valentine humble himself abjectly before Silvia, as Proteus before Julia, to earn his pardon would mean robbing the man of all the charisma which he possesses at this important stage. Apart from that, Silvia herself is not, I take it, in need of being asked pardon like Julia. Valentine, by contrast to Proteus, has never actually offended Silvia except unintentionally at that point where he momentarily resigns her in order to promote the bond of friendship. And Silvia has shown a familiarity with friendship in her rejection of Proteus (IV.ii.91-4, 104-07; V.iv.53, 54). To Proteus's rejoinder - 'In love,/ Who respects friend?' she sharply remarks - 'All men but Proteus' (V.iv.54, 55). Silvia is, therefore, fully aware that the codes of friendship have to come first with Valentine who, of all men will respect a friend in love. She is aware, too, that once those codes are re-established, they will be followed by a re-instatement of the claims of love. This is manifest in the way Thurio is forced to withdraw his suit, clearing the way for Valentine's genuine pass-

ion. Valentine's gallant attitude towards Thurio is likely to produce a feeling of joy in Silvia. The latter sees her lover's stature mounting to eminence above the other male characters. Also, she becomes convinced that she is still his beloved. Silvia could presumably have felt ashamed if Valentine, the 'gentleman' who has just granted pardon, reunited two lovers, challenged Thurio, and restored a group of aberrant bandits to the community, sank to his knees pleading tearfully for amnesty.

As I see each of them, Valentine's behaviour in the concluding scene is wise, noble, and gentlemanly; and Silvia's attitude is simply one of self-respect, well becoming an emperor's daughter.

The resolution of the play and the comic unity which crystallises around the hero, are brought about by the self-same character, only to be shared by the others. The integrating pattern of reconciliations makes the comic resolution possible, and achieves victory for friends, union for lovers, harmony of parents and children, and unity between ruler and subjects. All are reconciled to celebrate 'One feast, one house, one mutual happiness' (173).

Chapter 4  
The Morality Pattern in  
Love's Labour's Lost

Love's Labour's Lost is the pride of the early comedies. In the past, it had to put up with a large share of the adverse criticism<sup>1</sup> directed at these plays. And in the present, it has elicited respect especially when it has been successfully staged.<sup>2</sup>

In one major respect, it has to be noted, Love's Labour's Lost is a difficult play to fit in easily with its early sister-comedies. Domesticity and family relationships, around one or another of which these plays revolve, do not come to the fore in Love's Labour's Lost. It is basically a bachelors' comedy. Apart from the double reference to the Princess's father (I.i.136; V.ii.707), and the allusion to Katharine's sister (V.ii.13), there is nothing in the play to suggest a serious concern about family life. What we have is a group of young noblemen who fall for a bevy of young ladies, but only to end up in conditional, temporary separation.

With the expectation of multiple marriage ceremonies, Love's Labour's Lost deliberately closes. The probationary year and a day, imposed between the lovers and marriage, strike the male characters as

agonisingly long. Here, the play's ending is distinguished even from its most immediate neighbour, the other courtly comedy<sup>3</sup> of The Two Gentlemen, which optimistically ends on a promised, almost instant, double wedding. The play's ending is distinguished again from that of the Errors which involves actual rather than potential reunions. Contrary to Aegeon's family who come together in harmony, the bachelors of Love's Labour's Lost drift apart to lead - albeit in isolation - the independent life that they had aspired to in the first place.

However, the development of narrative in Love's Labour's Lost follows the basic frame explicit in the Errors. I have shown how the quest pattern in that play moves from threatened death to recovery, or rather regeneration, symbolised in the reunion of family members who believed one another dead. The travellers' chaotic misfortunes are subsumed into the note of order struck at the end. Similarly, the main action of Love's Labour's Lost is designed in such a way as to move from initial disruptions to possible cohesion, from a disorderly view of love, life, and the world, to an orderly one, from 'form confounded' to 'reformation,' to use terms from the play (V.ii.517, 557). This constitutes the nucleus of a structural pattern made available to the Elizabethan dramatist through the

medieval Christian tradition - namely, the Morality pattern.

The Morality plays introduced life through death, resurrection through decay, and regeneration through disruption. All of that was contained within the grand cosmic pattern of innocence, fall, and redemption - a pattern following the sequence of life, death, and rebirth. As Glynne Wickham puts it in Shakespeare's Dramatic Heritage, this medieval tradition gave 'the structural strength and forcefulness of expression to the chronicles, comedies and tragedies of the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre which made them the envy of posterity throughout the world.' <sup>4</sup>

As I see it, the Morality pattern is the guiding structure of Love's Labour's Lost. This pattern is essentially comic because it believes in salvation. As distinct from laughter, comedy in mediaval Morality terms is a joyful celebration of confession and redemption. All men according to the Morality pattern are redeemable: sin may be inevitable but repentance is always possible. <sup>5</sup>

The basic pattern of medieval Morality presents man, who can be anything from a king to a peasant (all men are equal in the sight of God), in a state of grace. He is innocent in that he has no contact whatsoever with vice (normally the Seven Deadly Sins).

Exposed to temptation, he succumbs, and then there is a fall (repeating Lucifer's Fall and the Fall of Adam). In the course of his fall, man goes through his own private passions of doubt and sorrow about his soul, which he may commit totally to the devil. But at that critical moment, there is an intervention on Mercy's part to point out man's ability to be redeemed despite his sins. Following Mercy's intervention, a débat occurs between the daughters of God, in which Mercy and Peace plead against Truth and Righteousness for man's deliverance. The debate is judged by God, and at the end of it man is saved. Contrite, man confesses his sin and the god-figure takes him under his wing to heaven. As man has been made in the image of God, so his life parallels that of Christ, who had gone through the same life-cycle from birth, baptism, through the temptation, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. This is nowhere clearer than in the most celebrated of English Moralities - the Interlude of Everyman. The course of this 'gigantic compendium of moral themes,' brings into focus 'the process by which Everyman brings the cycle of his own life into consequence with the redeeming life, death, and resurrection of Christ.'<sup>6</sup>

Love's Labour's Lost uses the same structural formula as the Morality Play. It fulfils the same comic requirement, going from a state of innocence, through

the sin and its inevitable consequence - the fall, to repentance and its concomitant - forgiveness, after a kind of spiritual trial.<sup>7</sup> The following pages concentrate on the scenes in the play that reveal, by analogy for the most part, the Morality structure. The other scenes are simply neutral without detracting from this structure.

The opening scene of the play brings forward four young men, a King and his companions, who are to endorse the establishment of a 'monastic institution.'<sup>8</sup> They have already debated the project among themselves, and voted for an ascetic vita contemplativa in which they will remain virginal, almost Christ-like. The objective in sight is clear: through this modus vivendi, the King argues, he and his fellow-ascetics will triumph over 'death' ('cormorant devouring Time'). One of the young men is dubious; he pooh-poohs the absurdity and futility of the entire endeavour. In spite of his objections, the scheme apparently goes ahead.

This part of the opening scene corresponds to the earliest known Morality fragment, The Pride of Life.<sup>9</sup> This early fragment introduces also a King with three comrades, two knights and a messenger. The King boasts of his invincible powers and majesty and is supported by his henchmen, Strength, Health, and Mirth (Solace) to challenge Death. There is an objecting voice,



which comes from his Queen, reminding him that he is a mortal creature and cannot escape 'death.' But the Queen's warnings are ignored.

A parallel King-and-death theme emerges from both plays. The treatment it receives and the role it plays are, however, different. The Pride of Life uses most of its action as a metaphor to explain the fact of death which in itself is the moral. Love's Labour's Lost, on the other hand, gives the theme far less space to make death pose a 'substantial threat to human aspirations.'<sup>10</sup>

One of these aspirations has been to be an heir 'of all eternity.' (I.i.7). This does not seem to be impossible, given the state of grace which the young lords have been privileged to enjoy in Navarre. The dukedom is apparently exempted from the worldly pressures of sickness, growing old and dying.<sup>11</sup> It is obviously remote from France which is associated with old age, illness and potential death ('her decrepit, sick, and bedrid father'). In such a state of exceptional grace,<sup>12</sup> no matter how illusory it may be, it is quintessential to be young, to live for ever, to feel immortal, that is 'to be boy eternal' (The Winter's Tale, I.ii.64). Added to all that is the motif of celebration. Already Berowne is looking forward to having some immediate entertainment - 'But is

there no quick recreation granted?' (Love's Labour's Lost, I.i.159). Mirth and hilarity are promised to him and his associates: 'that there is' is the King's reply. 'Costard, the swain,' and Armado the 'most illustrious wight' are to provide the required 'sport' (160, 177, 175, 177). In The Pride of Life, the 'Prolocutor' promises the spectators 'mirth' (14), and a character by the name of Mirth plays the part at once of the King's Jester.

In his resolve to conquer death, the King of Love's Labour's Lost commits the same 'sin' as the King of The Pride of Life. That is 'pride,' always the chief sin.<sup>13</sup> since the Fall. Young and innocent at heart, both Kings are expected, given the moral theme, to sin. It should not be surprising that they are arrogant. A young king has every reason to be proud, and much to boast about. But he has also someone wiser - if not maturer - than he is to deflate his ostentations and put him down.

In Mundus et Infans,<sup>14</sup> an early Morality similar in scope to The Castle of Perseverance, Child is given new apparel and titles - 'Manhode' and 'knyght' - at the age of twenty-one; so he 'waxes proud, warlike, and defiant, acknowledging only the power of World and his seven tributary kings'<sup>15</sup> -



against the spiritual and sexual attractions -

Therefore, brave conquerors - for so you are  
That war against your own affections  
And the huge army of the world's desires -  
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force.  
I.i.8-11.

However, his high-flown confidence is played down by Berowne who stresses the 'vanity' (72) of the 'edict.' Berowne's words, though ironic, are significant -

why should proud summer boast  
Before the birds have any cause to sing?  
102-3; my own italics.

Though lodged safely behind the walls of the 'castle,' Humanum Genus of The Castle of Perseverance is assaulted from outside by the 'Seven Deadly Sins,' until he ultimately 'falls.' In Love's Labour's Lost, although the King and his young gentry take shelter in their chateau, they cannot help encountering reminders of the 'sins.' Just as they have committed themselves to their own affected scheme (though persistently warned against an inevitable 'fall' - 'Necessity will make us all forsworn'), they are presented with a situation whose full significance they fail to grasp. They have associated themselves with 'pride;' another character, appropriately of a lower stature, is associated with another of the deadly sins - 'lust,' or 'lechery,' and falls. Costard is caught red-handed while copulating with a woman,<sup>16</sup> Jaquenetta, and is 'prosecuted' by a man singular in his own 'vain tongue' -

Armado (164). Constable Dull refers to the affair as 'villainous;' 'There's villainy abroad,' he says (186) as he presents Costard for judgement. A mock court drama follows in which Costard plays his own 'defence,' the lords select the 'jury,' with the King presiding as the high arbiter. Costard makes a mock confession but he receives 'the meed of punishment' (252) appropriate for him; the verdict is pronounced as 'guilty' of ignoring the 'proclamation' (265) regarding 'consorting' (268) with women. 'You shall,' the royal 'judge' sentences Costard, 'fast for a week with bran and water' (281). This trial will later strike us as more than mere mockery, when the 'jury' and 'judge' of the beginning stand as 'defendants' in front - and at the mercy of a beautiful 'jury' headed by the Princess (then Queen).

Unaware that they are 'sinners' themselves, the young noblemen step into further dramas of their own making, in which they go through their own private passions. The stage of these dramas is the private park of the place. This is analogous to the scenery of The Pride of Life, a play also set outdoors, having the King's tentorium as a property.<sup>17</sup> We know how when the French delegation headed by the Princess arrives, it is offered all the hospitality of the ground but none of the house; the delegates are lodged in a large tent outside the park boundary (II.i.171-

74). Having perceptively noticed the dilemma associated with the vain oath, the Princess does not hesitate to point out the courtiers' 'sinfulness' - 'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath ... / And sin to break it'

(105). She puts it to the King that it is sinful to trifle with a monastic vow, implying that pride (the well-known chief of vices) is the sin that has caused the oath in the first place. The King and his friends are not monks but courtiers. This points to the failures and frustrations that are bound to occur in the play. The position the Navarrese Court is in cannot, according to the Princess, be easily resolved. The Princess goes on to warn the King in a sweet couplet -

You will the sooner that I were away,  
For you'll prove perjur'd if you make me stay.  
II.i.111-12.

Though made in an air of light-heartedness, the Princess's threat immediately proves to be serious. The courtiers' resolve of celibacy, one of the prerequisites of asceticism, clashes with the very antagonists of asceticism - love and natural pleasures. In their attitude to love, the courtiers are characteristically conceited, eccentric, and arrogant. Paralysed by their artificial oath, they go through a pretentious display, seriatim, of their affection for one of the ladies. This is nowhere clearer in the play than in the famous and most amusing billet-doux scene (IV.iii),

in which each lord vainly endeavours to surprise his fellow in an act of perjury while concealing his own. Having betrayed one another, the lords turn to Berowne for 'some salve' (284) for the perjury of which they all have been discovered guilty. Berowne, thus, endeavours - like medieval virtues - to defend his sinful friends. In a mock pompous oration, he tries to 'cheat the devil' (283) after the sin has been committed. However, he is cheated by the devil rather than cheating 'him;' he is led to conclude that 'It is religion to be thus forsworn' (369).

This unequivocal heresy shows up the 'proud' lords as far from being completely purged of their sins. From that point onwards, they - like 'Everyman' in medieval Moralities - 'fall,' as can be concluded from the course of degrading ordeals through which they are put. The ladies of France prove just what Berowne has expected of them - 'plagues to men forsworn' (381). In their privacy, the ladies ridicule their perjured lovers - 'We are wise girls to mock our loves so' (V.ii.58). Rosaline surprises us with -

That same Berowne I'll torture ere I go.  
 O that I knew he were but in by th' week!  
 How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek  
 And wait the season, and observe the times,..  
 And make him proud to make me proud that jests!  
 60-6.

This will later be shown in the severe sentence she passes on Berowne.

In public, too, the ladies show little consideration for perjured men. Their determination to disconcert the lords' intended masquerade ('we will not move a foot,/ Not to their pinn'd speech render we no grace;/But while 'tis spoke each turn away her face') strikes Boyet as contemptuous. 'Why,' he murmurs, 'that contempt will kill the speaker's heart,/ And quite divorce his memory from his part' (146-48, 149-50).

The ladies do not stop at chaffing with and scoffing at their masked wooers; they do not stop at abashing them through a rude reception when they arrive as Russians dancing the trepak. The ladies decide that if the gentlemen 'return in their own shapes' they will 'mock them still'. (299, 309). When, therefore, the celibates' original vow is broken with openness at the invitation of the ladies to the court, the Princess playfully pricks the King's conscience, pointing out the sin -

King. We come to visit you, and purpose now  
To lead you to our court; vouchsafe it then.  
Prin. This field shall hold me, and so hold your vow:  
Nor God, nor I, delights in perjurd men.  
King. Rebuke me not, for that which you provoke.  
The virtue of your eye must break my oath.  
Prin. You nickname virtue: vice you should have spoke;  
For virtue's office never breaks men's troth ..  
A world of torments though I should endure,  
I would not yield to be your house's guest;  
So much I hate a breaking cause to be  
Of heavenly oaths, vowed with integrity.

343-56.



As characteristic of him, Berowne is first to get the message; he abjures his sin of 'pride' once and for all -

Three-pil'd hyperboles, spruce affectation,  
 Figures pedantical - these summer flies  
 Have blown me full of maggot ostentation.  
 I do forswear them ...  
 Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd  
 In russet yeas, and honest kersey noes.  
 406-13.

In the Interlude of Youth,<sup>18</sup> a Morality that continues The Pride of Life theme, dwelling 'heavily on the state of sin,'<sup>19</sup> the hero of the title forsakes one of his best comrades - Pride (the other being Riot) -

Here all sin I forsake,  
 And to God I me betake  
 Good Lord, I pray have no indignation,  
 That I, a sinner, should ask salvation.

In that, Youth follows Humility's advice to the letters -

Kneel down and ask God mercy,  
 For that you have offended.

Here, Berowne, after he has abandoned his literary affectations, he finishes with a brief prayer - 'So God help me' (414), following it with another, a moment later -

'Lord have mercy on us' on those three;  
 They are infected; in their hearts it lies.  
 419-20.

There follows a judgement scene in which the lords are put to trial. Overwhelmed by his sense of guilt, the King calls on the Princess, just as he did with Berowne previously, to - 'Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression/ Some fair excuse' (431-32).

'The fairest is confession,' is the Princess's guileful rejoinder (433). In The Castle of Perseverance,<sup>20</sup> when Bonus Angelus wonders how Humanum Genus can be lifted from his sins - 'No man wyl hym amende,' Confescio retorts that the only way is through confession; Mankind will be saved 'If he wyl be aknowe hys wronge' (1319, 1328). The lords of Navarre acknowledge their perjuries, which they have unwittingly exposed by swearing oaths of love to the wrong ladies ('Now, to our perjury to add more terror,/ We are again forsworn in will and error'). Confescio goes on to reassure Bonus Angelus that man should repent his sin after admitting it; and for that he, man, will have dramatic entertainment and mirth -

And don penaunce sone amonge,  
I schal hym stere to gamyn and gle  
1330-331.

Here the lords are explicitly asked to confess which is a step towards repentance. They are already on the verge of enjoying a dramatic show involving some 'Nine Worthies.' The King's misgivings about the extent of the spectacle's potential hilarity are confirmed by the Princess's curiously intense words -

That sport best pleases that doth least  
knew how;  
Where zeal strives to content, and the contents  
Dies in the zeal of that which it presents.  
Their form confounded makes most form in mirth  
When great things labouring perish in their  
birth.  
514-18.

To this Berowne instantly reacts - 'A right description

of our sport, my lord' (519). This reaction ties in with the same character's earlier reference to the masquerade which has been 'dashed' 'like a Christmas comedy' (462). More importantly, it anticipates Berowne's epilogue-like comment on the anomaly of the play's ending -

Our wooing doth not end like an old play:  
 Jack hath not Jill. These ladies' courtesy  
 Might well have made our sport a comedy.  
 862-64.

Besides the King and his men, there are other inhabitants of Navarre to whom the moral connotations are extended. Belonging to lower orders (perhaps with the exception of Armado whose 'role places him between the rustics and the nobles'<sup>21</sup>), these characters provide parallel sets of scenes in which they parody, by their own level of affectation, the courtiers' arrogance. But the effect of their parody is two-sided, for they also intensify the noblemen's moral dilemma, especially when they similarly fall. Their fall is significantly pointed out in their high-sounding effort to do something worthwhile - during the dramatisation of the Worthies.

Striking the Princess as someone who 'speaks not like a man of God his making' (524), fantastical Armado contrasts with the King in that he expresses his optimism about the prospects of the dramatic show, though not without reservations - 'I protest the schoolmaster is exceeding fantastical; too too vain, too too vain; but we will put it, as they say to for-

tuna de la guerra' (526-27). Armado calls to mind Holofernes's opinion of him made but in the previous scene (V.i.8-13) -

His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestic, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

Both Armado and Holofernes associate one another with affectation and its moral implications. The braggart goes to the extreme in his verbal affectations in two scenes (I.ii, III.i), accompanied by witty Moth who unmasks his master's boastfulness. This is balanced by the pedagogue's 'great feast of languages' (V.i.34), celebrated in two scenes also (IV.ii, V.i), in the company of the Curate, and Dull - a 'deformed' 'monster of Ignorance' (IV.ii.21). Given the same dramatic function as Moth - though in nature rather than in manner - Dull's taciturnity (not to mention his brief, odd remarks) unveils the showy and absurd nature of the pedant's interminable quibblings. This deliberate conduct of Dull is, to a great extent, reminiscent of Silence's behaviour in the company of Shallow and Falstaff.<sup>22</sup>

Costard opens the Worthies pageant. He plays a role alien to his unpretentious nature, but he makes a good impression. His modest representation of 'Pompey'

'the Big,' wins him 'Great thanks' from the Princess, and a pleasing prediction from Berowne - 'My hat to a half penny, Pompey proves the best worthy' (V.ii. 546, 554, 557). Costard's brief performance does not pass without some jeers from members of the audience prompted by Berowne. Yet Costard enters into the humour of his scoffers, admitting his humble effort - ''Tis not so much worth; but I hope I was perfect' (556).

Nathaniel, on the contrary, does not adapt to the vituperative reception: just as he steps into the world of the play without making an impression (as an actor), he enters the Worthies' chronicle and is made to step out of it without making an impression either. 'Take away the conqueror, take away Alisander,' Berowne asks Costard who apologises for Nathaniel's lack of adaptibility - 'He is a marvellous good neighbour - alas! you see how 'tis-a little o'erparted' (568, 577-79).

Earlier in the scene, Moth failed as a 'masque-presenter.' When he saw 'The ladies turn their backs to him,' he understood that action as a cue for his 'exit.' 'They do not mark me,' he concluded, 'and this brings me out' (172). Here, hardly has he appeared 'for Hercules' before he is asked by master Holofernes, now 'Judas Maccabaeus,' to disappear - 'keep some state in thy exit and vanish' (587).

It is thus left to Holofernes and Armado to make the greatest impression of all. After all, the whole idea of some 'show' was Armado's, and the very suggestion of the 'Nine Worthies' was Holofernes's. At the end of the previous scene, Armado unmistakably approached a man of his own fantastical calibre - Holofernes, seeking urgent aid -

sweet heart, I do implore secrecy - that the King would have me present the Princess, sweet chuck, with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antic, or firework. Now, understanding that the curate and your sweet self are good at such eruptions and sudden breaking-out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end <sup>to</sup> crave your assistance.

V.i.97-101.

Holofernes offered at once to help, not only in theory but in practice also, when he indicated his desire to manage the pageant, nominating candidates for the different roles.

Holofernes is, however, disheartened to see that his show is sunk in abuses. As a Judas Maccabaeus, he is reviled, charged with treachery, and in his own words 'put out of countenance' (613). His acceptance of humiliation (which arouses the Princess's pity - 'Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited'), underlines, on a moral level, his fall.

It is not just Holofernes who is made to pay dearly for his ostentations in his hour of importance. Armado, too, is forced to suffer for his showy life in 'the posterior' of his suggested 'antic.' He is challenged to a duel by Costard but retreats, probably recalling the humiliating defeat of Trojan Hector whom he represents. Armado's braggadocio is publicly debunked; he is now overcome by shame. His 'I have no shirt' (697) implies a further humiliation. A hundred lines later, Armado declares his own severe and harsh punishment in earnest. What stresses the braggart's retributive ordeal, inflicts in the meantime penalties on the courtly characters, and sets the whole play in a state of emergency, is the coming of 'death' personified by Marcade. But the approach of Marcade, more importantly, moves with the play's action, and deliberately so, towards that crucial point in Moralities, e.g. The Three Estates, where the figure of 'Divine Correction' opportunely emerges.

For a moment, the coming of Marcade may strike us as sudden and unexpected.<sup>23</sup> By reflection, however, we realise that it has - albeit unconditionally - been prepared for. With a major difference, the manner in which Shakespeare paves the way for the ultimate appearance of 'death,' bears some resemblance to the dramatic structure of The Pride of Life. In

our play, it is we - the audience - who are casually reminded of death at different points of the action. In the opening lines, the King introduces 'brazen tombs' (I.i.2), 'the disgrace of death' (3), and 'cormorant devouring Time' (4). In scene ii of Act IV, Holofernes makes, in his typical pedantic terms, a flourish of the 'death' of the deer which the Princess shot in the forest (2-6). And at the beginning of the long closing scene, Rosaline and Katharine indulge in a serious conversation concerning a tragedy that befell Katharine's sister. Rosaline remarks - 'You'll ne'er be friends with him: a kill'd your sister;' and Katharine replies - 'He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;/ And so she died' (V.ii.13, 14-5). And the subject of the exchange between the two women that soon follows (15 ff), is a play on 'light' and 'dark,' which may not be without its symbolic significance at that point. Verbal references to the word 'death' and its different forms, keep being repeated so rapidly especially during the last scene, climaxing in the actual death brought by Marcade.<sup>24</sup>

In The Pride of Life, on the other hand, the dramatist gradually brings both his central character - the King - as well as his audience closer and closer to the fact of death - 'first in the warning of the Queen, then in the Bishop's sermon, next in the King's dream, and finally in the actual combat.'<sup>25</sup>



In a matter of seconds, Marcade appears, delivers the tragically shocking news, and vanishes. A moment of silence on stage ensues as the characters attempt to absorb the shock. This gives the chance to the equally shocked theatre audiences to cast their minds back and visualise the medieval kingdom of Moralities, discerning clearly in it the figure of the 'old man in blue' or 'sergeant death'<sup>26</sup> summoning - in his power as 'divine correction' - the sinners to their dooms. In 'The Morality of Love's Labour's Lost,' J.J. Anderson writes of Marcade - 'His sudden arrival, brief announcement, and immediate fading from view ... suggests something of the medieval personified death itself, coming like a thief in the night.'<sup>27</sup> But this theme of the coming of death is much older than the Moralities. In The English Morality Play, Robert Potter argues how 'the preaching of repentance by means of the figure of death was already a commonplace in sermon collections of the thirteenth century ... In several friars' sermons death is actually depicted as the sergeant or bailiff of God, come to arrest an errant mankind.' The figure of death appears again in the cult known as 'the Dance of Death' which 'swept fifteenth-century Europe in the wake of the plague.' Like the Moralities, this cult had its roots also in the preaching tradition,<sup>28</sup> whose primary

function was to warn the unrepentant sinner. The need for repentance is present in almost all the early Moralities. It dominates The Pride of Life,<sup>29</sup> just as it is prominent in The Castle of Perseverance and Mundus et Infans. It is present also, though to a lesser extent, in the Moralities of Mankind and Wisdom.<sup>30</sup>

With the coming of Marcade, the plot of Love's Labour's Lost reaches an indispensable stage of Moralities. This stage alone forms the entire body of one Morality, a masterpiece, in fact, of the species - Everyman. This complete little play is 'only one of the units of a complete "morality" - the part that consists of the coming of Death.'<sup>31</sup> The essential dramatic form of this play which should properly be called The Summoning of Everyman is that of a journey. Given no respite, Everyman is summoned to his long journey. 'Without any longer respite,' Death uncompromisingly dictates his will,

On thee thou must take a long journey; ...  
Have ado that we were in that way.

100,103-11. <sup>32</sup>

The journey of Everyman is re-echoed in Love's Labour's Lost. However, instead of beginning the action as does Everyman, the journey here brings the action to a close. Following the announcement of the death and the dismissal of the Worthies, the Princess commands in a royal tone of voice - 'Boyet, prepare,

I will away to-night' (V.ii.715). She even goes on -  
'Prepare, I say' (717), in reply to the King's objection to her resolve of sudden departure.

Reminded by Wisdom of the sure approach of 'death,' Mynde, Wyll, and Wndyrstondynge - the central characters of Wisdom - reflect upon their 'sins' -

now I brynge to mynde  
My horryble synns and myn offenses.  
925-26.

Here the Princess, shaken violently by the heavy message of Marcade, is similarly made to reflect upon the 'guilty' conduct of herself and her ladies-in-waiting since they set foot in Navarre. Given the morality theme, her address to the gentlemen is interesting. Moralities overtly (but allegorically) deal with human behaviour.

I thank you, gracious lords,  
For all your fair endeavours, and entreat,  
Out of a new-sad soul, that you vouchsafe,  
In your rich wisdom to excuse or hide  
The liberal opposition of our spirits.  
If over-boldly we have borne ourselves  
In the converse of breath-- your gentleness  
Was guilty of it.

V.ii.717-24.

We, as audience, have been aware of that guilty conduct on the part of the Princess and her retinue, though not presumably asked to take particular notice. We have heard the Princess claiming to have a 'serious business' to settle with Navarre, only to contradict herself a short while later showing that her real intentions are to expose the King and his mates as

perjured votaries. She betrays what is on her mind in a subtly menacing observation to the King - 'You'll prove perjurd if you make me stay.' She even puts her threat into effect when she advises her train of ladies - 'This civil war of wits were much better us'd/ On Navarre and his book-men' (II.i.112, 225-26). Although there is enough good reason for the Princess's embassy to stay at least for a day (165) until Boyet 'can produce acquittances' proving Navarre's outstanding debt ('To-morrow you shall have a sight of them'), one gets the impression that the French feminine ambassadors have all along been intent on staying. They have already heard of the 'all-telling fame' of Navarre's 'vow' (21, 22) to keep aloof from 'the children of our grand mother Eve, females, or rather women' to rephrase Armado's words (I.i.249). And they have already seen the oath takers and learned even about the particular traits of their personalities, a fact which, not surprisingly, strikes the Princess as a symptom of infatuation -

God bless my ladies! Are they all in love,  
That every one her own hath garnished  
With such bedecking ornaments of praise?  
II.i.77-9.

On the advent of Marcade, the Princess attempts to find excuses for her and her ladies' affected behaviour by transferring the blame to the gentlemen's





ity and share of guilt. The King suggests that they all let bygones be bygones and turn over a new leaf -

Now, at the latest minute of the hour,  
Grant us your loves.

776-77.

The King's 'mistimed' suggestion is the cue for the Princess and her ladies of honour to point out over again the 'guiltiness' of the lords and stress the sore need for them to have their sins atoned. The Princess tells the King that his 'Grace is perjur'd much,/ Full of dear guiltiness' (778-79), before she sends him 'To some forlorn and naked hermitage;/ Remote from all the pleasures of the world' (783-84). Berowne's turn comes next; he, too, is told that - 'You must be purged too, your sins are rack'd;/ You are attaint with faults and perjury' (806-07). Dumain and Long-aville are similarly sentenced to 'a twelvemonth and a day of penance' (815).

In the play of Wisdom, for example, the soul, Anima, having been routed to the right course of penance charted for her, resumes 'her original beauty and resplendent costume.'<sup>33</sup> This is pointed out in her 'reformation' - 'Ande now ye be reformyde by [the sakyrment] of penance' (1111). The same thing is also suggested to the lords of Love's Labour's Lost,

though only specifically put to Berowne -

And I shall find you empty of that fault,  
Right joyful of your reformation.  
V.ii.856-57.

Balancing the penitential tasks prescribed for the lords, a year's mourning is undertaken by the Princess and her ladies-in-waiting (which was the normal length of time) for the then late French King. This is interesting because the ladies have partly been responsible for the lords' perjuries, as already feebly indicated by the King and affirmed by Berowne. And they have also been guilty of trifling generally with love and particularly with the lords' fascination with them. For that the ladies partake of the punishments which they have inflicted on the lords. Just as Youth in his play is informed by Humility - 'For your sin look ye mourn' (p.114), here, too, the Princess is forced to spend a whole year's mourning. She says to the King -

I will ..... shut  
My woeful self up in a mournful house, ...  
~~For~~ the remembrance of my father's death.  
795-98.

The Princess's ladies are apparently destined to go through the same ordeal. Maria makes the point for the other two; she tells Longaville - 'At the twelve-month's end/ I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend' (821-22).



As in most medieval plays, it is not necessary for the characters to perform some act of penance. Confession and forgiveness, however, are all that matters. This is a departure from the Christian tradition particularly in its early days. 'In the early centuries of the Christian era,' Potter informs us, 'penance was a public ceremony. It had come into being as a means of reconciling a wayward member of the Church; it was a ceremony representing renewal of the original act of baptism ... The public ceremony of reconciliation was traditionally performed near the end of the Lenton season, on Maundy Thursday.' <sup>34</sup>

In Mundus et Infans and The Castle of Perseverance, 'the necessity of repentance is determined by the cyclical evolution of Infans into Manhood and thence into old age.' <sup>35</sup> Here, too, the penances imposed almost on everybody including, of course, the braggart ('to hold the plough for ... three years'), is made to look as if necessary by the cyclical movement of time compressed in the final seasonal songs. The cycle of time applies to human affairs, for that was a renaissance commonplace. <sup>36</sup> As the winter of the final songs follows spring so does old age youth. The young gentry will inevitably grow old, to end up like

the King of France in absolute submission to 'cormorant devouring time.' This is the very thing they ignore in their Pride-of-Life-like opening speech. During the action of the play, however, the young men gradually learn facts of life.

Love's Labour's Lost fulfils one of the most significant requirements of Moralities. Most Morality plays depict sin as a preliminary step towards the ultimate education of Mankind.<sup>37</sup> But Mankind is firstly required to mature. Here, also, the young noblemen's sin caused by their passion for immortality, is a prerequisite for their maturity.

At the beginning of the play, the juvenile courtiers ignore an all-important factor in a human being's life, and probably so do we while watching them - namely, one's fitness for various human states such as asceticism and celibacy. In their own case, the courtiers are obviously young and so fit for nothing other than love and marriage - the opposites of asceticism and celibacy. That is why Berowne, who is aware that 'all true order must be in accordance with natural order,' 'insists that a youn man's personal regimen must allow the pleasures appropriate to the "season" of his life.'<sup>38</sup> The ladies of France have probably been aware of that fact, but only in as far as

their view of the courtiers' scheme is concerned. Most critics regard the ladies as much more mature, wiser, and more realistic than the men.<sup>39</sup> To me, however, they are presented as immature young women who - not unlike the lords - will deny themselves the pleasures of love and loving, which virginal girls like themselves ought to enjoy. Instead, they take to the humour of mockery; they do not hesitate to mock anything that comes their way, and if nothing at all does, they start mocking themselves. Boyet, their courtly guardian, comments on their sardonic idiosyncrasies -

The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen  
As is the razor's edge invisible,  
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen,  
Above the sense of sense.

V.ii, 256-59.

The ladies have, in fact, made mockery the name of their game. They have even trespassed the boundaries of polite conversation envisaged for their likes by Castiglione, and involved their wits in verbal obscenities.<sup>40</sup>

The process of growing up is not just to be seen in the lords. Throughout the play, the Princess, at least, has been learning how to cope with life. She delivers her long reflection on the deer (IV.i. 21-35) as a political lesson which she has learnt. Her moment of full maturity comes on Marcade's

entrance, not as an abrupt transformation 'but as a logical development, an inevitable part of growing up.' She takes on authority; her 'Prepare, I say!' has an unmistakable imperious command. The Princess's departure as 'queen' of France from the park of Navarre 'parallels the situation in 2 Henry IV, where Hal's summons to a world of regal power and responsibility require him to leave the comic world of Eastcheap and reject Falstaff.'<sup>41</sup> The lords' full maturity, too, is reached on Marcade's entry. Realising that they should but repent their sins - and seriously so - Berowne dejectedly comments on the play's structure arguing that it does not make the subject of love work out happily.

Though popular in the Elizabethan theatres, Berowne's notion here that 'a comedy is a comedy if it ends in marriage is erroneous.' A.N. Kaul comments in The Action of English Comedy - 'marriage is not just the end but the subject of comic stories. It is, in fact, a test of everyday life, just as love is the highest attainable form of everyday social experience.'<sup>42</sup> That is why the point is made clearly to the male characters, in the first part of the songs, that when 'Jack' has his 'Jill,' this does not denote the conclusion of their love affair, but only the begin-

ning of another experience. In the very spring of marriage, the Cuckoo <sup>43</sup> threatens, married 'Jacks' may not after all relax in eternal bliss, having courted and won their 'Jills.' The latter are likely to be promiscuous in springtime and make cuckolds <sup>44</sup> of their husbands -

When daisies pied and violets blue  
 And lady-smocks all silver-white ...  
 The cuckoo then on every tree  
 Mocks marries men, for thus sings he:  
 'Cuckoo;  
 Cuckoo, cuckoo' - O word of fear,  
 Unpleasing to a married ear.  
 V.ii.881-89.

No matter what Berowne says about the play's comic formula. No matter what Armado implicitly says about the dramatic entrance of Marcade ('The Words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo'). No matter even what the reader or spectator feels about the play's closure. In spite of all opinions and impressions, the play closes comically, the comic part being derived from the perspective of the play's guiding pattern. This pattern, I have so far suggested, is woven on a Morality canvas. And through which the whole play moves deliberately towards the working out of the salvation of its characters - in itself the comic end of Moralities. Nowhere in the play is this pattern emphasised as completely as it is at the entrance of Marcade who brings with him no pre-

tensions of festivity. The play starts with its young men seeking some 'artificial seclusion'<sup>45</sup> from life and draws towards its close with a sentence urging separation from playmates, from the world, as a means of self-reformation.

Love's Labour's Lost ends by stressing 'the urgent need for everyman to amend his life, lest he lose his individual [albeit secular] salvation.'<sup>46</sup> For the lords this means a fresh start, a new venture into further worldly learning through a purgatory-like ordeal. The play, thus, conforms to the Morality pattern in Youth particularly, which, interestingly enough, happens to be a Morality about a preparation for life without Pride.

PART I: NOTES

For full references, see the first  
mention of books.

## Chapter 1

- 1 Construction in Shakespeare, p. 1
- 2 See Hamilton, p. 92; G.R. Hibbard (ed.), The Taming of the Shrew, Penguin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 44; Morris, pp. 12-50. Morris makes the latest contribution to the question of the early disappearance of Sly. He implies in his account on pp. 42-5 that the incomplete text theory is not just an old view but is still tenable. See, also, Francis A. Shirely, Swearing and Perjury in Shakespeare (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979), p.36; and Richard G. Moulton, Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929), 3rd ed., pp. 297 ff.
- 3 See C.J. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy in Collected Works, trans. R.F. Hull (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), Vol. 12, pp. 317-22; Albert J. Guerard, Conrad The Novelist (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969), 5th rpt., p.15; W.H. Auden, 'The Quest Hero,' Texas Quarterly, IV, 4 (1961), 81-93; Sherman Hawkins, 'The Two Worlds of Shakespearean Comedy,' SSt, 3 (1967), 75-7; and Reul K. Wilson, The Literary Travelogue (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague; 1973), pp. xi, 3, 123.
- 4 See Salinger, pp.59-67; Evans, pp. 7-8; John Weld, Meaning in Comedy (New York: State University Press, 1975), p. 155; Marguerite Alexander, A Reader's Guide to Shakespeare and his Contemporaries (London: Heinemann, 1979), p. 35; A.P. Riemer, Antic Fables (Manchester: University Press, 1980), p. 128; Huston, pp.19-20; Richard G. Moulton, The Moral System of Shakespeare (New



York: Macmillan, 1903), pp. 222-28; Bonazza, pp. 88-91; and Godshalk, pp. 49-54.

- 5 The Supposes (1566) was first 'included in the unauthorised A Hundreth sundrie Flowers printed in 1573 during Gascoigne's absence in the Netherlands, and by himself in the authorised edition of his works issued on his return, The Poisies of George Gascoigne Esquire ... 1575.' See R.W. Bond (ed.), The Taming of the Shrew, Old Arden (London: Methuen, 1904), p.xxvi. Gower's version of Apollonius in Confessio Amantis, had been printed in 1493 by Caxton, and again in 1532 and 1554. See Salinger, p.62. See, also, F.P. Wilson, 'Shakespeare's Comedies' in Shakespearian and other Studies, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), p. 56.
- 6 Quoted from Bullough.
- 7 See Talbert, p. 7.
- 8 See Hawkins, op.cit., 75; and Auden, op.cit., 82.
- 9 See Hawkins, 75.
- 10 See Godshalk, pp.49-50; Guerard, op.cit., p. 15; R. K. Wilson, op.cit., p. xi; and Hawkins, 76.
- 11 See Auden, 83.
- 12 Ibid., 85.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Sen Gupta, p.172.
- 15 Auden, 83, cites the example of the 'golden road' used to scrutinise the true hero of The Waters of Life, one of the celebrated fairy tales.
- 16 Ibid., 83.
- 17 Hawkins, 65-6, makes a good case for the view that in some comedies of Shakespeare 'the characters stay put, but they are visited by outsiders, who upset the routine of the community into which they come.'

- 18 Most critics argue that the difference in character between the two Antipholuses 'is due entirely to the parts they have to play.' See Kenneth Muir, Shakespeare's Comic Sequence (Liverpool: University Press, 1979), p. 21.
- 19 See Chapter 5 of this thesis
- 20 It is noteworthy that in the novels of the 18 th and 19 th centuries, the quest comes to be seen in 'Jungian' terms as a psychological descent into the subconscious aimed at the integration of the self. See Jung, op.cit., pp. 317-22; Guerard, pp. 38 ff; and Irving S. Sponsik, Robert Louis Stevenson (New York: Twayne, 1974), pp. 32-3.
- 21 For a detailed discussion of these, see Harold F. Brooks, 'Themes and Structure.'
- 22 In my examination of the significance of this reference, I have relied on: J.E. Zimmerman, Dictionary of Classical Mythology (New York: Harper & Row, 1964); and Edward Tripp, The Handbook of Classical Mythology (London: Arthur Barker, 1970).
- 23 I refer to Ovid's Heroides - a group of imaginary letters written by female and mythological characters like Penelope. See Marcus Southwell Dimsdale, A History of Latin Literature (London: William Heinemann, 1915), pp. 330, 336.

## Chapter 2

- 1 Marguerite Alexander, Shakespeare and his Contemporaries, p. 49.
- 2 See Wright, p. 204; and G.R. Hibbard, 'The Taming of the Shrew: A Social Comedy,' in Shakespearean Essays, ed. Alwin Thaler and Norman Sanders (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1964), p. 40.
- 3 Ralph Berry, Shakespearean Structures (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 12.
- 4 In my examination of classical allusions, I have heavily relied on: Zimmerman; and Tripp. I have also looked into Michael Grant, Myths of Greeks and Romans (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962).
- 5 E.g. Paul K. Shultz, 'The Merchant of Venice: A Study in Tragi-Comedy,' William and Mary Review, IV, 2 (1966), 59-64; Godshalk, pp. 43-5.
- 6 See Bush, 'Classical Myth in Shakespeare's Plays,' in Elizabethan and Jacobean Studies (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959), p. 68; Farley-Hills, pp. 171-72; and Morris, p. 134.
- 7 See Robert K. Root, Classical Mythology in Shakespeare, Yale University Studies in English, ed. Albert S. Cook (New York: Gordian, 1965), p. 134. See, also, Morris, p. 134.
- 8 See Morris's explicit remarks on p. 129.
- 9 Ibid., p. 134. See, also, Farley-Hills, p. 170.
- 10 See DeWitt T. Starnes and E.W. Talbert, Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p. 134.
- 11 The Cambridge editors find that the classical reference here is rather 'forced.' See Arthur Quiller-

- Couch and J.D. Wilson (eds.) The Taming of the Shrew. (London: CUP, 1928), p. 140, n.153.
- 12 P. 171.
- 13 Niall Rudd, however, finds the reference to Dido and Aeneas justifiable - 'the reminiscence is not just of a character, but of a character in a dramatic situation. As the situation is recalled, so are the appropriate words.' 'The Taming of the Shrew: Notes on Some Classical Allusions,' Hermathena, 129 (1980), 27.
- 14 Rudd, 24-5, draws our attention to Shakespeare's 'understandable mistake' in referring to 'the Cretan strand' instead of Ovid's 'the coast of Sidon.'
- 15 P. 172.
- 16 Spenser's Faerie Queene treats Penelope as the symbol of a faithful wife.
- 17 P. 171.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Op.cit., p. 47.
- 20 See Morris, p. 221.
- 21 Ibid., p. 187.
- 22 This allusion dramatically parallels that one made by Tranio in connection with Lucentio and Bianca (I.ii. 240-43). In each case a character makes one reference to each of the pairs concerned. But although Tranio suggests that Lucentio will surely win Bianca despite the many suitors involved, Gremio seems to be suggesting that Petruchio may succeed in submitting Katherina's will.
- 23 See p. 71. See, also, Zimmerman, pp. 268-69.
- 24 Morris, p. 105.
- 25 See Eric Partridge, Shakespeare's Bawdy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 2 nd rpt., p. 218; and E.A.M. Colman, The Dramatic Use of Bawdy in Shakespeare (London: Longman, 1974), p. 38.

- 26 See Nevo, p. 41.
- 27 Most of the details about Diana fit in my argument here. However, I cannot be sure how many of them Shakespeare intended to use.
- 28 See C.T. Onions, A Shakespeare Glossary (Oxford: Clarendon, 1949), 2<sup>nd</sup> edn.; and Morris, pp. 204-05. See, also, Huston, p. 60.
- 29 In a paper read at the recent Sixteenth International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Francis Gussenhoven makes the point in 'Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew and Chaucer's Wife of Bath: The Struggle for Marital Mastery,' that both Chaucer and Shakespeare make allusions to identical models of wifhood (i.e. Griselda and Lucrece). See The Shakespeare Newsletter, 31 (Dec. 1981), 39. See, also, Onions.
- 30 Morris, p. 212.
- 31 P. 172.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Berry, p.63.
- 34 It should still be noted that the ending of the play has given rise to different critical interpretations. Depending on the understanding of Katherina's last speech, two views have been introduced - either that the play is a 'piece of chauvinist wishful thinking, asserting that woman's will can be broken and in the end she and the man will be the happier for it,' or that it is a feminist work showing how 'the woman can lord it over the man so long as she allows him to think he is lording it over her.' See Jack J. Jorgens, Shakespeare in Film (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 67; and Harold C. Goddard, The Meaning of Shakespeare (Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1951), Vol. 1, pp. 68 ff.

## Chapter 3

- 1 Leggatt, p. 17, observes that 'Antipholus of Syracuse's (presumably) approaching marriage is politely but firmly put to one side, as something to be discussed later.'
- 2 This reference to 'penance,' coming at the end of The Two Gentlemen, leads naturally to the Morality Pattern of Love's Labour's Lost to be discussed next.
- 3 The term 'expedition' with both meanings of journeying and acting speedily occurs at least some four times in the play.
- 4 Godshalk focuses on pp. 49-54 on the recurring journeys in the play. My argument differs from his contention that the journey is mainly educative, leading to a possible happy ending
- 5 The whole opening speech depreciates 'home' and the implications of staying at home, upon which I dwelt in my first Chapter. To me, this draws a demarcation line in thematic content between the 'popular,' more domestic Errors and the 'courtly,' more worldly Two Gentlemen.
- 6 It is interesting to notice the number of messages and letters sent in the play, totalling to about five in the main plot and one in the subplot. Godshalk, pp. 45-9, analyses the structural function of these love letters.
- 7 Julia's packing, as so often in Shakespeare, exemplifies a woman's practical streak.
- 8 See Northrop Frye, 'The Argument of Comedy,' (1948), in Shakespeare's Comedies: An Anthology of Modern Criticism, ed. Laurence Lerner (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 315 ff; and A Natural Perspective: The

- Development of Shakespearean Comedy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 63. See, also, Salinger, pp. 122 ff, 203-06.
- 9 This feature of variety of locales is especially noticed by: Denton Snider, System of Shakespeare's Dramas (St. Louis: G.I. Jones, 1877), Vol. 2, p. 25; Moulton, Moral System, p. 223; Frye, 'Argument of Comedy,' p. 321; and Clifford Leech (ed.), The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Arden (London: Methuen, 1969), pp. lvi-lxxxv.
- 10 See Samuel Asa Small, 'The Ending of The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' PMLA, 48 (1933), 767-76; and Joseph L. Tynan, 'The Influence of Greene on Shakespeare's Early Romance,' PMLA, 27 (1912), 246-64.
- 11 R.W. Bond (ed.), The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Old Arden (London: Methuen, 1906), p. xxxv.
- 12 See Parrott, p. 113; Quiller-Couch and J.D. Wilson (eds.), The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Cambridge (London: CUP, 1921), pp. xviii-xix; Thorndike, English Comedy (New York: Macmillan, 1929), p. 99; and Tillyard, p. 112.
- 13 P. 55.
- 14 Pp. 252-54, 299-302, 306-13, 253.
- 15 Parrott, p. 111, takes the line - 'By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar' (iv.i.36) as a clue to the scene and the dénouement of the play - 'Shakespeare needed Valentine as captain of an outlaw band for the dénouement he was planning, and when he thought of outlaws he instinctively thought of Robin and his band ...'
- 16 A modern Western audience's reaction can best be found in both George Eliot and Bernard Shaw. See Gordon S. Haight, George Eliot: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p. 178. Cited in Inga-

Stina Ewbank, "'Were man but constant, he were perfect:" Constancy and Consistency in The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' in Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, ed. Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Edward Arnold, 1972), p. 31. See, also, Our Theatres in the Nineties (London: Constable, 1954), 2<sup>nd</sup> rpt., Vol. 1, pp. 170-77; esp. 176.

- 17 It is possible that Valentine's name was associated in the Elizabethans' minds with 'valour,' particularly on the basis of its sound. Silvia already uses the word 'valiant' ironically when complimenting Sir Eglamour (IV.iii.13). Murray Levith, however, asserts that 'All the Valentines ... are meant to recall Saint Valentine, the patron of lovers.' What's in Shakespeare's Names (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), p. 72. See, also, Parrott, p. 110.

- 18 Op.cit., 776



## Chapter 4

- 1 The unfavourable criticism which Love's Labour's Lost encountered was not confined to one particular aspect. Summarising the general range of depreciative comment, Phialas, p. 66, shows how the play was believed by many to be Shakespeare's least substantial, the one with the weakest structure and most superficial characterisation.
- 2 The John Barton production at Stratford (1978), in Newcastle and at the Aldwych (1979), is probably the latest powerful theatrical impression recently made by the play.
- 3 I do not wish to imply the same sense as in Lyly's complimentary comedies. What I am saying here is that the plays are courtly in the sense that they are more concerned with courtiers than with courtly life and ethics.
- 4 London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, p. 23.
- 5 See Robert Potter, The English Morality Play (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 16.
- 6 A.P. Rossiter, English Drama from Early Times to the Elizabethans (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1950), p. 96; and Potter, op.cit., p. 47.
- 7 Not all Morality Plays start at the beginning: in a few cases, e.g. Everyman, the action starts at the final stage and works its way back through the initial and intermediary stages.
- 8 See Gordon, p. 47.
- 9 Also known as The King of Life. See Norman Davis (ed.), Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments, published for

- the Early English-Text Society (London: OUP, 1970), pp. 90-105. For a brief description, see Potter, p. 30.
- <sup>10</sup> Potter, pp. 14-5; Godshalk, pp. 64-5.
- <sup>11</sup> This idea was probably first suggested by Bobbyann Roesen, 'Love's Labour's Lost,' SQ, 4 (1953), 412. Huston, pp. 35-57, makes it the backbone of his interpretation of the play.
- <sup>12</sup> McFarland, Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy, pp. 49, 52, takes the park as a 'pastoral environment remote from the complications of city life.' He also talks about what he terms 'a Chinese-box motifs of happiness within happiness.'
- <sup>13</sup> It should be noted, though, that 'avarice' was overtaking 'pride' in the sixteenth century.
- <sup>14</sup> Mundus et Infans, sometimes The World and the Child, edited by John Matthews Manly in Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama (New York: Ginn, 1897), Vol. 1, pp. 353-85.
- <sup>15</sup> Frederick S. Boas, Shakespeare and his Predecessors (London: John Murray, 1902), p. 12. Cf. Potter, pp. 31, 45.
- <sup>16</sup> Godshalk, p. 65, makes the point that 'Costard is the comic emblem of rampant sexuality' in the play.
- <sup>17</sup> See Rossiter, op.cit., p. 168, n. 30.
- <sup>18</sup> In Six Anonymous Plays, ed. John S. Farmer, in Early English Dramatists (London: Charles W. Traylen, 1966), Vol. 8, pp. 93-115.
- <sup>19</sup> Potter, p. 52.
- <sup>20</sup> In The Marco Plays, ed. Mark Eccles, published for The Early English-Text Society (London: OUP, 1969), pp. 1-111.

- 21 Hunter, Lyly, p. 317.
- 22 See William Matthews, 'Language in Love's Labour's Lost,' E&S, 17 (1964), 8.
- 23 See Carroll, p. 167; Phialas, p. 85; and Huston, p. 52.
- 24 146, 149, 253, 254, 333, 447, 516, 518, 597, 605, 670, 708, 796, 803.
- 25 Potter, p. 15.
- 26 Rossiter, pp. 153-54, sees in Marcade a character with an emblematic dimension, evoking in the imagined minds of the Elizabethan audience an image of the figure of 'death' in a Morality like R. Willis's Mount Tabor, or Private Exercises of a Penitent Sinner.
- 27 ShS, 24 (1971), 60.
- 28 Pp. 20, 21.
- 29 I am aware, though, that the play is not complete, that we are told of the action to come in the Prologue. Equally I am aware that although there is a short piece of dialogue with the Cheer and Merry, sin and the need for repentance are the basic issues of this fragmentary play.
- 30 In Eccles, op.cit., pp. 114-52; 154-84.
- 31 John Gassner (ed.), Medieval and Tudor Drama (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), 10 th rpt., p.205.
- 32 In The Genius of the Early English Theater, ed. Sylvan Barnet et al (New York: Mentor Books, 1962), pp. 71-94.
- 33 Potter, p. 51.
- 34 P. 17.
- 35 Potter, p. 51.
- 36 See S.K. Heninger, 'The Pattern of Love's Labour's Lost,' SSt, 7 (1974), 29.

- 37 See Potter, p. 48.
- 38 Brown, p. 130.
- 39 E.g. Kerrigan (ed.), Love's Labour's Lost, p. 27.
- 40 See Castiglione, pp. 35-7; Terence Hawkes, Shakespeare's Talking Animals (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 62; and Colman, Use of Bawdy, p. 36.
- 41 Janet Birkett, John Barton's Productions of Love's Labour's Lost: 1965 and 1978, M.A. Dissert. (University of Birmingham: Shakespeare Institute, 1979), p. 41; and Ian Patrick Barker, Comic Artifice in Love's Labour's Lost and A Midsummer Night's Dream, M.A. Dissert. (University of Birmingham: Shakespeare Institute, 1979), p. 32.
- 42 P. 46.
- 43 Catherine M. McLay, 'The Dialogues of Spring and Winter: A Key to the Unity of Love's Labour's Lost,' SQ, 18 (1967), 120, brings forward the significance of the Cuckoo as an omen of adultery, and how it 'would be unmistakable to an Elizabethan ear.'
- 44 James Wey, Musical Allusions and Song as Part of the Structure of Shakespeare's Plays, Ph.D. Dissert. (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1957), was probably the first critic to observe the predominance of sexual reference and connotation in the songs, especially in the Spring sequence.
- 45 Gordon, p. 14, observes that most of Shakespeare's comedies 'begin with some artificial seclusion or segregation from the world.'
- 46 V.A. Kolve, The Play Called Corpus Christi (Stanford, California: University Press, 1966), p. 268.

PART II: THEMES

## Chapter 5

'Why should their liberty  
than ours be more?'

The Debate about Marriage in

The Comedy of Errors

In The Gap in Shakespeare, Colin N. Manlove observes that Shakespeare's early comedies use the motif of contrariety by way of reaching out to a principle of harmony in which opposites are reconciled in a happy togetherness. These plays, he says, 'treat of division only to make a higher marriage, a discordia concors, out of it ...' <sup>1</sup> Such an observation, I believe, is illuminating, for it explicates an important facet of the thematic content of The Comedy of Errors. This is the basic relation of the couple humain, very often represented on stage as 'a perpetual war to the knife: femina viro lupa.' <sup>2</sup> So far, this domestic interest has been referred to in passing - if not entirely neglected - by critics of the play. <sup>3</sup>

Of course, the Errors is neither the first nor the last work to deal with the debate about marriage. This motif, which is as ancient as Adam and Eve - that is as the genesis of Mankind, is to be found in the

literatures of many countries. A quick survey of the history of the dramatic roles of the squabbling husband and wife would tell us that stories about such characters belong to the general tradition of bourgeois satire as well as to folk tales. Chaucer's tales concerning the Wife of Bath and the Merchant contain humorous discussions of the roles to be played by man and wife on the household stage. Tudor Jest Books such as A Hundred Mery Talys, also, contain interesting narratives about the battle between the sexes.<sup>4</sup> The folk ballad closer to Shakespeare's own time, 'A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife,'<sup>5</sup> involves a couple in the same domestic strife.

On stage, it cannot be determined how ancient the theme is, but there is no doubt that it has a long dramatic history. It can be traced in Roman Comedy, especially in the Plautine Menaechmi and Amphitruo, the two basic sources of the Errors. It emerges in medieval times in the dramatisation of the biblical story of Noah and his wife. Plays about the same topic can also be traced back to the early Tudor stage. There is the didactic school drama called The Disobedient Child intended as a Christmas interlude. In Lydgate's Prologue to the 'Mumming at Hertford,' there

is another example of the same subject, though the scene and language have strong echoes from the Noah Plays.<sup>6</sup> Belonging, too, to the same early Tudor stage, Johan Johan and Tom Tyler are two plays about marital life.

Many of these earlier instances involve married couples in a direct debate. The wife insists upon having things her own way, only to drive her husband to the use of violence. Pestered by a 'stubborn, self-willed harridan,' who is 'as adept at striking as at spinning her distaff,'<sup>7</sup> Noah has but one option. He resorts to physical force to get his wife into the Ark. At the end of Johan Johan, the rebellious husband takes up a shovel with which he means to take revenge on Tyb, his wife, and her priest-lover. The young bridegroom of The Disobedient Child, on the other hand, fails to confront his wife who departs to make merry with her gossips while he is out selling wood.<sup>8</sup>

The Errors belongs (as surely does its early sister-comedy of the Shrew) to this constant tradition of the domestic debate. Antipholus of Ephesus, for example, bears some resemblance to both Johan (the husband) and the groom of The Disobedient Child. Like the latter, Antipholus is never offered a chance to



debate the domestic situation with his wife. And at one point, he, like Johan, sends for 'a rope's end,' intending to avenge himself on his wife and her 'damned pack' (IV.i.16; iv.99).

Nevertheless, there are elements in the Errors which distinguish it, particularly among the group of plays dealing with domesticity. One basic element is the development of the theme itself. This, as already briefly shown, is in two stages - the direct confrontation between the couple leading up to the husband's adoption of rowdy barbarity as a last resort, by way of achieving a possible settlement. In the Errors, the theme is handled differently, in that it does not take the form of a direct conflict whether verbal or physical. It is continually debated in the absence of Antipholus of Ephesus, and only resolved when he is there in frantic mood, beseeching justice against Adriana. But since his brother of Syracuse stands in for him, the difference is surely not very great. There is a greater difference yet. Unlike his prototypes in the genre, Antipholus plays no part, whatsoever, in the achievement of the resolution.

When set against its social context, the Errors becomes at once a remarkable work. It is seen to contribute in its own way to awakening the audience's

social consciousness. By the time the play was written, the controversy over women and their position in marriage particularly, had already started. 'Political and social changes,' Louis B. Wright informs us in his useful Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England, 'conspired to focus the attention of the English citizen of the Renaissance upon the relations of the sexes.' 'From the first half of the sixteenth century onwards,' therefore, 'English writers on domestic themes busied themselves in the propagation of the notions about the best methods for maintaining the proper harmony between husband and wife in the government of the home.' There was great demand for treatises on the relation of the husband and wife as well as on domestic affairs. The 'book of domestic advice,' Wright informs us again, 'became a work regarded as necessary in the household of every honest and thoughtful citizen.' Two outstanding works on the subject were Miles Coverdale's translation of Heinrich Bullinger's The Christen state of Matrimonye and Thomas Bacon's tractate known as The Boke of Matrimony. There was also an anonymous journalistic pamphlet - Tell-Trothes New-years Gift, better described as 'a discussion of middle-class family life and its problems.' Most of the writings on the success of the individual home were by preachers

who, throughout the sixteenth century, were zealous in providing advice on domestic relations. The public's realisation 'of the significance and complexity of such ordinary human relations,' had inevitably led to an 'increasing demand for plays dramatizing domestic problems from everyday life.'<sup>9</sup> The Errors is one of these plays; it examines, as Juliet Dusinberre holds, the social views that were current at the time, especially those concerning 'women and authority' and 'women and property.'<sup>10</sup>

It can still be instructive to look at the play against its most direct source. This is Roman Comedy from which Shakespeare took the best known and most popular Roman plays in the sixteenth century - the Menaechmi and Amphitruo.<sup>11</sup> Almost without exception, Roman comedies deal with domestic affairs, contributing thus to the well-established tradition of marital debates. Characteristically, the debate is presented in those plays as an inevitable concomitant of the system of marriages of convenience which was typical of Roman real life. High-born Roman ladies always bring a big dowry to their husbands on account of which they intend to wear 'the breeches' in the household. 'Such marriages,' as Charlton holds, 'must often have proved unhappy bargains; but release was

an expensive luxury. <sup>12</sup>

Although Roman wives mean to have the upper hand in the domestic duel, they are generally exhorted to ease the marital situation by paying attention to their husbands. Mulier of the Menaechmi, for instance, is reprimanded by her father and strongly urged to be complaisant. The Senex may be seen as sympathetic to his son-in-law, yet this does not really denote his concern about Mulier's domestic happiness. His general attitude results from the economic values that govern his thinking. <sup>13</sup>

Material conditions, from wifely dowry to household wealth, govern the domestic debate in Roman Comedy. The rich wife comes to her husband with high hopes of mastery in the management of household. And the materialistic husband accepts his dominant wife, but takes her for granted, treats her as a property, and worst of all indulges in uninhibited sex with the harlots of the town.

That Shakespeare should make this domestic situation into the centre of dramatic interest in the mad world of Ephesus, is evidence of his fascination with Plautus' handling of the theme. However, in bringing the problem of domesticity to the Elizabethan theatre, the dramatist departs - though not a long way - from his

Roman model. In the Menaechmi, the farcical manner in which the Citizen's wife is disposed of suggests that Plautus does not take her character seriously, or ask his audience to sympathise with the feminine view of marriage. At the very end of the play, Messenio jestingly asks his master's brother, the Citizen, 'Will ye sell your wife ... ?' The reply he gets is - 'Yea, but I thinke no bodie will bid money for her' (V).<sup>14</sup> This indicates that Mulier (like Mrs. Noah) is meant to be 'a figure of fun,' who 'is dismissed with a laugh.'<sup>15</sup> This also exposes the ideology of the Citizen who regards his wife as nothing more than a commodity to be purchased in a public auction.

There is undeniably a good deal of farce in Shakespeare's adaptation of the characters of Mulier and her husband, yet he goes deeper than mere farce. He weaves the complexities of his couple's situation into an interesting web of domestic unity. Katherina calls for such a unity in the Shrew; the wife, she argues, should serve her husband in subjection. This argument is extended in our play to preach husbandly duty as well towards both wife and household responsibility. The wife is not a commercial good; she is, on the contrary, a social being. The husband should be aware of her role; he should treat her as an equal and should indeed re-

gard her as partly responsible for the prosperity of his home.

In expressing views on the marital debate, Shakespeare, it is now widely believed, was thinking of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians.<sup>16</sup> Among other things, the Apostle touches in this Epistle on the relations of husbands and wives. This may explain the setting of the scene in Ephesus instead of ancient Epidamnum. Admittedly, the reputation of Ephesus as a place of sorcerers and exorcists and curious arts may have appealed to the dramatist as providing the weird atmosphere he meant for his complicated network of errors. Nevertheless, any other ancient Latin city (such as Rome or Corinth) would just as well have served his purpose. The practice of magic and witchcraft was known all over the ancient world. Not only was Ephesus exceptionally associated with sortilege in different stories made available to the Elizabethans through Johannes Calvin's and others' exegeses on Paul's Epistle,<sup>17</sup> but Shakespeare could not have failed to be attracted to Paul's earnest exhortations to family integrity in the Epistle, sent probably to the Christian Ephesians<sup>18</sup> -

Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the wives head, even as

Christ is the head of the Church ..  
 Husbands, love your wives ... let  
 every one love his wife, even as  
 himselfe, and let the wife see that  
 she feare her husband.

The Bible, 1587. 19

The domestic situation in the Plautine play, and the earnest exhortations to family integrity of the Pauline Epistle may, therefore, have assisted Shakespeare in fashioning his idea of the debate about marriage in the Errors. Shakespeare's overall assessment of the controversial theme, however, is - as will become abundantly clear - influenced by the changing views about marriage and the place of women in wedlock witnessed by his age. Consequently, the portrayal of Adriana around whom the debate revolves goes beyond that of Mulier. The former is not a butt, and has a point of view that is disputed on a number of occasions.

Mulier hardly holds a specific view of marriage and marital life. All she is concerned about is the way her disloyal husband makes her 'a stale and a laughing stock to all the world.' She admits to the Senex - 'I have not any way misbehaved my selfe, but the truth is, I can by no means endure this bad man to die for it.' She even begs the old man to 'take me home to you againe' (V). But she never looks beneath

the surface of the embroiled situation to try to find a reason for her husband's misconduct. Possibly, the dramatist does not want her to assess the intricate domestic question, only to complain about it. Mulier's complaint that she is being made 'a stale' by an unworthy husband, is, notwithstanding, human and carries some pathos.

The Senex, on the other hand, is the one who apparently has a broad understanding and wide experience of unworkable marriages. He is not instantly turned against Menaechmus, by his daughter's report. 'He is the wiser,' the father says, referring to his son-in-law, 'because he cannot be quiet at home ... ye will not let him make merry' (ibid). And yet when the wife adds that her husband steals her property to squander upon his affaires de coeur, the old man suddenly finds the husband clearly in the wrong. <sup>20</sup>

Adriana has some of the qualities of Mulier as a wronged wife, but her claims are recognised and her views are respected. Although her right frame of mind may sometimes be clouded by jealousy, her better nature soon comes to the fore and she carefully reconsiders her earlier notions arrived at in a moment of agony. In this she differs from Mulier in the Plautine original. Unlike the latter again, Shakespeare's



heroine debates the question of duties and rights in so far as household relationships are concerned, with a confidante - her sister, Luciana.

There is no father of Adriana in the play to direct the course of the debate in the woman's mind. Instead, Shakespeare introduces Luciana through whom he also evokes one of his major interests in comedy - romantic love. Having included Luciana in the network of events, Shakespeare probably realised that he could use her more significantly to reflect the opposite view of marriage from Adriana's, and thus lend even greater interest to the debate. <sup>21</sup>

Critics have differed about the characters of the sisters in the Errors. The general view held is that Shakespeare provides through the two women what is known as character-antithesis, which is basic to sustaining their argument. However, whereas W.W. Lloyd believes that Adriana 'is very affectionate, ... very amiable, and she gives an earnest of her future improvement in considerateness, by abstaining from public outbreak against her husband's hostess,' Charlton argues that 'Adriana is the shrew realistically sketched in the routine of housewifery, complaining, bullying servants, seeing to dinner, and querulously shouting her troubles to the street.' And while the latter

reports Luciana as 'a singing mermaid, spreading o'er the silver waves the echoes of her song and wisps of golden hair as a bed whereon her love may lie,' E.C. Pettet protests saying that - 'If Luciana does speak in this style, it must be the dumb language of lips, for Shakespeare affords her no opportunity of responding to Antipholus' courtship when it is cleared of the false appearance of adultery; and when one hears her reproving her sister and abusing Dromio like a fish-wife ... one is not altogether happy with the epithet "gentle hearted."<sup>22</sup>

These judgements are too simple a description of the sister's characters. The character-contrast between Adriana and Luciana is a classical theme in itself. The Antigone of Sophocles is the obvious example that immediately comes to mind.<sup>23</sup> Tillyard has rightly observed that Shakespeare's portraiture of Adriana and Luciana 'ranks, ... with other studies of that classical theme.' In these studies 'the two sisters are different, sometimes opposed, in temperament, but loyal one to the other, however much their principles may differ and their actions in life diverge.'<sup>24</sup> The sisters of the Errors are perhaps Shakespeare's earliest contribution to the tradition. In the Shrew and King Lear,<sup>25</sup> he delineates similar types of character, though he uses them to produce various effects. Here

the counter-balancing of the two sisters is utilised basically to sustain the theme debated in some set speeches of successful rhetoric.

Before the first of these is launched in II.i, Adriana appears to be suffering from the pangs of a neglected wife. She is in distraction because her husband is late for dinner. The latter, however, as shortly becomes evident, is sure of the state his wife may be in as a result of his being late. He tells the goldsmith - 'My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours' (III.i.2). This brings Shakespeare's wife and husband close to the typical couple of the Passion Plays - Noah and his wife -

NOAH: Lord, homeward will I fast in haste as that I may;  
 My wife will I ask what she will say, (Exit God)  
 And I am all aghast lest there be some fray  
                   Between us both;  
 For she is full techy,  
 For little oft angry,  
 If anything wrong be,  
                   Soon is she wroth.

He goes to his wife.

God speed thee, wife, how fare ye?  
 WIFE: Now, as ever might I thrive, the worse to see thee;  
 Tell me, on your life, where thus long could thou be?  
 To death may we drive, because of thee,  
                   Alack.  
 When work weary we sink,  
 Thou dost what thou think,  
 Yet of meat and drink  
                   Have we great lack. 26  
                                   182-99.

Luciana tries to make an impression on a wife who cannot tolerate her husband's lack of punctuality - but in vain -

Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,  
 And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.  
 Good sister, let us dine, and never fret.

II.i.4-6.

From that point onwards, the opposition between the two sisters begins fully to crystallise. Adriana is the restless wife who questions the fundamentals of her own marriage. Luciana, on the other hand, is the moralist who is well-equipped with handy words of advice. This sets the domestic debate in its proper social context. In the domestic conduct books of the period, Chilton Latham Powell observes, 'The woman usually receives the greater part of the instruction, in accordance with the popular principle of the time that she was as Touchstone said, "an ill-favored thing but mine own," or as R[obert] C[leaver] put it, "though she be by nature weaker than he [the husband], yet she is an excellent instrument for him."' 27

Adriana is willing to receive instruction if it does not deny her dignity or undermine her moral strengths. She will be only too happy to 'serve' her husband if he does not take her service 'ill'(12). And yet she cannot be 'bridled' like 'asses' as implied in Luciana's homilies (13-4). When Luciana refers to the age's view of men - 'A man is master of his liberty' (7), Adriana, therefore objects - 'Why should their

liberty than ours be more' (10). Surely, this reply expresses not only the inner feeling of Adriana but also that of many women throughout the sixteenth century. The same reply is viable both socially and theologically. In The Nobilitie and excellencye of woman kynde (1529),<sup>28</sup> a treatise replete with learning and ingenious argument, Agrippa remarks that women were meant by God to be as free as men if not freer. 'For why,' Agrippa argues, 'the fruyte of the tree was forbydden to the mā. end not to the woman: which was not than created. For god wolde her be fre from the begynning.' As a humanist, Agrippa was well-known even to ordinary readers, which meant that people in Elizabethan England were familiar with his ethical writings.<sup>29</sup>

In her debate with Adriana, Luciana rehearses moral views made available to the serious-minded citizen of the century through practical and utilitarian advice. Following Adriana's question regarding connubial equality or how much freedom the husband or the wife should enjoy, Luciana sets out to expound her own creed of matrimonial relationships -

There's nothing situate under heaven's eye  
 But hath his bound, in earth, in sea, in sky.  
 The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls,  
 Are their males' subjects, and at their controls  
 Man, more divine, the master of all these,  
 Lord of the wide world and wild wat'ry seas,

Indu'd with intellectual sense and souls,  
 Of more pre-eminence than fish and fowls,  
 Are masters to their females, and the lords;  
 Then let your will attend on their accords.  
 16-25.

Luciana campaigns here as a traditional Renaissance moralist. She talks as a true descendant of Eve who was first to acknowledge 'Adam as her true "guide" and "head."' In the sixteenth century, a woman's 'mental inferiority was certainly a result of the fact that not only had the education of woman been wholly neglected in the past, but even in the so-called "woman's sphere," she was always under the authority and direction of her husband.' <sup>30</sup> These social and philosophical circumstances reflect upon Luciana's argument. But the woman's thesis derives basically 'from the account in Genesis of man in the Garden of Eden, when he held all in the world in his subjection.' <sup>31</sup>

This theological basis reveals one of the causes of her sister's as well as of many women's dilemma during the Renaissance. I refer to 'the teachings of the church drawn chiefly from the book of Genesis and the apostles' commentaries thereupon - that it was the woman who by her fall first brought sin into the world.' <sup>32</sup> Agrippa relies on the same basis as Luciana only to prove that it was the woman rather than the man who held all in subjection. In his aforementioned tractate,

he demonstrates 'what great dignitie' Eve 'hath obtained of god aboue man,' by being the last of his divine work -

The ende always is the fyrst entention  
and in the dede is the laste. So a  
woman was the laste work of god, formed  
into thys world as quene of the same, into  
her prepared palayce, garnyshed with  
pleasures plentyfully. therefore euerye  
creature worthely loueth reuerenceth &  
serueth her, and worthyly is subiect,  
and obeyeth unto her, which is of al  
creatures the absolute quene, ende,  
perfeccion, & glory by al ways and meanes.

It is probably for this reason that Adriana turns a deaf ear to her sister. The latter admonishes 'forbearance' (31), relying on ideas popularised by what became in her time the most important continental book written on the subject - namely, Bullinger's Christen state of Matrimonye. Among a myriad of instructions, this book 'insists upon forbearance and mutual sympathy as the basis for successful marriage.'<sup>33</sup> Here Adriana feels the weight of Luciana's argument, yet she refuses again to listen. And, there is still substance in her retort -

So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,  
With urging helpless patience would relieve me;  
But if thou live to see like might bereft,  
This fool-begg'd patience in thee will be left.  
38-41.

Adriana is simply trying to tell Luciana that 'what is true in theory may not always be confirmed by practical experience.'<sup>34</sup>

In Cōmendacions of matrimony (1528), William Harrington recommends 'love, peaceful dwelling, faithfulness (adultery being a cause for separation a mensa et thoro).' Bacon's Boke of Matrimony (1562) includes a similar recommendation - namely, the mutual duties of husband and wife 'to love each other, ... to live chaste.'<sup>35</sup> Adriana here is distressed to see that her husband apparently ignores these didactic writers, while she recognises her basic duty towards him - 'he's master of my state' (95). For when Dromio of Ephesus returns and reports to her the strange behaviour of Antipholus of Syracuse, she flies into a blaze of jealousy -

His company must do his minions grace,  
Whilst I at home starve for a merry look ..  
poor I am but his stale.

87-101.

Adriana's finishing clause recalls her prototype's complaint in the Menaechmi that she is but 'a stale and a laughing stock.' This does not necessarily mean that Adriana as a character recalls Mulier. After all, the latter is a one-dimensional figure, divulging on the whole an excessively demanding nature. Adriana's character is developed beyond this superficiality, as the profundities of her soul evince. It is not unimportant that Shakespeare should remind us of Plautus' shallow heroine at this point. A short while later, we



will discover that Adriana, like Mulier, brings a wealthy dowry to her husband. And, we will further learn, towards the end of the play, that the marriage of Adriana was, like that of Mulier, one of convenience. The dramatist wants us to bear in mind the superficiality of Mulier to appreciate even more the complexities of Adriana's portraiture.

Domestic books of the period exhorted wives against 'jealousy' which was a cause not only of unhappy marriages, but also of damnation in hell. In Tell-Trothes, 'Robin Good-fellow, just back from hell, relates to Tell-Troth the devil's boast that jealousy is one of the chief means of bringing people to his domain.'<sup>36</sup> Luciana, as we expect of her, is aware of the 'devil's boast!' for she reproves Adriana's 'self-harming jealousy!' advising: 'beat it hence' (102). As before, Adriana is not entirely convinced, though she reaches a conclusion about her domestic life -

Since that my beauty cannot please his eye,  
I'll weep what's left away, and weeping die.  
114-15.

In his treatise, The Commendation of Matrimony (1532), Agrippa states that 'there is no loue so vehement and so stedfast as betwen the husband and the wife.' One of the reasons for that was certainly a woman's 'morueylous faire beautye,' which Adriana

intends to lament here. Agrippa proceeds to describe female 'beautie' as something 'not onely among men, but also of god hyghly estemed and honoured' - 'In all the hole heape of creatures, there is noo thynge so wonderfull to see, ne noo miracle so maruaylouse to beholde.' 37

Adriana picks up her own beauty again as a subject of debate with Antipholus of Syracuse whom she mistakes for her husband. Seeing that her beauty is not what it is supposed to be - a source of marital love and hence domestic harmony, she confronts the wrong Antipholus with a powerful rhetorical argument -

Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown.  
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects;  
I am not Adriana, nor thy wife.  
The time was once when thou unurg'd wouldst vow  
That never words were music to thine ear,  
That never object pleasing in thine eye,  
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,  
That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,  
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or  
carv'd to thee.

II.ii.109-17.

Adriana echoes Agrippa's extensive observations on womanly beauty in his Nobilitie and excellencye of woman kynde - 'The propre body of a woman in syght and felynge is maste delicate and pleasant: her fleshe softe and tender ... her loke and chere merye and pleasaunt: her voyce smal ... her speche lowe and swete ... her handes white and softe ... '

Regarding matrimony as an 'honorable sacrament,'  
'ordeined and commanded of god,' Agrippa says -

For god the maker of all thiges, wold  
this most holy bonde so to be knit  
with indissoluble glewe, an perseuer,  
that the husband in his wife, and the  
wife in hir husband, shuld allwaies  
bothe liue and abide, as a bone of  
bones, & fleshe of fleshe. Nor it cā  
be lafull for any cause, the wife  
to forsake her husbande, or the  
husbande his wife, because it is  
lafull for no man to leaue hym-  
selfe.'

Adriana reiterates Agrippa again in front of the wrong  
Antipholus still, who wonders what it is all about.

How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,  
That thou art then estranged from thyself?  
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,  
That, undividable, incorporate,  
Am better than thy dear self's better part.  
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me ...

119-23.

When Antipholus' bearing, which is after all  
genuine, reflects sheer bewilderment, Adriana urges  
passionately that their married life ought to be pure  
and high -

How dearly would it touch thee to the quick,  
Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious,  
And that this body, consecrate to thee,  
By ruffian lust should be contaminate!  
Wouldst thou not spit at me and spurn at me,  
And hurl the name of husband in my face,  
And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot-brow,  
And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring,  
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?

129-38.

In this situation of comic misunderstanding, Adriana  
places emphasis on reciprocal trust as a sine qua non



According to what she says, a wife extracts her strength from her lawful husband, and should for this reason be separated from him on no account (172 ff). However, because she, as well as Luciana, has been puzzled at the stranger's 'weirdness,' especially when she hears him 'counterfeit grossly' with her Dromio (168), Adriana brings her subject to a close -

Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,  
To put the finger in the eye and weep,  
Whilst man and master laughs my woes to scorn.  
202-04.

Shortly after Adriana lectures the wide-eyed Anti-  
pholus of Syracuse on 'the duties of man and wife one  
toward another,'<sup>39</sup> Luciana reads the same character an-  
other lesson in the duties of a husband. As before,  
Luciana uses the domestic conduct book as a text for her  
directions. But wisely, she first of all reminds the  
mistaken character of his 'office' as a husband (III.ii.  
2). Most of the books on household affairs printed in  
England by that time contained one chapter at least on  
the 'state of maryage & how it ought to be mayntened.'  
In such a chapter moral advice focused on the duties of  
the husband - if not on those of himself and his wife at  
the same time. It was generally advocated that the  
husband should act as a friend towards his wife, to  
provide for her and to defend and help her.<sup>40</sup> Here Luciana

asks Antipholus of Syracuse - 'gentle brother, get you in again;/ Comfort my sister, cheer her, call her wife' (25-6).

The same chapter dealt with a cross-section of moralistic opinion regarding marriages for money. Such alliances were viewed in terms of cause and effect. Because they were not primarily love-matches, all they brought about was disaster. 'And me semeth it is a grete abhomynacion,' Caxton said,

to see in many maryages so lytyl fayth  
and loyalte as now is. But I byleue  
that one of the causes emonge the other  
is. that the maryage be not duely maad.  
but for money. or other euyl cause  
Thene it is noo meruelle that the  
maryage contynue not well. 41

Here Luciana is aware of the shortcomings of marriages for money, for she advises the Syracusan who does not, however, listen (like her sister) and pays courtship to her instead -

If you did wed my sister for her wealth,  
Then for her wealth's sake use her with  
more kindness.

5-6.

There is little doubt that Luciana is loyal to and solicitous for her sister's domestic happiness. This at least enlivens her moral directions. But it justifies, too, the policy of dissimulation which she advocates -

Or, if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth;  
Muffle your false love with some show of  
blindness.

7-8.

It may conversely be argued that Luciana infringes the text book of ethical advice. Normally, a conventional moralist would try to dissuade Antipholus from breaking the 'holy band of wedlock,' advising him to repent that he has ever 'transgressed against so high and so holy a sacrament, to the great ieoperdy of his soul.' 'God shall iuge fornicatours and aduouterers,' would be an appropriate admonition. <sup>42</sup> The Elizabethan writers of domestic treatises drew in part upon their common sense to justify their points of view. <sup>43</sup> This is what Luciana does here; she resorts to her own common sense. She believes that if her sister's supposed husband conducts his affairs secretively, this may ensure domestic peace, to say the least -

'Tis double wrong to truant with your bed  
And let her read it in thy looks at board.  
17-8.

In her rhetorical speech (9-16), it is the way terms such as 'sweet[ness]' and 'disloyalty,' 'vice' and 'virtue,' 'sin' and 'holy,' and 'saint' and 'thief' are paradoxically brought together, that tells us about the quality of Luciana's worldly wisdom.

The debate about marriage is resumed in the final stage, in front of the Priory where it is resolved

once and for all. Although Luciana is present then, she does not participate in its progress except at one point. She has already expressed her views on the subject to the full. It is Aemilia, the lady Abbess (under whose roof Antipholus of Syracuse and his Dromio take shelter) who maintains the debate.

The appearance of the Abbess at this particular stage is all-significant; it suggests a providential resolution most requisite for the reconciliation of the alienated wife and husband. The same divine providence has previously seen them joined as man and wife. The appearance of the Abbess calls to mind the figure of St. Paul and his moral teachings in Ephesus. As the Apostle would most certainly have done, the Abbess sees to it that the couple are reunited in new harmony and fresh evaluation of the matrimonial sacrament.

As I have so far shown, Adriana exhibits a fairly substantial knowledge of contemporary moral advice. She still needs to be convinced of the practicality of the various domestic stances advocated in the play. She has, for this reason, to be challenged by a syllogist far more learned than she is and superior in the quality of mind. It is in the character of the holy lady that Shakespeare introduces a person with incomparable wisdom and logic, one of religious distinction, endowed



with the reverence required to subdue argumentative Adriana.<sup>44</sup> Not only is this bound to justify the presence of the Abbess in Ephesus, but to show also that her touch of Divine Providence in the Ephesian world of black magic is not simply a neat co-incidence, is, to the contrary, a deliberate dramatic device.<sup>45</sup>

The Abbess picks up the debate where Luciana left it - namely, at the point of insisting on forbearance and mutual sympathy as a basis for successful marriages. Mainly because of her superior line of reasoning as well as her distinguished authority, Aemilia succeeds where Luciana failed, that is in pressing home the latter's homilies. Utilitarian domestic conduct books in England relied a great deal on the teachings of St. Paul and the church fathers. The Abbess here evokes both sources by recalling St. Paul and by figuring as head of an abbey. Not surprisingly, therefore, she is capable of scoring a success.

Grave, venerable, and wise in judging what she sees, the Abbess identifies Adriana's deficiency as one of venomous, clamorous, and ungrounded jealousy. She suspects from the vehemence of the woman's manner that it is probably not the husband's extramarital affairs which often absent him from home, but the nagging jealousy of his wife. There is yet an added

difficulty to Adriana's situation of which the Abbess is not aware. The fact that during the action of the play the man Adriana chases is not her husband complicates the debate even more and defuses the passions of marital strife.

To learn the truth, however, and let Adriana see it clearly, the Abbess keeps probing the latter's treatment of her husband. This technique pays; it draws a full confession from the wife -

It was the copy of our conference.  
 In bed, he slept not for my urging it;  
 At board, he fed not for my urging it;  
 Alone, it was the subject of my theme;  
 In company, I often glanced it;  
 Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

V.i.62-7.

The Abbess's fears are at once confirmed. Adriana has ignored her duties to her husband. According to the main body of contemporary domestic writers, such duties required the wife to be modest in discourse, and a source of comfort to her husband. We read in Caxton's Good Manners that the wife ought to be 'symple and good. & not onely of her body. but also of her maynten and maners/ For in spekyng. in beholdyng. ne in conuersace she ought not doo ony thyng. by whiche ony other myght thynke or Juge in her ony euyll.' <sup>46</sup> In a clearly changed tone, therefore, the holy lady points to Adriana the shortcomings of neglecting her share as a wife of household duties -

And thereof came it that the man was mad.  
 The venom clamours of a jealous woman  
 Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.  
 68-70.

To this Adriana, for the first time, does not respond. She perceives the trap laid for her into which she has unwittingly fallen, and so holds her peace. But Luciana cannot stand her sister's humiliation; she breaks in with an excuse, correcting Adriana's initial claim -

She never reprehended him but mildly,  
 When he demean'd himself rough, rude, and  
 wildly.  
 87-8.

Following that Luciana turns to Adriana with a sisterly reproof but only to find the latter having difficulty with words still.

Tillyard takes the ease with which the Abbess handles Adriana as suggestive of the latter's stupidity. <sup>47</sup> Adriana behaves stupidly sometimes like garrulous Mistress Quickly, and yet even in her stupid moments she is wise. A stupid person is someone always blind to his or her correctness of judgements. Adriana recognises the difference between what she says in the heat of the moment and what she thinks in her heart. For instance, on being informed of her supposed husband's amatory advances, Adriana expresses her resentment with considerable force -

He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,  
 Ill-fac'd, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere;  
 Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind;  
 Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

IV.ii.19-22.

This bitter description of her husband's disloyalty, she, none the less, takes back a moment later, showing herself to be not a mere foolish figure but a human being of wise understanding - 'Ah, but I think him better than I say' (25). In this Adriana displays over again her superiority to Plautus' Mulier who is a mere lay-figure of farce. If Adriana has been caught on the Abbess' hook, this is ( as in Valentine's case in The Two Gentlemen) a symptom of credulousness rather than of foolishness.

Although Adriana is ashamed of her own conduct, she still wants her supposed husband to be delivered up to her. But the Abbess will suffer no person to enter her house, nor will she deliver up the unhappy man to the care of a jealous wife. Adriana insists that she has every right to her husband, given that she understands the duties she owes him. The fact that Adriana is now ready to offer her man the loving care she previously denied him, shows that the woman is purged of her 'mad jealousy.' This paves the way for the restoration of domestic harmony and the responsibility of normal relationships -

I will attend my husband, be his nurse,  
 Diet his sickness, for it is my office,  
 And will have no attorney but myself;  
 And therefore let me have him home with me.  
 V.i.98-101.

This sincere speech lays bare two important facets of Adriana's domestic complexity. The last line shows the wife finding domestic stability in simply having her husband at home. The latter, to her disappointment, cannot afford to stay at home and leave his commercial transactions unattended. My opening Chapter enlarges upon this point. On the whole, however, the speech betrays Adriana's mastering passion - her love, from which her jealousy has sprung in the first place. All Adriana's actions so far have implied this love - the way she is prompt to bail her husband out; the way she is profoundly distressed at his apparent lunacy; and the way she is ready to take the only known means for his cure even if it is exorcism.<sup>48</sup> Adriana, in other words, strives to convince the Abbess that she has always understood domestic responsibility as a wife, what she herself calls 'my office.'

Faced with this sudden flash of past passion and reassertion of household obligations, the Abbess is not as yet willing to surrender the refugee. She determines to use gentle means for the man's recovery, claiming this to be a duty of her order (102-07). Surprisingly,

Adriana interprets this motive as an act of potential danger, for it causes marital disruption -

I will not hence and leave my husband here;  
And ill it doth beseem your holiness  
To separate the husband and the wife ..  
109-11.

Theologically, Adriana is right. In his treatise<sup>e</sup> about the sacrament of marriage, Agrippa asserts - 'whom the almighty power of god hath ones ioyned together, no power shall presume to separate.' As a humanist, Agrippa uses, like other theorists on the subject, the Bible for illustration. 49

When Adriana complains of the lady-Abbess to the Duke, her address reveals unquestioned subjection to her husband -

Antipholus, my husband,  
Who I made a lord of me and all I had  
At your important letters ...  
136-38.

The same idea is implied in the Duke's -

Long since thy husband serv'd me in my wars,  
And I to thee engag'd a prince's word,  
When thou didst make him master of thy bed ...  
161-63.

Interestingly, both Adriana and the Duke here unveil the mystery of the marriage affair so far debated among the characters. Adriana seems to have been an heiress, that is a ward of the Duke, whom he bestowed in marriage upon a soldier of fortune - Antipholus of Ephesus. The latter, in effect, was like his predecessors on the Roman stage

all Adriana's, bought with all she had. He was to put up with a rich and domineering Roman-type wife - Adriana.

This is, however, incompatible with the overall impression we get from the play. Adriana, as already established, improves on Mulier and, by analogy, on Roman wives. Never at any moment does she refer to her husband as an object to be owned, though on one occasion she is suspected to have a possessive nature (II.ii.172 ff). Antipholus, for his part, never complains about being restless in the arms of his rich wife. When he first appears, he only says his wife does not enjoy his lack of punctuality. Although he resorts to the house of the Courtesan, as husbands often did in Roman Comedy, he only exceptionally does so by way of revenge on a wife who has locked him out. Even when he decides to hold a bachelor's party at a disreputable house, he makes no gesture to a lewd, licentious entertainment. His moral conduct is not, however, impeccable, for in a furious mood he sends for 'a rope's end' (IV.i.16), with the intention of applying corporal punishment to his wife and her 'confederates' (IV.iv.99). His forceful complaint towards the end is a consequence of mistaken identity, and not of wifely dominance.

With the emergence of Antipholus the husband, the debate about marriage suddenly mounts to a high peak

of artificiality. Both wife and husband have unintentionally wronged one another and both now demand justice one against the other. Gradually, the truth dawns upon both characters, saving their marriage from an inevitable breakdown. Antipholus is not to use his 'rope's end' after all, and Adriana will never thereafter cherish unjust suspicions, or be jealous over nothing. This is instantly tested when the husband turns to the Courtesan expressing his gratitude - 'much thanks for my good cheer' (391).

Through the Abbess, the initial discords are resolved. Domestic responsibility is newly re-established, replanted rather, in a clearly better soil, one of love, trust, and mutual understanding. This is important since in marriage, Agrippa puts it, husband and wife are but 'one fleshe, one minde, one concorde.' But it is Luciana who has paved the way for, and made possible this resolution.

The domestic order so far advocated by Luciana and convincingly achieved through the Abbess, anticipates the 'symbolic and spiritual order which haunts Shakespeare's last plays.'<sup>50</sup> It is an order which is finally restored, as Shakespearian comedy intends, in marriages, and reconciliations between wives and husbands, parents and children, and masters and servants.



The new harmony between Adriana and Antipholus of Ephesus is symbolised in the natural equality of the twin Dromios which draws the curtain on the world of Ephesus and Ephesians. The Comedy of Errors, therefore, ends, as Stanley Wells says, 'not in the chaos characteristic of some types of farce, but in a re-establishment of order and harmony, accompanied by an assertion and demonstration of humane values such as are associated with the most romantic of romantic comedies.'<sup>51</sup>

## Chapter 6.

'O this learning,  
what a thing it is!'

The Theme of Education in

The Taming of the Shrew

The basic concern of the present Chapter is to look at The Taming of the Shrew afresh, by exploring one of its interesting areas which has scarcely received a fair share of critical attention. This is the experience of education<sup>1</sup> dramatised by the play for the benefit of both its characters and its audience.

The plot of the Shrew incorporates three distinct strands: the Induction of Christopher Sly, the popular knock-about story of Katherina and Petruchio, and the romantic episodes of Bianca and her smitten lovers. These three elements have very often been treated separately except in a few cases. Donald A. Stauffer is perhaps the first critic to call attention, in his Shakespeare's World of Images,<sup>2</sup> to the way in which the principle of 'supposes' - which the dramatist borrows from Ariosto's play translated by Gascoigne: I Suppositi - has a unifying effect on the three different stories of

the play. This idea was to be fully worked out some years later by C.C. Seronsy in his frequently quoted article, '"Supposes" as the Unifying Theme in The Shrew.' <sup>3</sup> Traversi, on the other hand, observes how the motif of 'marriage' functions as the common integrating element that draws together the prologue and the two plots of the play. The same view was to be reiterated by Leo Salinger. <sup>4</sup> Tillyard examines the dichotomy of appearance versus reality, and probes the structural purpose it subserves towards the integration of the play. Echoes of this approach can also be found in Irving Ribner. <sup>5</sup>

The theme that I here pursue with a view to elucidating the play's wholeness is, as already indicated, one of study and learning, of school and teaching, and of pupil and schoolmaster. It is a process of education that is time and again shown to follow various curricula set and applied in such a way as to tally with the type of student, the category of instruction, and the mood and qualifications of tutor. This variety of disciplinary programmes, of lecturers and scholars, is both striking and pleasing.

There are three learning institutions implanted in the body of the Shrew, all with varied purposes,

significantly corresponding to the different parts of the play - the academy or rather school of dramatic art implied in the Induction; the private school of music and classics inaugurated in Baptista's household; and the school of taming established in Petruchio's country house. These institutions are presented with a great deal of subtlety, in the sense that each is deliberately made ambivalent, thus implying one thing but actually yielding another.

To begin with the Induction. This critics normally regard either as a joke, an amusing sport, or as a dirty trick. Critics even get carried away in tracing its literary ancestries which are distributed in the folkloric literatures of many nations, extending from the Arabs, through the Portuguese and the French to the English.<sup>6</sup> And sometimes critics are induced by the wealth of exuberant poetry which describes in detail the transmogrification of Sly to the lordly setting, to depreciate the anonymous Taming of a Shrew, for lacking this characteristic. These approaches are of course interesting, but only in the way they demonstrate Shakespeare's original treatment of a given situation. It can yet be as much interesting to approach the Induction from the point of view of its characters and the way they manipulate its proceedings.



'Would not the beggar then forget himself?' (39). 'I think he cannot choose,' one servant remarks, while another suggests - 'It would seem strange unto him when he wak'd' (40, 41). The Lord declares that his lesson is concerned with the implications of dramatic art as a 'flatt'ring dream' (42). He determines to stage a play by way of demonstration, availing himself of the now unconscious 'tinker.' What we have here is a situation in which a teacher of drama seeks an activity method in giving instruction to his students. The Lord, in other words, hits upon the natural approach of education - namely, 'by practice, by doing things, and not [merely] by instruction.'<sup>9</sup>

The gradual stages in which the demonstrative play is launched imply an orderly intellect. The manner of instruction is direct. The Lord explains how the scenery should be (44-9), before he moves on to dialogue and costume (50-8). It does not escape the Lord's attention to advise his would-be players against exaggeration in the art of acting (65-6). He offers the same advice to a troupe of players whose assistance he seeks after learning about their qualifications (92-5). But the players remind him that they have been taught in the theatres of the world (97-8). The Lord concludes his instructions by turning to what is to become the most

important part of his play. That is the role to be played by Bartholomew as Sly's 'humble wife' (113). This the Lord gives double attention, insisting on a life-like and passionate performance accompanied by a soft, courteous delivery of speech (107-19). The Lord is certain that Bartholomew possesses the abilities requisite for such a role (129-30). The only misgiving is that the page may not have 'a woman's gift/ To rain a shower of commanded tears;' but 'such a shift,' the Lord instructs, can be overcome by 'an onion' (122-23, 124).

Following these practical instructions, the Lord's play is set afoot, hopefully to prove his point about the illusiveness of dramatic art, the 'worthwhile fancy,' as the Lord himself calls it (42). All attention is focused on Sly and how this character learns politer behaviour by expressing it. Sly is not of course aware that he is meant to behave like a decorous person, nor does he know about etiquette as is concluded from his clumsiness in addressing his 'wife.'

Sly fell asleep at the door-step of an inn after his ejection by the 'fat ale-wife' (Induc.ii.18) who threatened to 'fetch the thirdborough' (Induc.i.9). When, therefore, he awakes, he cannot believe the luxury he opens his eyes upon. '[Do] I dream?' he

wonders (Induc.ii.67), while still reluctant to believe himself a noble lord - 'I am Christopher Sly; call not me "honour" nor "lordship" (5). Yet since all men are normally anxious to believe the best about themselves, Sly is no exception. 'The physical facts and gorgeous environment,' Hardin Craig observes, 'are too much for [Sly's] realism; with [him] seeing is believing.' <sup>10</sup> Sly becomes convinced and at once begins to speak blank verse, finishing off with a thanksgiving prayer - 'Now, Lord be thanked for my good amends' (95). The change of style from prose to blank verse shows that Sly is already benefitting from his education.

The theme of education, as is intimated in the Induction, makes its appearance under cover of a practical lesson. This lesson is taught by the Lord, and it is concerned with the illusive nature of drama. Though initially meant for the Lord's attendants, the lesson turns out to be useful to Sly. It is not insignificant that a Messenger should inform Sly, towards the end of the Induction, that a play is about to be performed for his own good (128-33).

This play in fact opens as a serious academic drama, the setting in Padua being appropriate. However, when a love-learning debate shortly arises, the play



turns out to be a drama of education in and through love. The character of Lucentio exemplifies the Elizabethans' ideal of cosmopolitan education. A 'bright spark,'<sup>11</sup> as he appears to be, Lucentio strikes the academic leit-motif of the whole play -

since for the great desire I had  
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,  
I am arriv'd for fruitful Lombardy ...  
Here let us breathe, and haply institute  
A course of learning and ingenious studies.  
I.i.1-9.

Lucentio refers here to one of the choices of Elizabethan youths, summarised by Shakespeare in The Two Gentlemen as:

Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there;  
Some to discover islands far away;  
Some to the studious universities.  
I.iii.8-10.

The course that Lucentio has chosen for himself, counting as he says on his father's moral and financial support, happens to translate a wide-spread custom among Elizabethan and Jacobean gentlemen of completing their education abroad. 'For even till our days,' William Camden says under the year 1577, 'certain young men of promising hopes, out of both Universities have been maintained in foreign countries, at the King's charge, for the more complete polishing of their Parts and Studies.'<sup>12</sup>

Lucentio exemplifies also a social impulse that was strongly influenced by the Renaissance - the love of travel. A view for this old instinct 'was springing up and filling the leading minds of the sixteenth century - the desire of learning, at first hand, the best that was being thought and said.'<sup>13</sup> The traveller was to learn about foreign countries by way of obtaining wisdom, in line with Ulysses' remark - 'Felix qui mundi mores cognovit et urbes:'<sup>14</sup> 'wise is the man who knows the customs of the world and its cities.' In the Elizabethan age, particularly, the love of travel for gaining further experience flourished exceedingly with the result that all classes felt the desire to go beyond seas upon 'such wind as scatters young men through the world/ To seek their fortunes farther than at home,/ Where small experience grows' (the Shrew, I.ii.48-50). 'Antony à Wood frequently explains how such an Oxonian "travelled beyond seas and returned a compleat Person."<sup>15</sup> It was the humanistic eulogies of travel that made it too strong a desire to resist. 'Human and Plebeian souls stay at home, bound to their own piece of earth,' the humanist Lipsius wrote following Plato; 'that soul is near the divine which rejoices in movement, as do the heavens themselves. Therefore all great men ... were travellers.'<sup>16</sup>

It is interesting that Lucentio should select Padua of all the other Italian cities to register there for a post-graduate study. Padua was a reputable Italian seat of learning. No wonder it became 'the city where a Pisan burgher would have sent his son to study during the sixteenth century.'<sup>17</sup> Lucentio justifies his preference by disclosing his past infatuation with the glorious city, the 'nursery of arts' (I.i.2).

A quick glance at the intellectual map of the sixteenth century reveals the sort of importance that this city had. In a recent study of Young Philip Sidney, James M. Osborn comments -

[that] this small provincial town earned such an eminence seems almost unbelievable, for it counted a population of only about five thousand souls. Of these, about fifteen hundred were students at the ancient University and perhaps another thousand were faculty, lodging-house keepers, and tradesmen dependent on the university community for their livelihood.<sup>18</sup>

It was not only Padua that had its special continental attraction for embracing 'one of the greatest universities in Europe' to which students 'from all nations crowded.' The whole of Italy figured in the Renaissance map as the aspired-for shrine of the intellectual pilgrims. In her stimulating study of the English Travellers of the Renaissance, Clare Howard traces the pre-eminence of the Italian universities

throughout the fifteenth century particularly after the revival of Greek literature, and concludes that '[p]rofessional humanists could not do without the stamp of true culture which an Italian degree gave them.' Professor Howard further concludes that Erasmus, who is known to have 'despised degree-hunting,' 'felt the power of Italy' and was 'tempted to remain in Rome forever, by reason of the company he found there.' 'It was this charm of intellectual companionship,' Professor Howard sums up, 'which started the whole stream of travel animi causa. Whoever had keen wits, an agile mind, imagination, yearned for Italy.' <sup>19</sup>

Lucentio, a young gentleman fresh from his undergraduate study at Rheims, travels to Padua to complete his education at the 'pleasant garden of great Italy' (4). He approaches the city with an inquiring, open mind, eager to learn, quick to imitate the refinements and ideas of a place more recognised than his own. Well-equipped with the Renaissance notion of travel as a highly educating experience, Lucentio is also accompanied by a 'trusty' servant (7), Tranio, to whom he usually resorts for friendly counsel. That was a further social impulse influenced by the Renaissance - the need for guidance. A young man about to travel would apply to some experienced friend to accompany him

in his tours. E.S. Bates's Touring in 1600 reveals how 'A qualified first-rate guide usually accompanied young noblemen when leaving their country.'<sup>20</sup> Yet probably because not all experienced friends or private tutors were ready to incur the dangers of foreign travel, and as a demand for advice to young men grew up, which became a feature of Elizabethan literature, 'book-publishers thought it worthwhile to print books addressed to travellers,' availing themselves of the newly-returned cosmopolitan courtiers, one of them being Sir Philip Sidney.<sup>21</sup>

One of the directions for travellers, available in Sir J. Stradling's contemporary epistle to the Earl of Bedford on the occasion of his journey to Italy in 1592, was the refinement of one's manner through wisdom, the concomitant of learning. 'If therefore you will be a profitable Trauailer and come home better then you went out,' the young Earl is told, 'you must seeke to be enriched with three things ... Wisdome, or Pollicie. Knowledge, or learning. Manners, or behaiour' for 'what is learning? nay what shall it profit a man to be wise, if a man be not also honest, vertuous, and of good qualities?'<sup>22</sup> In 'Travel as Education,' George B. Parks refers to the same argument saying that 'the end of education is moral. The means is intellectual.'<sup>23</sup>

The young Lucentio here, on the eager scent of

learning, is in no doubt about what he is after - 'for the time I study,/ Virtue ... virtue specially to be achieved' (17-20). Virtue, he believes, will refine his manners and enhance his deeds, which both his father and himself are looking forward to -

It shall become to serve all hopes conceiv'd,  
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds.  
15-6.

Passionately, Lucentio feels this; he dreams it; and his next words, as Theodore Weiss argues, 'show a great adventure, a drinking with his whole body and being' <sup>24</sup> -

I have Pisa left  
And am to Padua come as he that leaves  
A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep,  
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.  
21-4.

Tranio sounds a flourish of rhetoric like his master, cautioning against excessive austerity -

Let's be no Stoics nor no stocks, I pray,  
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks  
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjur'd.  
31-3.

He proceeds to prescribe an ideal modus vivendi that is not excessively bookish -

Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,  
And practise rhetoric in your common talk,  
Music and poesy use to quicken you;  
The mathematics and the metaphysics,  
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves  
you,

and argues that 'youth must not be stultified nor learning divorced from pleasure,' <sup>25</sup> concluding with a fitting motto - 'No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en' (34-8, 39).

The play proper of the Shrew thus begins with an academic note struck by 'youthful blades whitting their edges on the wheel of travel.'<sup>26</sup> Lucentio does not, however, prove to be one of the 'Merchants of Light,' the travelling scholars who would on their return, according to Francis Bacon, give fresh impetus to travel for education's sake,<sup>27</sup> nor does Padua prove to be the right place for such a young student to come to for higher academic qualifications.

As soon as Lucentio is resolved to pursue his studies with the hope of subduing his passions to his reason to attain some tranquility of mind,<sup>28</sup> he catches sight of Bianca and falls promptly in love. Lord Edward is advised in the Epistle previously mentioned to 'refraine your Eyes, and your Eares. First shut your eies that they see no vanytie, next your eares that they heare not follye. Loue creepeth in at the windowes of the eies ...' Lucentio's infatuation here is dramatised as both eye-love and ear-love - namely, as springing from the mere visible and audible. '[D]o I see/ Maid's mild behaviour and sobriety,' is what he first utters to follow it with a - 'thou mayst hear Minerva speak!' (70-1). His love in fact is dramatised as sudden and overwhelming - 'I burn, I pine, I perish,' he sighs (150), calling to mind the poet who once said: 'vt vidi,

vt arsi: I sawe, and I sighed.' <sup>29</sup>

Lucentio is made by this action to fit into the group of the early Shakespearian characters, the immature but accomplished young men who begin their discovery of the world by discovering their love for rich and pretty young women. Instead of embarking upon his enterprising scheme of study, he is about to receive his éducation sentimentale. It is here, as is pointed out by Farley-Hills, that the contest between 'rational academic tranquility and passionate love-making' arises, interestingly 'in Lucentio's finding love where he is looking for study.' <sup>30</sup>

Lucentio must have Bianca or else he 'perishes,' a resolution that leads to his jettisoning of study. In a light-hearted comment, Professor Gordon deplores the fact that Lucentio discards his academic gown and his books, all for his lady-love - 'Lucentio ... is supposed ... to have entered on a post-graduate course at the University of Padua. I regret to say that there is no evidence that he even matriculated there, or if he matriculated, that he even did any work.' <sup>31</sup> It does not matter really if the young scholar has not registered at the Paduan University; 'he is already well enrolled in love's college, under the tutelage of Professor Cupid,' <sup>32</sup> for an amatory course that will



prove in the long run to be worthwhile.

Bianca happens to be a scholar herself. A regard for a Renaissance discipline is picked up by her lines about books and instruments -

My books and instruments shall be my company,  
On them to look, and practise by myself.

I.i.82-3.

Saying this, Bianca is instantly associated in Lucentio's mind with 'Minerva,' the Roman goddess of intelligence and wisdom, who was also the patroness of liberal arts. (The association may perhaps explain the special affection which Baptista has for his younger daughter. Minerva was the apple of Jupiter's eye, as she sprang full-grown from his brain.)

Baptista shares with Bianca a regard for a Renaissance discipline as is evident from his references to 'music' and 'poetry' (93); yet his agreement is more in spirit rather in practice -

Schoolmasters will I keep within my house  
Fit to instruct her youth.

94-5.

Bianca does not want to be bothered by tutors; she prefers to be her own instructor - that is to become self-taught. Baptista, on the other hand, desires to get his daughter properly educated by hiring private tutors. Such private tutors as we gather from Kenneth Charlton's Education in Renaissance England, 'were, in fact, an

indispensable part of the educational scene among the upper classes of Renaissance England, both for boys and for girls.' <sup>33</sup> Baptista goes on to say -

for to cunning men  
I will be very kind, and liberal  
To <sup>own</sup> mine children in good bringing-up.  
97-9.

By relating his children's education to their upbringing, Baptista touches not only upon the broader sense of education as a social force that awards the student a degree in the art of living, but also upon one of the prerequisites of the moral and religious upbringing of children in the Renaissance - 'the education of women to fit them for the role both of companion to their husband and educator of their children.' <sup>34</sup>

Baptista seems here to follow the footsteps of Sir Thomas Elyot, who, as noted by Joan Simon in her Education and Society in Tudor England, advocated the upbringing of children through private education in the household. <sup>35</sup> To the daughters of the sixteenth century gentry 'the court was not the only centre of women's education, though obviously the most sought after.' There were 'the houses of the other families, where under the supervision of the lady of the household and the instruction of a private tutor, they [could] receive an education which would fit them for their vocation - marriage and mistress of their own house-

holds.' <sup>36</sup> Baptista does not send his daughters to another house for their education; he assumes that his house can be a centre of learning and that he can himself with a mixture of kindness and liberality supervise it. This is reminiscent of the family headed by Sir Thomas More who had William Gonell as his daughters' tutor, and whose household school was linked by Erasmus to Plato's Academy. <sup>37</sup> Baptista's school, it should be noted, sounds a good deal more scrappy than those of Renaissance England.

Baptista does not, for example, live up to his self-imagined role of supervisor or 'headmaster' of the intended indoor school. He never at any moment questions the credentials of the 'cunning schoolmasters' whom he employs, taking their references at face value. Baptista contrasts with the Lord of the Induction who checks the players' qualifications before approving of their service. It is wise of Baptista to ask Hortensio and Gremio whom he obviously trusts to recommend tutors ('know any such/ Prefer them hither'). It is wise of him to accept Lucentio when the latter is presented by Gremio as one Cambio, a young scholar 'that hath been long studying at Rheims' (I.i.96-7; II.i.79-80). Foolishly, however, Baptista welcomes the disguised Hortensio at the recommendation of a character whom he does not

as yet know - Petruchio. This renders Baptista's 'school' vulnerable to the amorous attacks of a pseudo teacher, whom he unwittingly enables to 'profess' the art of love to Bianca.

'Take you the lute, and you the set of books,' Baptista directs disguised Hortensio and Lucentio respectively, referring to the 'simple instrument' and the 'small packet of Greek and Latin books' (98-9), brought by Tranio, supposedly Lucentio. He then sends the schoolmasters to his daughters -

<sup>90</sup>  
 You shall see your pupils presently ...  
 Sirrah, lead these gentlemen  
 To my daughters; and tell them both  
 These are their tutors.  
 106-09.

There is no suggestion in these lines as to which of his daughters should be instructed in music and which in Greek and Latin. We have heard Bianca talking about her particular interest in music. We have heard her father reporting how she 'taketh most delight in music and instruments' (I.i.82-3, 92-3). We have heard Gremio promising to send a music master to Baptista's house for Bianca fit to 'teach her that wherein she delights' (108). And we have heard Hortensio imploring Petruchio to offer him 'disguised in sober robes/ To old Baptista as a schoolmaster/ Well seen in music, to instruct her youth,' meaning Bianca (I.ii. 129-31).

We are, therefore, prepared to take the music lesson and music master to be both meant for Bianca rather than for Katherina. Petruchio, nevertheless, reverses the situation, frustrating thus Hortensio's expectations. He presents the latter as 'Cunning in music,' meaning him to be a gift for Katherina - 'To instruct her fully in those sciences,/ Whom I know she is not ignorant' (II.i.56, 57-8). Although it does not elicit any attention in the scene, Petruchio's reversal is dramatically significant because it anticipates a major lesson that he will try to teach Katherina once she is enrolled in his 'school of taming' - namely, 'the inner order of which music is but a reflection.'<sup>38</sup>

Obviously, Hortensio is not interested in Katherina, nor is she interested in music. We are not surprised that he fails to make an artistic impression: we laugh heartily instead, especially when he re-enters 'with his head broke,' indignantly complaining about his pupil's reception. 'Well ... be not so discomfited,' Baptista reacts, inviting Hortensio to 'proceed in practice' with Bianca (162). This surely comforts Hortensio; he has, after all, come as a teacher for Bianca's sake but only to woo her -

I may by this device at least  
Have leave and leisure to make love to her,  
And unsuspected court her by herself.

I.ii.132-34.

Yet he is frustrated; he has neither 'leave' nor 'leisure,' nor is his pupil 'by herself.' Another rival has also come to win the girl on the pretext of educating her. The fact that both are fake makes them suspicious of one another (III.i.46-8, 59-61). Their squabble over Bianca evokes our laughter.

When Lucentio made up his mind to become a 'school-master/ And undertake the teaching of the maid' (I.i. 186-87), like Hortensio he expected no rivalry at least in so far as the tutoring of the girl is concerned. His plans to 'achieve that maid/ Whose sudden sight hath enthrall'd [his] wounded eye' (215), are almost foiled by the presence of a competitor-tutor, with the result that Lucentio broods upon a new course of action - "'Twere good, methinks to steal our marriage' (III.ii.136).

Juan Vives, the Spanish humanist who was well known in England particularly for the considerable influence which he had exercised upon the Renaissance education of women, recommended mathematics, philosophy, poetry, and classics (Greek and Latin), among other sciences, as useful subjects that a woman should learn. These sciences, as we have already seen, are picked up for the education of Baptista's daughters.

Vives, again, was emphatic in the demand that the woman-student should learn Latin to use it as a medium of conversation. In a 'Plan of Study' which he designed at the order of Lady Catharine, Queen of England, to be followed by Princess Mary's tutor, he advised the Queen - 'Let the Princess speak with her tutor ... in Latin ... let her attempt to express (in Latin) what she has been reading ... and in the same manner let her listen to others speaking of what they have been reading.'<sup>39</sup> The same view of Latin as a means of conversation prevailed also in the English Grammar schools of the Renaissance. Foster Watson tells us that 'it was the language of lectures, the language of examination, and supposed to be the language used between student and student.'<sup>40</sup> In the lesson scene here, Latin prevails as a means of education and conversation, but the joke is that it does not really mean what both tutor and student say. The Latin lessons, nevertheless, assist the tutor in winning his pupil-sweetheart.

Appropriately enough, the Latin exchanged is from Ovid's Heroides; it is excerpted from a letter supposedly written by Penelope to her husband, Ulysses, during whose absence she had been surrounded by unwanted suitors. On his return, Ulysses rids his wife of the suitors whom she had constantly put off, and is joined to her.

In our play, Bianca has been surrounded by suitors even before the appearance of Lucentio on the scene. In none of these suitors, as she confesses to Katherina (II.i. 8-9, 11-2), is she interested. As Lucentio sets foot in Padua, he realises that he is up against a tough competition (though not certainly so where Bianca herself is concerned), and that he has to 'over-reach the greybeard' Gremio, and the 'quaint musician, amorous Licio' (III.ii.141, 143).

The allusion to Ovid is yet more significant for other reasons. Ovid is the poet of love. We have seen how Tranio advised that he should be read side by side with Aristotle. When Lucentio offers service to Gremio, he is handed a pile of 'books of love' and instructed - 'See you read no other lectures to her' (I.ii.143, 144). Later on we listen to this brief dialogue -

Luc. Now, mistress, profit you in what you read?  
 Bian. What, master, read you? First resolve me that.  
 Luc. I read that I profess, 'The Art to Love.'  
 IV.ii.6-8.

The reference is clearly to Ovid's Ars Amatoria. Ovid is also known to us through his Metamorphoses with its bearing on the series of transformations so far encountered. The transformations of our play are, unlike those of Ovid's, not miraculous: they are manipulated by human beings as part of a learning process; they are achieved through various modes of education dramatised throughout



the play. The Lord and his attendants introduce Sly into high life, and so does Lucentio Tranio into a gentleman's character. Lucentio and Hortensio introduce themselves in academic dress to teach Bianca. But they find the latter transformed into a truant pupil already. She puts it point blank to them - 'I am no breeching scholar in the schools,/ I'll not be tied down to hours nor 'pointed time' (III.i.18-9). It is the theme of education, as I have so far shown, which involves these characters and others in their respective comic transformations.

The two major characters of the play, too, are involved in some transformation, with Katherina featuring as a headstrong pupil and Petruchio as a brutal master who almost whips his pupil into moral education. When Katherina is first brought on stage, she is shown to be lacking one of the female virtues which was particularly praised in the Renaissance as 'a great ornament of the whole feminine sex' - silence.<sup>41</sup> She is contrasted with her sister in Lucentio's reference to 'the other's silence;' and her scolding 'tongue' and 'loud alarums' are set against '[maid's] mild behaviour and sobriety' (I.i.70, 89, 124, 71). Being 'too rough,' and a proper 'fiend of hell,' she cannot but be 'cart[ed]' and 'whipp'd at the high cross every morning' (55, 88, 55, 128). It is only when she becomes of 'gentler' and 'milder'

mould,' that she may have as many 'mates' as Bianca (60, 59). As she is now, Katherina is a failure socially. It takes an astute teacher to handle and change her into a 'conformable' person (II.i.270).

Petruchio, on the other hand, reveals when he first appears the same social impulse as Lucentio - the love of travel. Petruchio is clearly against the idea of 'living dully sluggard'sed at home' which, according to Valentine - another Shakespearian traveller who is also Veronese - will [wear] out [one's] youth with shapeless idleness' (The Two Gentlemen, I.i.7-8).

In a sense, Petruchio is a scholar. His line '[and] so am come abroad to see the world' - also reminiscent of Valentine's 'to see the wonders of the world abroad' (The Two Gentlemen, I.i.6) - sums up the principal aim of travel as understood throughout the Renaissance. Petruchio must have travelled a good deal; his speeches, particularly the 'Have I not in my time' (I.ii.56, 197-207), reveal the extent of experience he has achieved in the college of life. He is not thus to miss the opportunity of 'wiv[ing] ... wealthily in Padua' (73), on the mere report of the bride's irascibility. He is too practical to waste time on words rather than on action - 'Few words suffice;' 'Tell me her father's name, and 'tis enough;' 'to what end are all these words' (64, 92,

245). And he is self-assured to the point of fearlessness - 'She moves me not, or not removes, at least, / Affection's edge in me;' 'For I will board her' (70-1, 93). He is even a rough and tough person upon whom 'scolding,' on Grumio's report, 'would do little good' (106). Petruchio, thus, qualifies, on the others' unanimous decision, to ride, as Gremio has vowed, 'the best horse in Padua' and undertake 'this feat' of taking the elder daughter off from Baptista's house, with all her many faults to 'set the younger free' (I.i.137, ii.263, 264). Although Petruchio may be associated here with the brave young man of the fairy-tales, he is more like the experienced teacher who arrives in time with a set curriculum to apply to Katherina.

When Petruchio is about to commence his task, Katherina demonstrates her uneducability by smashing the lute on her teacher's head. But this makes Petruchio all the more resolved to undertake her education. 'O how I long to have some chat with her!' he murmurs (II.i. 161), while probably contemplating the category of instruction to pursue. He suddenly decides to use a method in which he reverses the received opinion of his pupil with the hope of working on her mind. He will see in Katherina an image that is entirely alien to her in order to produce, as the Lord previously did with Sly,

'a sense of dislocation.'<sup>42</sup> Thus after initially identifying Katherina with 'foul ... Florentius' love,' 'old .. Sibyl,' and 'curst and shrewd/ ... Socrates' Xanthippe,' he refers to her as 'Dian,' the patroness of virginity, as 'Lucrece,' the symbol of chastity, and more importantly as Grissel,' the proverbial type of a meek and patient wife (I.ii.67, 68, 68-9; II.i.251, 288, 287).

Still following the same method, Petruchio works on the others' minds as well. Having mentally prepared them to take his confrontation with Katherina as the meeting of 'two raging fires' (II.i.131), he frustrates their expectations by describing a romantic encounter instead -

She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss  
 She vied so fast, protesting oath to oath,  
 That in a twink she won me to her love.

300-02.

He even embarrasses them by pointing their unfairness to Katherina, the deceptiveness of their views, and their lack of worldly understanding, which he has surely achieved in his travels - 'O, you are novices! 'Tis a world to see' (303).

On the wedding day, Petruchio carries on his educational plan, yet with an important development, one suggested to him by Katherina. The latter has concluded from her encounter with Petruchio that the man is 'one half lunatic,/ A mad-cap ruffian and a

swearing Jack' (279-80). This description strikes Petruchio as suitable for a teacher wishing to take on such a hard pupil as Katherina. Thereupon, he puts on the role of a wild schoolmaster, resorting to play-acting as an appropriate mode of education. The Lord of the Induction did this and it seemed to have worked.

Petruchio improvises a one-character drama for which he invents, precisely like the Lord, the appropriate costume and dialogue. And deliberately, he selects two public places - a church and a street both in Padua - to stage his play. Before the curtain rises to this production, Katherina disappointedly observes - 'Now must the world point at poor Katherine,/ And say "Lo, there is mad Petruchio's wife"' (III.ii.18-9). This is exactly the sort of lesson that Petruchio intends his play to convey. He employs Biondello as Chorus to herald the oddity of his dress and equipage, significantly remarking on his arrival - 'To me she's married, not unto my clothes' (113). Then he stages the first part of his play right at the altar, successfully creating consternation by his preposterous performance. He concludes his play after the wedding by scoring even greater success, leaving the audience confused between fright, laughter, and bewilderment. Petruchio must have been pleased to see his play going down ill with the

public; this is, after all, what he has been driving at - to make the people of Padua reconsider their judgement of Katherina. Now that they have watched Petruchio's outrageous behaviour, Katherina is 'a lamb, a dove' (153) compared to diabolical Petruchio. They have already learnt a lesson at the hands of master Petruchio.

In his country house, Petruchio resumes a series of private performances of his play, allowing other performers to step into the action, including Katherina who does not, however, take her cue at once. G.R. Hibbard has suggested that Petruchio, by his outlandish behaviour, has been holding up a mirror wherein his wife can see herself. In this distorting mirror she has seen how impossible her own behaviour has been.<sup>43</sup> Although this argument is true, it undermines Petruchio's teaching methods and reduces his role as a master to that of the wise fool; it also oversimplifies Katherina's transformation. What Petruchio is doing here is heading a cast in an instructive drama in which Katherina explores a role for herself by way of learning. Only a very clever, very discerning man' like Petruchio, Ruth Nevo remarks, 'could bring off [such a drama] on a honeymoon as sexless (as well as dinnerless) as could well be imagined.'<sup>44</sup>

As Petruchio continues performing, Katherina explores different roles before she apprehends her lesson fully. She is first the sympathetic mistress of the house who would not like a servant to be unjustly struck (IV.i.140). She is the snobbish lady who would not but be dressed in the latest fashion (IV.iii.69-72, 103). And then she is the stodgy literalist who would call the 'meat ... well' when it is not 'burnt' (IV.i.153, 145); and say it is 'two' o'clock when it strikes only two (IV.iii.185). But finally Katherina learns that she has to adopt the role that her teacher wishes her to play - namely, that of an obedient wife. Only then, Katherina realises that she and Petruchio can live in harmony. <sup>45</sup>

Brown has drawn the analogy between Sly and Katherina and shown how both characters reveal 'the gusto of actors who have been given congenial roles.' What Petruchio does in this play is 'to place his subject in a pageant where she will need an actor's ability to assess her role, and decide how to play it. Unlike Sly who remains a simple tinker because he lacks that ability, Katherina finally learns under the direction of Petruchio, to alter her role as the pageant of marriage and life requires.' <sup>46</sup> Katherina learns not to be tied to the literal when she must say it is the 'moon' when 'it is the blessed sun,' and when she must address

old Vincentio as a 'budding virgin' (IV.v.17. 18, 36).

More importantly, Katherina learns that her husband's commands are no more than an invitation to humorous invention. That is why in the final scene she does not fail to score a stage triumph. There, she knows that her cunning master is 'starting a new play in which she is to take a part.' And since she has worked her own education out for herself, she joins her teacher in his game, showing that she is not only a brilliant student but a talented actress too. In fact, she plays her part so well that the audience cannot be sure how much serious she is in her lecture on the 'subordination' of wives (V.ii.136-79). She plays it so brilliantly that 'only she and Petruchio,' as concluded by Charles Brooks, 'know how much is serious and how much put on.'<sup>47</sup>

It has been suggested that Katherina's last speech springs from a new-found happiness. 'She is simply enjoying herself,' Leggatt says. This, indeed, is the acme of Petruchio's education. As a teacher, he has taught his female-student his version of a moral lesson - namely, that man feels 'only human when he plays;'<sup>48</sup> he functions efficiently in a social group when he adapts his role as the drama of life requires.

The Taming of the Shrew is in the final analysis an academic drama - a play about education with all its



intellectual, psychological, and moral implications. It is significantly set in Renaissance Italy, the Paduan landscape being exceptionally appropriate.

The play's thematic development, however, is far from serious - is light-hearted. Comic reversals occur throughout as a result of the characters' involvement in various modes of education. The dramatist obviously takes the whole experience in which he sets his characters flippantly. This is nowhere clearer in the comedy than in Gremio's sarcastic remark - 'O this learning, what a thing it is!' (I.ii.158).

The degree of success achieved by the play's 'institutions of learning' is, therefore, a good deal less than one might have expected. Sly is dropped just as he is about to learn his lesson in earnest. In the Ovidian school of love, Bianca learns nothing, not in music, nor in life either. Lucentio, too, learns nothing. These characters' lack of education reflects on their embarrassment during the wager scene (V.ii). Surprisingly, it is Katherina who makes the most of her intensive 'course' at Petruchio's school of taming. She learns her lesson too well, and prides herself upon her own educability. However, Hortensio who actually reads on taming techniques at the same school, fails

the test when his wife emerges as a new virago yet to be brought to heel. The audience which has been watching in laughter the live experience of the play is expected to learn a lesson - most likely Petruchio's vision of moral order advocated by Katherina at the end.

Education may not be literally useful to all the play's characters, but it technically is so to the play itself. The theme elucidates the Shrew's wholeness with steadiness and clarity.

## Chapter 7

'Here can I sit alone  
unseen of any'

Alienation and Communion in

The Two Gentlemen of Verona

As quite rightly observed by Ralph Berry, 'No exercise of critical masculinity can make of The Two Gentlemen of Verona a neglected masterpiece.'<sup>1</sup> The present Chapter does not seek such an ambitious achievement. For a start, there is no reason why any amount of critical effort should be exerted to make of a given play a masterpiece overnight. Partly<sup>2</sup> important is the play's status in the study, a place where it has to be scrutinised before its ultimate release with - if fortunate - some grace. This is the thesis of the following argument: to suggest a way in which the play may read better in our study.

There are in The Two Gentlemen situations in which social as well as ethical standards are in conflict. In these situations the dramatis personae are rendered unable to find meaningful social norms within the geographical territories of their play. For instance,

Julia wonders whether she is tearing apart social convention by deserting her home town in pursuit of a lover - 'how will the world repute me/ For undertaking so unstaid a journey?' (II.vii.59-60). As a result, the characters feel restless about the extent of their social commitments. Julia becomes unreasonably scared of the consequences of her socially phenomenal action - 'I fear me it will make me scandalis'd' (61).

The sociological term which describes these situations is anomie, and the appropriate term for translating the characters' feelings is estrangement or alienation. Both concepts overlap each other so repeatedly that they have now become synonymous for the growing gap between individuals and their social existence.<sup>3</sup> Alienation is, however, 'a concept of considerable antiquity,' its implications changing throughout the ages. These implications are legion, but they are not, as may sometimes be thought, uniquely modern. Indeed they have been experienced by every society in every era.<sup>4</sup>

As a theme, alienation has always been one of the major topoi of literature. We find it in Greek and Roman tragedies, e.g. King Oedipus; in the comedies of Plautus and Terence, e.g. the Menaechmi; in medieval allegorical literature and Dante. In all of these, the motif of alienation is projected - though never without

ambivalence - 'in obsessive ... characters, perceptible ... beneath the nominal plots and dramatis personae.' One of these is the 'archetypal figure,' 'named variously the "shadow," the "other," the "alien," the "outsider," the "stranger."' <sup>5</sup> In Elizabethan drama, the theme is more readily available in Shakespeare than in any of his contemporaries, especially in his romantic comedies. <sup>6</sup> In these plays, Frye has found a pattern descending from the works of Menander, Plautus, and Terence, and a teteo-logical plot tracing the movement of an alienated lover towards holy communion and sexual fulfilment via marriage in a renewed society. <sup>7</sup>

Regardless of this pattern or plot, however, the theme of alienation can generally be traced in Shakespeare in his tragedies, e.g. Hamlet, or sonnets, by examining the dramatist's 'communal mythology,' 'inherited from his sources,' side by side with 'plot structures and characters.' 'Especially important,' Leslie A. Fiedler tells us, 'is the body of myth implicit in those fairy tales, fabliaux, and novelle to which he turned constantly in search of story material ...' <sup>8</sup>

For his plot in The Two Gentlemen, Shakespeare uses a myriad of literary source-materials found all over the Continent in prose and verse, Latin, English, French, Spanish, and Italian, in classical, medieval,

and contemporary versions. The most important at all of these is the prose romance originally composed in Spanish - Diana Enamorada. The body of this work of Portuguese Jorge de Montemayor, Shakespeare incorporates into the core of his love plot in the play.<sup>9</sup> For the play's setting, Shakespeare chooses Italy, probably in its 'Silver Age' in the sixteenth century, when 'The numerous Italian courts became centres of intellectual and social intercourse.'<sup>10</sup> One of these was the court of Milan at which the young gentleman Baldassare Castiglione was partly trained.<sup>11</sup> To this court, our 'two gentlemen,' Valentine and Proteus, are dispatched to receive their education and

practise tilts and tournaments,  
Hear sweet discourse, converse with noblemen,  
And in eye of every exercise.  
I.iii.30-2.

Although Shakespeare could have had access to the various sources of his plot in one way or another, he could never have seen the location selected for his play. It is very unlikely, as Sidney Lee strongly held, 'that Shakespeare ever set foot on the Continent of Europe in either a private or a professional capacity.' The dramatist's information about the social structure of the Italian society or its secular or religious institutions was thus indebted either 'to the verbal reports of travelled friends or to books.'<sup>12</sup>

Many of the sources of The Two Gentlemen involve disintegration of traditional ways of life reflected in the dichotomy of human needs versus social values. In the Diana, for instance, Felismena and Don Felix are separated from each other because of certain social values which necessitate the latter's advancement in the ways of high society. Felismena is alienated not only from her society which condemns her love affair while overpraising other human activities such as learning, but from herself also. She disguises herself as a man to catch up with her separated lover. And in the Arcadia, (the real) Zelmane and Pyrocles are involved in a similar situation when they are rendered unable to cope with the moral standards of their community. But they are later reintegrated (though only as Zelmane is lying at the point of death) when these standards are overcome and replaced by new ones <sup>13</sup> (Book IV). Both Felismena and Amazon Zelmane are estranged from their societies, and they are aware of their estrangements. They represent a generation facing 'structures (religious or secular) whose permanent features are indifferent to that generation's desires and aspirations.' <sup>14</sup>

Shakespeare could not have failed to grasp these moral and ethical connotations when he sat down to write his play. The situation of Amazon Zelmane as

well as that of her original prototype in the Diana is epitomised here in the comic predicament of Julia (and Silvia). Yet the dramatist carries the implications of alienation even to the rest of the characters, especially his 'two gentlemen' of the title. It is through these characters and their vicissitudes that Shakespeare most poignantly introduces his theme of estrangement. He places them right at the centre of the old, ritualistic strife of the generations, the old against the young, making them feel their alienations most strongly at the initial victory of their elders. Then in the final stages of his drama he transforms their estrangements into homecoming, communion, and complete reintegration with their social habitats after the defeat and submission of the older generation.

In deriving his theme from the age-old ritual of the struggle of the generations, Shakespeare was showing the extent of his anthropological awareness. Societies 'in order to continue in time have to transmit their institutions as well as roles and values from one generation to the next. The new generation is initiated into the meanings of the culture by means of family, school, church, and state, and learns to participate in its established tasks and to accept the roles as well as the identities that make up its social structure.' How-



ever, this process of handing a whole culture and system of life over to a new generation 'is not easy: every now and then it faces difficulties.' <sup>15</sup> It is these occasional impediments which engineer the plot of The Two Gentlemen, only to be vanquished later on and assimilated into the mirthful world, the new society which crystallises around the hero of the younger generation. It is only then that alienations resolve into communion.

The opening scene of the play shows us the workings of the older generation on the minds and attitudes of young Valentine and Proteus. Brought up in Renaissance Italy when the proper education of a young man was something that the old gentry pointed out most emphatically to their children, Valentine and Proteus, each strives in his own way to come to grips with this condition of society. The nobility of the time were not expected to ignore Castiglione's tips on how to prepare a child as an ideal courtier in an ideal court. Antonio's brother (Proteus's uncle) was, therefore, aggrieved to see that these ethical values were not conveyed to Proteus. Panthino thus breaks the news to Antonio -

He wond' red that your lordship  
 Would suffer him to spend his youth at home,  
 While other men, of slender reputation,  
 Put forth their sons to seek preferment out.

I.iii.4-7.

The importance of travel and worldwide education was already pointed out to Valentine most likely by a father who was not going to rest before seeing his son to the seaport. However, as Valentine speaks, one cannot help feeling that the young man has formed the whole notion of youth accomplishment all by himself. Although we may be carried away with him by his enthusiasm, there is little doubt, especially as we gather a little while later from Proteus's father's attitude, that the duties of a youth and the requirements of study have been dictated by an old-fashioned parent. But when Valentine enthusiastically embarks on his travels, we conclude that at least one member of the younger generation is quite happy with the previous generation's requirements.

Valentine is undoubtedly the agreeable type of son; he accepts without complaints the duties imposed by elder age, never arguing his own rights. He even goes to several lengths in portrayal of his own frame of mind, resorting to the useful methods of analysis and comparison. He firstly recites to Proteus - as if in fact to himself - the fruits to be harvested from 'studies;' his terms re-echo Bacon's view that 'Studies' are subservient 'for ornament and for ability. Their chief use for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability



as all scorn and grievousness and folly. This engenders a breach in the wall of friendship, which Valentine will later try to repair upon his reunion with Proteus - albeit to no avail.

Although Proteus feels very deeply this wide divergence, he does not blame Valentine for it: on the contrary, he reproves himself, his opinion of his friend becoming even higher than before. He is still, however, aware of the demarcation line which separates them.

He after honour hunts, I after love;  
 He leaves his friends to dignify them more:  
 I leave myself, my friends, and all for love,

Proteus says in conclusion (63-5). But then, almost out of the blue, he transfers the blame to Julia, on whom he fixes the responsibility for his marked alienation from himself, his studies, and his friends -

Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphis'd me,  
 Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,  
 War against good counsel, set the world  
   at nought;  
 Made wit with musing weak, heart sick  
   with thought.  
 66-9.

One would have conversely expected Proteus to try to overcome his feeling of alienation by entering into a positive relationship of feeling with Julia, that is, to let the sentiment of love overpower the feeling of

estrangement - 'Ah, love, let us be true/ To one another another.'<sup>18</sup> This, Proteus will try to do when he falls for Silvia. Before the scene yet ends, Proteus appears to be anxious about his message of love which he has put in Speed's charge. In this Proteus reveals one dimension of his character as a lover: he is the sort of bashful lover who dares not face his beloved with an amorous confession. But Castiglione's prescription for love-sick Proteus is handy - 'If the lover is so modest that he is ashamed to tell her of his love, let him write it to her.'<sup>19</sup>

Julia, in her turn, goes through the motions of saving her dignity by refusing to accept the letter of Proteus she so eagerly desires. Yet it is the conditions of society which give rise to such a conflict in the first place. Like Lyly's Gallathea or Sapho, Julia is in two minds. She should either listen to the moral teachings of the older generation and 'refuse always to believe that whoever pays court to her for that reason loves her,'<sup>20</sup> or obey her inner preacher and let her emotions go wherever and whenever they wish to go. When Lucetta singles out Proteus from the list of potential suitors, Julia hesitates at first to approve of her maid's preference, re-echoing the ethical values of her elders - 'His little speaking

shows his love but small;' 'They do not love that do not show their love' (I.ii.29, 31). But then she presumably dejectedly murmurs - 'I would I knew his mind' (33), betraying such a genuineness of affection that may pose a substantial threat to the generally accepted codes of reserved conduct. This will forcefully be brought forward in the unbridled conduct of Silvia in the following act.

Throughout the scene, Julia, especially when Proteus's letter is artlessly brought to her attention, passes through a continuous ebb and flow of calmness and resentment, sureness and uncertainty, ease and anxiety. She strives to demonstrate 'the chastity of mind' envisaged for 'highborn ladies in the presence of their lessers.'<sup>21</sup> And yet she endeavours at the same time to preserve the veracity of heart appropriate to sensitive and honest women as herself. Julia, in fact, struggles to prove something about herself, to herself as well as to others who are plainly inferior to her - Attic quality and distinction, both highly recommended by such a conservative society as the one in which she is a small unit. The general impression conveyed in the scene, especially in the severe reproof of the maid, of socially conforming womanhood, is a reminder of an analogous situation in Ralph Roister Doister.

Dame Custance anticipates Julia in that she sharply rebukes her maids for acting as Ralph's messengers (II.4.17-21). The difference between the two women, however, is that Dame Custance does mean what she says, whereas Julia does not.

Like Valentine earlier, Julia play-acts the 'spoilsport;' the 'sport' she 'spoils' is actually her own. However, even in that she spoils her relationship with her confidante, for which she will try to make up later when she leaves virtually all she has in Lucetta's trust. Knowingly, Julia alienates her maid from herself, as Valentine previously did with Proteus, 'How churlishly I chid Lucetta hence,/ When willingly I would have had her here!' (The Two Gentlemen, I.ii.60-1). Although at one moment in the scene Julia decides to 'call Lucetta back/ And ask remission for my fooly past' (64-5), she postpones asking pardon till later, when she willingly transforms all possible alienations into communal trust before embarking upon her 'divine' journey.

Nevertheless, these are not the only motions raised in the scene. More important is Julia's relationship with and response to Proteus and his love for her. Julia is supposed to be true to Proteus and yet also to adjust herself to the social structures

which obviously exert a definite pressure on her. In other words, Julia in order not to infringe social structure, has to let her emotional drives be adequately restrained by social control. Although she apparently observes the socially accepted norms especially in front of Lucetta she does not conform completely. She relinquishes, in her love for Proteus, the basic values of her community. Her prime desire of reintegrating with travelling Proteus is not in accord with governing codes of conduct in her society. Just before the scene ends, and as Julia falls into a love trance over the torn pieces of Proteus's letter, Lucetta comes back to recall her mistress to the inescapable routines of life - 'Madam,/ Dinner is ready, and your father stays' (130-31).

In the scene that immediately follows, Proteus is also called upon by his father to conform to a routine which became an established convention of the Italian society - travel.

Previously, we have not seen Valentine's father contemplating his son's career, but at least we have heard of his waiting at 'the road' to see his son 'shipp'd' (I.i.54). Here, however, the situation is worked out in detail and <sup>in</sup> such a way as to make us see that one of the young gentlemen does not actually have things his own way. The whole career of Proteus is decided in



a closed session between two presumably elderly people at the suggestion of an equally elderly person - Proteus's uncle. Antonio is informed by Panthino, an advisory servant, how his brother is tortured with the thought that his nephew's education is neglected. Antonio promptly allays his brother's fears, confirming that he has been brooding over his son's need to make the best of his time, now that he has it, being young and full of youthful energy.

Proteus's career has scarcely been planned in his absence, before he appears alone reading aside Julia's reply to his letter. This brings the notion of the clash between the generations to the foreground for the first time in the play. In the moment before his appearance, his father has taken a decision regarding his future life, assuming that his son will make no objection: social conventions are to be respectfully observed and more importantly by young people. Contrary to his father's assumptions, Proteus has other plans to carry out, which do not incidentally depart a long way from social convention: their ultimate conclusion - marriage - being the basic convention of any human community. Proteus, however, fears that his plans may clash with his (as well as with Julia's) father's moral values, which happens as is seen in the young



ion for love. Now he faces a kind of comic nemesis from the very thing towards which he was insolent - Love. Speed has a fair chance to play the 'spoilsport,' with the two-edged effect of integrating Valentine with his old friend - Proteus, while alienating Valentine from his very self - '... you are metamorphis'd ... that, when I look on you, I can hardly think you my master;' 'O that ... your own eyes had the lights they were wont to have when you chid at sir Proteus' (II.i.27-8, 64-5).

The love affair between Valentine and Silvia is still held in check by the governing codes of courtly ethics. This we gather from the awkward conduct of the pair throughout the scene which reaches a point of clumsiness. Instead of simply expressing their love for one another, Valentine and Silvia are forced to pursue the sophisticated channel of 'show-me-a-sign,' or 'take-this-clue.' These methods were propagated earlier in the century by the courtly moralist Castiglione. Let the courtly lady, Castiglione directed, 'show him who loves her every token of love except such as may imbue her lover's mind with the hope of obtaining something wanton from her.' 'Moreover,' Castiglione continued, 'he who is loved by such a woman ought to content himself with her every slightest demonstration, and to prize a single loving look from her more than a

complete possession of any other woman ... ' <sup>22</sup> In the light of these directions, Valentine ought to interpret Silvia's 'glove,' presumably dropped to be picked up by him, as a love token, a 'declaration of affection' on Silvia's part and a 'request for close relationship.' <sup>23</sup> Silvia, too, has to resort to the trick of making Valentine write her love letters to himself, in demonstration of her passion. Silvia does not directly write to Valentine because this type of behaviour was condemned at the time for showing a woman's immodesty.

The love affair of Valentine and Silvia is again destined to confront one of the most outstanding conventionalities of the age, one that has constantly recurred in fairy and folkloric tales. This is the motif of the old, rich suitor, normally the father's choice and favourite but only - as Valentine puts it - 'for his possessions are so huge' (II.iv.171). On the Italian stage from the sixteenth century, this figure appears in the comic type of character known as the 'pantaloon.' <sup>24</sup> Thurio plays the part, and the reference to him as a 'chameleon' (25) is unmistakable: he will later prove the inconstancy of his claim on Silvia when he retracts at Valentine's challenge. But Thurio is not the only inconstant character which constitutes traditional problems for young love. Proteus, the character with the



boy, run, run, and seek him out,' referring to Valentine (III.i.188). Proteus himself sums up both prophetic remarks when he states - though only as a figure of speech - how he is 'too mean a servant/ To have a look of such a worthy mistress,' meaning the emperor's daughter (II.iv.103-04).

Valentine attempts to reverse his previous attitude to love incarnated in his friend's character. By that he intimates to Proteus that both of them are no longer different, and that they can now celebrate their re-integration under the banner of victorious Cupid. Proteus is, however, unimpressed: he feels that he is still detached from Valentine - 'my zeal to Valentine is cold,/ And that I love him not as I was wont' (199-200). Proteus feels that he has become even more alienated from Valentine after catching sight of Silvia - 'O! but I love his lady too too much,/ And that's the reason I love him so little' (201-02). Proteus is emotionally metamorphosed; the transition in his feelings is so helplessly sudden that he cannot but feel alienated even from himself. Unconsciously, he acknowledges how susceptible he is to change and how defenceless before the claims of reason - ''Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,/ And that hath dazzled my reason's light' (205-06).

The choices which Proteus shortly reviews, in order to get over his emotional dilemma, lay bare the young man's distorted vision. He assumes that he should either reject Silvia and remain engaged to Julia and integrated with his friend, or alternatively alienate himself from his past passion and sever himself from Valentine by courting his mistress, or even refrain from both women and estrange himself from life by breaking his own heart. The central issue at stake here is one of identity which Proteus seems to have lost anyway - despite his sophistries -

Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose;  
 If I keep them, I needs must lose myself.  
 II.vi.19-20.

Proteus's review of the foregoing possibilities is pointless, since he has already determined to take a particular course of action. This implicates Proteus in further trouble: he needs to couple his scale of desired ends with socially regarded values as friendship and honour. His failure to do so reduces his general conduct to aberrance -

I will forget that Julia is alive,  
 Remembering that my love to her is dead;  
 And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,  
 Aiming at Silvia as a sweeter friend.  
 27-30.

At the very time that Proteus has so emphatically alienated himself from Julia particularly, the latter is longing to be reintegrated with him. And contrary to Proteus's outrageous decision to betray his friend's intrigue to the Duke, setting himself up as a courtly 'counsellor,' Julia makes amends for her earlier inexplicably rude treatment of Lucetta by confiding to the maid her deep heart desire - 'A journey to my loving Proteus' (II.vii.7). In that way Julia wisely modulates her relationship with Lucetta from one of provocation and chastisement into one of blessed friendship, that is from one of estrangement into one of intimacy. Confronted with the dramatic consequences of her lover's parting, Julia now declines to abide by social convention in front of her maid. Observing tradition, she makes out for herself, matters no more. She is now ready to tear away all traditions, confessing to spell-bound Lucetta how like 'A true devoted pilgrim,' she will follow 'one so dear/ Of such divine perfection, as Sir Proteus' (9, 12-3).

Julia's 'pilgrimage' here, which will later prove most requisite for bringing alienated Proteus to the community, is in a sense analogous to our wish, we, who have been alienated from heaven to renew our bond of



faith with the Lord -

I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,  
 And make a pastime of each weary step,  
 Till the last step have brought me to my love;  
 And there I'll rest as, after much turmoil,  
 A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

34-8.

Julia, however, makes the analogy with Elysium not heaven.

Although Julia is overconfident about her aspirational ends, she is somehow suspicious about the means. She is worried about how she will fare in the eye of the public if she is to cross over the facade of social morality. And since not many women at the time were allowed to undertake such a journey as hers - except for a few aristocratic ladies in the company of valiant knights as in Silvia's case - Julia is forced to make the journey in the guise of a man. She denies her own identity, or rather sex, in order to reunite with one whose

words, are bonds, his oaths are oracles,  
 His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,  
 His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,  
 His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

75-8.

It is highly significant in this context that Julia should congratulate herself on her lover's 'immaculate' integrity of character. This puts Proteus's disintegrated views of life, love, and friendship, which we have seen a short while ago, in a special perspective.

And so also Proteus's subsequent deeds are viewed from a particular angle. Julia oversteps socially prescribed manners, with the hope of achieving a divine union with Proteus. Proteus, by contrast, detaches himself from Julia, aiming to implement some anti-social ends - desires dictated to him in his emotional disorientation. Julia is blissfully ignorant that her estimation of Proteus does not after all tally with the man's tenuous integrity.

This point is brought into prominence in the scene to follow (III.i), where Proteus sounds the trumpet for a new bout between the struggling generations. In the same way that Panthino causes Antonio's action against his son, a situation that ends up with Proteus's humiliating defeat, the latter takes action against Valentine, by betraying him to the Duke. Proteus, nevertheless, finds the Duke already charged with grudge not just against Valentine, but against his daughter too whom he imprisons in an impregnable tower -

I nightly lodge her in an upper tow'r,  
The key whereof myself have ever kept.

35-6.

Silvia (possibly like Katherina) alienates herself from her father in demonstration of her disapproval of arranged alliances. The Duke, for his part, does

not concede. Rather than trying to re-establish his relationship with his daughter anew, he estranges himself from her entirely -

she is peevish, sullen, forward,  
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty;  
Neither regarding that she is my child  
Nor fearing me as if I were her father;  
..... this pride of hers,  
Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her.  
68-73.

Presumably unwittingly, the Duke touches upon meanings of alienation and explores - though only in theory - a way of preventing this alienation. Because the Duke forces his will on Silvia without paying attention to what she may feel, both father and daughter are alienated one from the other. The daughter takes to peevishness and sulks, while her father takes her captive and appoints himself the jailer. Having lost such a normal relationship with his daughter, the Duke pretends that he has turned to another woman seeking her love as a substitute by way of restoring his sense of belonging. He tells Valentine, whom he is trying to trap -

And, where I thought the remnant of my age  
Should have been cherish'd by her child-  
  like duty,  
I now am full resolv'd to take a wife.  
74-6.

Although in theory the Duke manifests an awareness of the dimensions of alienation, he does not certainly manifest the same in practice. Immediately after un-

covering Valentine's plot, he exiles him - 'Go, base intruder, overweening slave' (157). At this point Valentine is linked in our mind with the alienated hero of the fairy tales, who, banished from his princess and social existence, seeks, nevertheless, a means of reintegration. Valentine's feeling of alienation is explicit in his words -

Silvia is myself; banish'd from her  
Is self from self, a deadly banishment ...  
She is my essence.

172-73, 182.

Even Proteus stresses the same thing when addressing Valentine in an apparently sympathetic attitude, he says - 'thou art banished-/ From hence, from Silvia, and from me thy friend' (217-18).

The banishment of Valentine proves to be more serious than his presence. Soon after his exile, Silvia's defiance of her father's will becomes even more tangible. The courtesy she used to show to Thurio is now over, which makes the latter complain to the Duke -

Since his exile she hath despis'd me most,  
Forsworn my company and rail'd at me,  
That I am desperate of obtaining her.

III.ii.3-5.

The Duke himself complains to Proteus about the ground he is losing in his strife with his daughter -

Thou know'st how willingly I would effect



understandable to the bandits - 'A man I am cross'd with adversity;' 'I kill'd a man, whose death I much repent' (12, 27). Valentine is here telling lies to win the bandits' trust. He is surprised, however, to find out that at least one of them was banished for the same reason as himself -

Myself was from Verona banished  
 For practising to steal away a lady,  
 An heir, and near allied unto the Duke.

47-9.

(This, in a sense, brings Valentine more closely to these people.)

Attracted by Valentine's friendliness, the outlaws welcome him into their community, offering him what he lacks at this point - a sense of belonging and integration. They flatter him in their offer by asking him to act as their guardian, which adds the pleasure of being responsible -

Are you content to be our general-  
 To make a virtue of necessity,  
 And live as we do in this wilderness.

..... Wilt thou be of our consort?  
 Say 'ay' and be the captain of us all.  
 We'll do thee homage, and be rul'd by thee,  
 Love thee as our commander and our king.

61-3, 64-7.

Valentine does not become particularly alarmed by their intimidating remarks - 'But if thou scorn our courtesy thou diest,' 'Thou shalt not live to brag what we have

offer'd' (68, 69), and he agrees to be their guardian, dictating in the meantime one of the conditions of good guardianship -

I take your offer, and live with you,  
 Provided that you do no outrages  
 On silly women or poor passengers.

70-2.

Although Valentine's forced journey into the woods results in his integration in<sup>-to</sup> an alien social group, Julia's voluntary journey into Milan causes her alienation from her very lover. A little while before her appearance, Proteus reveals his intention of deceiving Thurio whom he actually makes a cat's-paw - 'Already have I been false to Valentine./ And now I must be as unjust to Thurio' (IV.ii.1-2). Proteus also reveals how his limitless falsehood, which now shoots in all directions, has been ineffectual on Silvia. The latter, in his confession, is shielded by a familiarity with the ethics of friendship as evident from the way she twits Proteus's inconstancy. The more Silvia detaches herself from him, the more he becomes spiritually engaged to her - 'Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love/ The more it grows and fawneth on her still' (14-5). Julia will come to the same realisation when she is shocked to see that for all the risks she has taken to

bring herself closer and closer to Proteus, the latter has been resolute in his delinquencies to tear himself away from her.

Entering Milan as Sebastian, Julia suddenly loses all excitement and falls into a depressed mood which the Host does not fail to notice - 'You're allycholly' (IV.ii.27). This feeling may be evidence of the woman's extra sensitivity - it is as if she sees clearly what is about to happen; as if she has suddenly become psychic. Julia's feeling of depression can be still better explained. Julia has earlier been uncomfortable about the shortcomings of her climbing over the fence of social convention. She has now the same misgivings, for she innocently believes Proteus to be a loyal observer of tradition. She is for this reason afraid lest he should rebuke her for imprudent conduct. She knows that he loves her for her noble maidenly pride, dignity of character, and truthfulness of heart, and she fears she may lower herself in his esteem by the unwomanly-like step that she has already taken.

Ignorant of this as well as of Sebastian's true identity, the Host suggests - 'Come, we'll have you merry; I'll bring you where you shall hear music, and see the gentleman that you ask'd for' (29-31). What, however, Julia sees and hears substantiates her pre-



monitions. There, in front of her eyes, her 'divine' Proteus is engaged in a live demonstration of his name. Julia's pun in the line - 'the musician likes me not' (55), indicates the sorrow of her heart, which she discloses still punning in her words - 'He plays false,' 'so false that he grieves my very heart-strings' (57, 59-60). It is during this scene that Julia learns of Proteus's betrayal of Valentine, of Thurio, and of herself. She hears Silvia rebuffing him, filling her lecture with the inconstancies of the man in both love and friendship. But she hears Proteus claiming that his love which is herself 'is dead,' and so his friend Valentine 'dead' too (102, 108). She hears Silvia asking Proteus to go and seek his 'lady's grave and call her thence;/ Or, at least, in hers sepulchre thine' (112-13). But she also finds Proteus not dispirited by Silvia's reproofs. Failing to gain access to her person, Proteus seeks permission to collect her picture for exhibition in his private gallery of love. Proteus is humiliated in his love for Silvia so immensely that his love for her turns into uninhibited lust. This shows up clearly in his rape attempt. Before the scene closes, Julia harps on the words 'substance' and 'shadow' to conclude for herself how Proteus has by his misdemeanours alienated Julia and her love from himself and his heart -





would have had to journey on her own probably disguising her identity like Julia - 'That I may venture to depart alone' (36).

Although Silvia here is not as reverential in describing the journey as Julia, she is much more pious in her general attitude. She justifies her motive by arguing that she will be avoiding an 'unholy match,' one that is not legalised by 'heavenly' laws. Moreover, she contemplates making confession (45).

Wishing to investigate closely Proteus's wilful conversion and hoping in the meantime to stumble incidentally upon a way out of this awkwardly unexpected state of affairs, Julia chooses not to segregate herself from her lover, taking service with him. In earlier scenes, Julia has been either almost silent, as at the moment of Proteus's leave-taking, or intensely perplexed, as on the occasion of receiving his letter; she has been either extremely excited, as when idolising her wayward lover, or remarkably enterprising, as in her decision to embark upon a symbolic 'pilgrimage.' But now that she heard Proteus wooing Silvia, Julia is for the first time made to experience a feeling of alienation.

It is interesting that Proteus should accept the service of Julia-Sebastian, judging her by her outward

looks to be most reliable and trustworthy. Proteus, unwittingly, reunites himself with his former love, an action that will ultimately work out his moral restoration. Julia, on the other hand, is now given a position of advantage in which she may (if she wishes) introduce the subject of her alienated self into her conversation with both Proteus and Silvia.

Agreeing to act as an agent of love, Julia explores Proteus's devotion. When the latter gives her the very ring she gave him earlier as a parting gift at Verona, to deliver to Silvia, she asks him, probing his previous statement to Silvia that Julia 'is dead' - 'It seems you lov'd not her, to leave her token./ She is dead, belike?' (IV.iv.70-1). Proteus, however, admits the fallacy of that statement - 'Not so; I think she lives' (72), showing that deep at heart he is aware of the abasement of his judgements. Thereupon, Julia struggles to awaken him to a glimpse of the past, pointing it out to him that he has estranged himself from former love for some new indifferent one -

She dreams on him that has forgot her love:  
 You dote on her that cares not for your love.  
 'Tis pity love should be so contrary.

77-9.

But Proteus does not wish to open his own eyes to this; he prefers to remain 'solitary' in his chamber where he

intends to pin up Silvia's picture and release his inhibited love for her in (sexual) fantasies. <sup>25</sup>

Aggrieved at the abnormality of feeling evidently exhibited by her own 'idol' lover, Julia debates her relationship with Proteus, just as he did before, but only to abide by her vow of love to him rather than to forswear his love. In this attitude, Julia has so far been consistent; she does not want to retract now. 'Because I love him, I must pity him,' she says while still aware of the disruption of relationship brought about by Proteus's parting with the very symbol of engagement -

This ring I gave him, when he parted from me,  
To bind him to remember my good will.  
92, 93-4.

Julia, therefore, determines to deny her own feelings so as to remain beside Proteus: if she can be a true lover, can she be a true servant too -

I am my master's true confirmed love,  
But cannot be true servant to my master  
Unless I prove false traitor to myself.  
99-101.

When Julia goes off to woo Silvia on Proteus's behalf, she is reassured that his suit is still utterly rejected. A conversation about Proteus's first but forsaken love then supervenes in which the theme of alienation is accentuated. Silvia tells Julia, unaware of Sebastian's true identity, that Proteus would do better to go back to his Julia rather than to woo where he

should not. She does not accept Proteus's present of the ring because she does not want to be responsible even partially for the separation of two lovers. Unwittingly, Silvia establishes a good, natural, human relationship with Julia which is bound under the circumstances to alleviate the latter's sense of estrangement. Julia, in her turn, reveals the sorrow of her heart aggrieved by Proteus's transgression of the moral laws of their relationship (145-52). She tells Silvia that she knows Julia as she does herself, knows how fondly she loves her master, and how his unkind neglect will grieve her, adding the pretty equivocation - 'she is about my height' (160). This derives even more sympathy for Julia from Silvia - 'Alas, poor lady, desolate and left' (170). Julia cannot but think highly of Silvia, explaining her reasons as thus - 'Since she respects my mistress' love so much' (176-78).

Left on her own, Julia reads into Proteus's devotion to her rival's painted image a reflection of his shows of faithlessness -

O, thou senseless form,  
 Thou shalt be worshipp'd, kiss'd,  
                                   and lov'd, and ador'd!  
                                   194-95.

She, then, turns her meditation into a denunciation of the idolatry which love of this kind implies -

And were there sense in his idolatry  
 My substance should be statue in thy stead.  
 196-97.

This demonstrates Julia's belief that Proteus is too dull not to differentiate between her own real devotions and the insubstantial reality of Silvia's picture. Julia is surprised to see Proteus seek the company of Silvia who detaches herself from him, while repudiating her who is already engaged to him.

The earlier reluctance of Julia to surrender to the unpleasant tide of events does not alleviate the discomforts of the social role imposed on by tradition. Contrary to her own expectations, the pursuit of her lover aggravates her situation. Silvia's rebellion, however, against social convention, happily resolves her entangled situation as well as that of travelling Julia. The Duke is furious when he finds out that his captive-daughter has managed to escape (V.ii.35). It is interesting that he should say how she was seen in her flight by Friar Lawrence - 'As he in penance wander'd through the forest' (38). The image of the friar performing an act of penance reflects the ordeal through which Valentine goes in the same forest; moreover the friar's action contrasts sharply with Proteus's sinful deeds in the wood for which he will later be required to do penance after his confession.



Already the action is approaching the end when all alienations are to be absorbed in holy communion. Already Thurio is contemplating withdrawal of his suit. He decides to follow Silvia not to renew his claim on her (which he, however, does), but to avenge himself on Sir Eglamour whom he would have thought to observe convention of all people (49-52). Proteus contrasts with Thurio; he does not care about social morality. He, too, will chase Silvia, but only for love which he claims by physical force (53-4). Julia, in her turn, decides to chase the rest to see to the restoration of Proteus (55-6).

In the forest, Eglamour takes to heels at the first sign of peril, disappointing Silvia in all the ideals of chivalry he stood for. The outlaws reassure Silvia, uttering one of the most significant lines at this stage - 'Be patient; we must bring you to our captain' (V.iii.2). The outlaws are unaware of the great joy they may bring Valentine. Silvia is not aware either of the good fortune awaiting her in the encounter with the 'captain.' Unwittingly, the outlaws intend to reintegrate Silvia and her lover, whereas Silvia deplures her misfortunes (3). The outlaws reassure Silvia, again, still remembering Valentine's first demand of them on taking over captainship -

Fear not; he bears an honourable mind,  
And will not use a woman lawlessly.

13-4.

There is, nevertheless, someone else who will 'use a woman lawlessly' - Proteus. But before we come to that, Valentine appears to make us privy to his now growing sense of belonging to the woods -

The shadowy desert, unfrequented woods;  
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.  
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,  
And to the nightingale's complaining notes  
Tune my distresses and record my woes.

V.iv.2-6.

As a leader, Valentine still has so much to do for the reformation of his subjects -

They love me well; yet I have much to do  
To keep them from uncivil outrages.

16-7.

Hardly has he finished his words before he is shocked to see that there is someone else needing reformation even more badly than the outlaws themselves - his very friend. He addresses the latter as an 'outlaw' stressing his 'uncivil outrages,' from which he was trying to save his friends of the forest. 'Ruffian,' Valentine addresses Proteus, 'let go that rude uncivil touch' (60). Valentine, then, sets out to 'reform' Proteus, by making him see the gravity of his transgressions. Through perjury, Proteus has reduced Valentine to an 'alien' and the world to a 'stranger' -



his words -

Who by repentance is not satisfied  
 Is nor of heaven nor of earth, for these  
   are pleased;  
 By penitence th' Eternal's wrath appeas'd.  
   79-81.

Valentine is also aware of the demands of friendship, which he cannot - with all the hurriedness of the scene - reconcile properly with the requirements of public morality. Even in this, Valentine does not go completely wrong. Valentine is obviously thinking now in terms of the morality of the forest in which he is a Duke-figure. He has already shown his preference of forest life to that of civilized society. Had he been at the court at this moment, he would most certainly have followed the ethical directions of Castiglione for courtiers. Here and now, things are tangibly different, and so particularly are the codes of conduct. Valentine, therefore, treats Proteus as an 'outlaw' and restores him to his new community. Then in order to make sure that Proteus will remain faithful to the values of this community, he offers him his lady. Robin Hood himself would have done the same thing so as to promote social integrity in his bandits. By this action, Valentine hopes to change Proteus from an inhibited, one-dimensional character into one uninhibited, one who can be socially conforming in the full sense.



Finding that Valentine has already forgiven Proteus, Julia forgives him too, especially when Proteus confesses that there was nothing particularly charming about Silvia enough to have made him estrange himself from Julia. Unlike Valentine's, Julia's forgiveness is not verbal; it is implied in her acquiescence at Valentine's suggestion of marriage. It is a pity, Valentine says, that such two lovers - as Proteus and Julia - should have been alienated for so long - "'Twere pity two such friends should be long foes' (118). In this line, Valentine is also thinking of his relation to both Silvia and Proteus.

The proposed marriage of Julia and Proteus is but a small part of the genial synthesis and happy combination in which the theme of alienation is resolved. The theme does not stop at reuniting individual lovers of a particular community. It goes as far as bringing together two different societies and contrasted characters: the uncivilized outlaws and the civilized noble characters come together to partake of a happy communion. But before that, contrasted attitudes within the community are reconciled. The will of the younger generation prevails as their confidence increases. Even in front of the Duke, Valentine challenges the older generation's will in the

character of Thurio. In his rebuke of the same character, the Duke concedes defeat of his own generation of which he is the supreme authority. The values of the younger generation are applauded in the character and will of Valentine, whose name swells now to significance. It has surely taken the Duke too long to realise that Valentine was 'worthy of an empress' love' (141). Previously, he had only to listen to Valentine's report of Proteus to conclude that the latter too was 'worthy for an empress' love' (II.iv.72). The fact that the Duke is left with no option but to endow his daughter upon her lover signifies the complete submission of the older generation to the younger. He simply says to Valentine - 'Thou hast prevail'd' (158), which is enough admission of defeat. The latter avails himself well of these advantageous circumstances by asking the Duke to reconsider the social status of the banished outlaws, and the possibility of their reintegration. Exiled aliens they may be, yet they possess qualities that qualify them to reintegrate with the civilized community. The Duke should 'let them be recall'd from their exile,' because they

Are men endu'd with worthy qualities ...  
 They are reformed, civil, full of good,  
 And fit for great employment.  
 V.iv.155,153-57.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona ends by suggesting a condition of society in which social standards are not in conflict, are, to the contrary, in harmony. The characters' goals are clear; they are to celebrate: the young their intended marriages, the bandits their new social commitments, and the old a new way of life. Meaningful social norms, such as love, honour, friendship, and constancy in all, are there for the characters to organise their lives anew. The sense of social belonging, on the part of the outlaws particularly, is now regained. This is bound to stop them from turning to crime. The play, in other words, ends in a state of communion in which all alienations are transformed into homecoming.

In this new state of affairs, all the stresses, pressures, inconsistencies, and injustices of social order experienced by the characters earlier on, are lifted. The want of correspondence between a young man or woman and his or her elders is provided for. The authoritarian type of parent is replaced by an understanding father who will no more suppress his child's spontaneous feelings. The purpose of society, in short, will from now on, be to provide 'the greatest possible fulfilment of its individual members.'<sup>28</sup> The Duke says -

Come, let us go; we will include all jars



With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.  
160-61.

In exploring this theme of alienation and communion, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, I believe, appeals to us to reconsider our view of it as the 'underdog' of the early comedies. If it has failed drastically to impress us as a romantic comedy by turning comedy against romance; if it has crudely tackled its plot of friendship by fitting its characters unconvincingly;<sup>29</sup> if it has not simply worked either way, it now tries again, harder than ever, to address itself to us from a new perspective, hoping to unveil its undervalued fascination. It concerns itself seriously with a theme that can be a key-element in the understanding of at least an aspect of the society of Shakespeare's plays. The theme can, in another respect, change the old view that 'social security' in Shakespeare 'is generally attained through marriage.'<sup>30</sup> As we have just seen from the play, this 'security' is basically achievable in a state of general communion, marriage being but part of a larger whole.

Incidentally, the theme of alienation happens to possess some special fascination to us - modern readers of literature. In the light of this further facet of the play's thematic content, therefore, The Two Gentlemen may be argued to make a good impression, as good an impression as can be made by any of Shakespeare's early comedies, if not by his later ones.

## Chapter 8

'It is religion  
to be thus forsworn'

The Religious Dimension of

Love's Labour's Lost

Despite all his jargon, the Curate of Love's Labour's Lost makes a meaningful remark which he substantiates by biblical if not patristic authority. When the Schoolmaster invites him to a dinner and a treat of critical debate, Nathaniel is obliged - 'thank you ...; society, saith the text is the happiness of life' (IV. ii.52). Nathaniel's observation is backed up here by two religious sources. The first which is biblical is the reason given for the creation of Eve in Genesis - 'Also, the Lord God sayde, it is not good that the man should be himselfe alone: I will make him an helpmeete for him' (ii.18).<sup>1</sup> The second source is the Book of Common Prayer in such commendations of matrimony as - 'duly considering the causes for which Matrimony was ordained ... for the mutual society, help, and comfort.'

Nathaniel's observation has some significance which I do not think has been noticed before, in connection

with either the structure or the theme of Love's Labour's Lost. With its scriptural bearings on women and the company they are intended to bear with men, whether in love or more specifically in marriage, the observation is structurally inserted in the interval, as it were, between two interesting scenes concerned with comic reversals. The first of these, IV.i, discloses Don Adriano de Armado's confession of love and anxiety to be with Jaquenetta. Earlier, the fantastical Spaniard referred to the same woman, especially after catching her off guard with Costard, as a 'weaker vessel,' being 'a child of our grandmother Eve, a female; or, .. a woman' (I.i.255, 249), using biblical terms.<sup>2</sup> Earlier also, Armado told this plebeian descendant of Eve that he wished to keep her company - 'I will visit thee at the lodge,' 'I know where it is situate' (I .ii.128, 130). Then in a wordy letter, obviously beyond the woman's rustic understanding, he goes to the length of begging her companionship - 'Shall I entreat thy love? I will' (IV.i.76). The characteristic rhetoric of the braggart is, however, unmistakable.

The other scene, IV.iii, exposes in the young gentry of Navarre the same emotional transformation as in Armado. They, too, voice a profound wish for engage-

ment to the young ladies of France. Unless they are united with their lady-loves, they can only be wretched, their lives becoming increasingly unbearable. When the Navarrese gentlemen decided to dedicate themselves to their scholarly project, the slightest contact with women was explicitly ruled out as a mere distraction - 'no woman shall come within a mile' (I.i.119). They even punished Costard for immoral behaviour - namely, making physical contact with a woman within the confines of their establishment. But they only had to encounter the Princess of France and her sweet entourage briefly to indulge in composing sonnets filled with genuine longings (IV.iii). As Armado's letter is betrayed to the train of courtly ladies, so are the courtiers' sonnets discovered to one another, Berowne's love poem to Rosaline being misdelivered to the country lass.

In its placing, thus, Nathaniel's remark with its religious connotations of women as the mainspring of a man's happy life is dramatically significant. It links two scenes dealing with comic reversals towards the opposite sex. The comic reversal occurs first in the subplot to prepare us for its counterpart in the main plot.

The Curate's remark is yet more significant from the thematic point of view. It relates directly to

what I believe is the religious concern of the play. The language of Love's Labour's Lost is, as I shall try to show, 'charged with more or less recognizable echoes of the Bible and of Christian homiletic material,' which if taken together 'constitute an important thematic undercurrent of thought and imagery in the play.'<sup>3</sup> This underlying stream can simply be defined as man's happy, good life, or rather, summum bonum.

Both the beginning of Love's Labour's Lost and the dénouement are concerned with a type of life, a modus vivendi in which man with the best of intentions may live - if not die - blissfully. One can look at this in terms of 'the medieval tradition of homily and drama which still survived into the Elizabethan Age ...'<sup>4</sup> I have previously shown that the underlying form of the play is the sin-confession-redemption Morality pattern. At a moment of moral confusion, man chooses a specific way of living which leads him astray and brings about his downfall. But then as he is about to lose individual salvation, he realises where he has gone wrong and mends his ways, reverting to the righteous path. In such a new state of affairs his sins are atoned, and he can be sure of heaven.

One can also consider this choice in terms of the



The Christian issue secularised here is immortality. The King describes his comrades -

Therefore, brave conquerors - for so you are  
That war against your own affections  
And the huge army of the world's desires.

I.i.8-10.

The lines again cite and echo scriptures especially the Pauline 'Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil' (Ephesians. iv.11), and the Book of Common Prayer's 'Grant that all carnal affections may die in them, ... Grant that they may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh.'

As it turns out, the means which may enable the young men to avert mortality is one of antagonism against sociable life with all its variations. It is not insignificant that the King should talk here about soldiers and conquests, wars and battles. As we have just seen, this has a close resemblance to the Christian 'metaphor of the spirit wrestling against dark adversaries'<sup>7</sup> - 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, - but against ... the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places' (Ephesians.iv.12).

Love's Labour's Lost commences as a play 'about arms and armour, about what men arm themselves for and what they fight against within themselves and outside.'<sup>8</sup>

On reminding his 'warriors' of their 'late edict' (I.i.11), the King refers to their armour which should 'strongly stand in force' (11). However, this armour, as we soon discover, is not meant to make the courtiers wrestle against certain influences and win. It is intended to make their dukedom the pride of all duchies. The King declares - 'Navarre shall be the wonder of the world' (12). What will make the dukedom so is the way of life the King suggests should be endorsed by his men-at-arms, equipped by their initial vows.

Our court shall be a little Academe  
Still and contemplative in living art.  
13-4.

The regime suggested by the King here points to one of the central issues of Christianity - the biblical 'problem of how to live - which can be another way of saying how to die'<sup>9</sup> - 'Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death' (Jeremiah.xxi.8). This biblical problem is taken up and intensely dramatised by most Moralities, where it involves a question of choice. Everyman, for example, dramatises 'the fact that a man must choose between Goods and Good deeds.' Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, to take a Renaissance Morality closer to our play, overtly deals with the same topic. Its hero of the title 'must choose between lawful and unlawful knowledge.'<sup>10</sup>



On account of his opening speech, Navarre may be argued to evoke memories of Marlowe's hero. And just as Navarre is associated with the same renaissance aspirations to scholarship, he may also be argued to sin like Faustus through spiritual pride. These assumptions are confirmed by Berowne's ironic remark - 'I will swear to study so,/ To know the thing I am forbid to know' (59-60). Yet, in spite of all this, the Navarrese King is after a way of life virtually the opposite to that of Faustus. Navarre remind his courtiers that they have decided to cast off the garment of amorous desire for three years to enhance their return after the prescribed period is over to the vita activa. Following that he says - 'Your oaths are pass'd; and now subscribe your names' (19). The covenant that the courtiers are asked to sign strikes me as a version of the Faustian bond with the devil played down (to suit the play's comic design). In this light, it further strikes me that Navarre is an Evil Angel trying to seduce his young attendants into going against the divine order of nature. His proposed war against eros and the living world, as a means of achieving intellectual awareness, may be sc<sup>h</sup>olarly but it is absurd surely.<sup>11</sup> Somehow he is unbalanced, and mentally ill-equipped in his

defiance of earthly pleasures. He, therefore, misdirects, like a malus daemon, his fellows' desires. This will later become evident when their quest for eternal fame through self-devotion to study, entraps them in incessant mockery.

To the King's temptation (22-3) -

If you are arm'd to do as sworn to do,  
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too,

Longaville and Dumain succumb. Ironically, however, they justify their submission on scriptural grounds. There is an echo in Longaville's justification of his resolve to fast (24-7) -

I am resolv'd; 'tis but a three years' fast.  
The mind shall banquet, though the body pine.  
Fat paunches have lean pates; and dainty bits  
Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits,

of the Old Testament's condemnation of excessive food and drink - 'But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of salvation' (Deuteronomy.xxxii.15).

Dumain's argument, on the other hand, though revealing as much mortification as Longaville's, points straight to the New Testament. When he announces - 'To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die,/ With all these living in philosophy' (31-2), he calls to mind the Apostolic advice to the Romans - 'For if ye live after

the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live' (viii.13), and to the Colossians - 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry' (iii.5).

Standing at the opposite pole from his innocent friends, Berowne does not knuckle under his King's inducement. And although he finally agrees to sign his name beside the others', he indicates that he is not entirely submissive. Berowne, in fact, objects to the very things that Longaville and Dumain have just 'proven,' by drawing on scriptural parallels, not to be worthwhile. His insistence that the company of women, and the necessities of eating, drinking, and sleeping are human needs, serves as a counter argument. It is more than likely that the reasons behind the creation of Eve - already mentioned - are at the back of Berowne's mind in presenting his conviction - 'these are barren tasks, too hard to keep,/ Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep!' (47-8).

The King teases Berowne, stressing that it is irreligious to break a monastic vow. Berowne's evasive reaction - 'By ye and nay, sir, then I swore in jest' (54), sets the whole verbal exchange in biblical context -



the evil serpent. The parallel is reinforced by the deliberate setting of the scene in the park.

Berowne keeps challenging the King's convictions, basing his counter arguments still on the Old Testament. To the King's mention of 'training' 'intellects to vain delights' (71), Berowne hastily argues -

Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain  
Which, with pain purchas'd, doth inherit pain,  
As painfully to pore upon a book  
To seek the light of truth.

72-5.

The lines are comparable to the scriptural 'All is but vanitie (saith the preacher) all is but plaine vanitie,' 'Therefore beware my sonne of that doctrine that is beside this: for to make many bookes, it is an endlesse worke: and too much study wearieth the body' (Ecclesiastes.xii.9, 12). To the Elizabethan ear, the lines are especially reminiscent of 'and much reading is a wearinesse of the flesh' (Genevan Bible), and the page heading in the Bishops' 'All things are vaine.'

It is interesting to notice how many allusions to scriptures are scattered throughout this part of the opening scene alone. It is interesting also to notice how the King and Berowne debate the validity of the structure and ethical standards of the would-be life of philosophical contemplation. In medieval terms, the two characters can probably be taken as the evil and good

'spirits contending for man's soul,'<sup>12</sup> represented here by innocent Longaville and Dumain. As the scene proceeds, the latter join their voices with the King with the result that Berowne (oddly enough) commits himself too - though unconvincedly - to the charted way of life.

At this point the clownish rustic Costard appears in custody as the first citizen to disobey the basic edict of the new 'Academe.' Berowne has just raised a protest against this strict item which prohibits any man from being 'seen to talk with a woman within the term of three years' (128). Now his objection is justified by the fact that the bumpkin is caught in the King's garden 'sorted and consorted' (245) with Jaquenetta. Costard endeavours to explain to the courtiers in what manner he was taken with Jaquenetta. His words show the extent to which he is made to echo the Bible. When he says - 'The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta. The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner' (197-98), he uses phrases commonly used in the Bible, even in similar connection - 'Neither she be taken with the maner' (Numbers.v.13). The biblical quotation concerns a man and a woman involved in a sexual act.

When the King pronounces that Costard will have to 'fast a week with bran and water,' the latter jestingly

reacts - 'I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge' (281, 282). Here Costard quibbles on the text's - 'ye may give yourselves to fastyng and prayer: and afterwarde come together agayne, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinencie' (I Corinthians.vii.5).

This little humorous incident adds to Berowne's assertion phrased in Puritanical terms - that every man with his affects is born, / Not by might mast'red, but by special grace' (149-50; my own italics). The same incident shows as faulty the moral foundation of the courtiers' imminent task. They try to live like monks and priests by turning to an introverted life - one devoid of female character. Soon, however, they will realise that women are there in the world not to be ejected.

The first character to become aware of this truth is Armado. With all his usual hyperboles, Armado still alludes to the Bible. His elaborate reference to Costard's girl in the letter dispatched to the King (249 ff), has its source in 'Hevah, because she was the mother of all living' (Genesis.iii.20), and in 'Giving honour unto the woman as unto the weaker vessel' (I Peter.iii.7). When Armado falls for the same country wench, he identifies her and himself with biblical figures, especially Samson and Delilah (I.ii.71 ff), referring

directly to scriptures (Judges.xvi.3, xiv.5, 6). His peculiar inference that 'Love is a devil. There is no evil angel but Love' (163) is intriguing. It infuses two distinct traditions, both of great antiquity, in a striking manner. The first one is the Platonic concept of the 'two loves' (the gemini amores), as two spirits (duo daemones) bonus daemon and malus daemon, attempting either to elevate the soul (ad superna) or degrade it (ad inferna). The second tradition is the concept of the two medieval 'spirits' - the good and evil - who also contend for man's soul. <sup>13</sup>

For Shakespeare and his audience, the Bible was not 'the only place where people were exhorted to think carefully about their undertakings. One of the Homilies was "Against Swearing and Perjury," and said in part: "As well they use the name of God in vaine, that by an oath make unlawful promises of good and honest things, and performe them not; as they which doe promise evill and unlawfull things, and doe performe the same."'<sup>14</sup> I quote this 'homily' at some length because it explains the Princess's comment that it is sinful both to make and break the oath.

When the Princess of France first appears, her speech to Boyet refers to the 'oath' sworn by Navarre - 'Till painful study shall outwear three years,/ No woman



may approach his silent court' (II.i.22, 23-4). The Princess is aware of the abnormality of the vow, and the confusion of its undertaker. She at once realises the palpable absurdity inherent in the King's scheme; and the spiritual pride which causes it to pervert the laws of nature. Her words to Boyet that 'All pride is willing pride' (36), are curiously meaningful.

Still referring to Navarre and his vow, the French Princess turns to her attendant lords inquiringly - 'Who are the votaries, .../ That are vow-fellows with this virtuous Duke' (37-8). The attendant ladies, however, are the ones who satisfy the royal lady's curiosity. They delineate the men in critical words as people in whom imagination, wit, and thought soar (40-76). The way the ladies acutely note the lords' respective qualities of 'wit' sets the play against the medieval background of 'Wit' Moralities. <sup>15</sup>

Having learned about Navarre 'and his competitors in oath' (82), the Princess sets out to test the steadfastness of their convictions. Thus in the confrontation scene, Christian words are used ironically to deflate the ostentatious vows. The King's 'Hear me, dear lady: I have sworn an oath' is ridiculed in the Princess's 'Our Lady help my lord! He'll be forsworn'

(96, 97). Emboldened by the King's inept excuses, the Princess underlines the difficulty of Navarre's situation - "'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, .../ And sin to break it' (104-05).

The Princess's attitude calls to mind Berowne's earlier (I.i), except for one thing. When Berowne inveighed against a way of life that excluded women, his protests had a common sensical basis (149-50). Even before Costard was 'taken' with his woman, Berowne prophesied - 'Necessity will make us all forsworn' (146). And after the affair of the clown was disclosed, Berowne provided a fitting sequel - 'These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn' (288). The Princess's view, on the other hand, is based on religion. This is emphasised by the words she uses - albeit sarcastically - in describing the devotees' involvement. Like Berowne, she warns Navarre - 'You'll prove perjurd if you make me stay' (II.i.112).

But it is Berowne who first proves 'perjurd' (III. i.188), through falling in love with and wanting to woo Rosaline. Berowne finds this hard to believe - 'What! I love, I sue, I seek a wife -/ A woman' (179-80). Without knowing it, Berowne harps on the very reason why he should not abide by his initial vow. Loving a woman and suing for her hand are ordinances of heaven to which

his King has chosen to turn a blind eye. Berowne, in effect, feels that he is going into temptation -

And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!  
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague.  
190-91.

Berowne misuses scriptural words which refer to temptation - 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak' (Matthew.xxvi.41).

Berowne is pleased to see that he is not alone in danger of breaking his pledge. In the most memorable scene of the play, IV.iii, he finds himself in a position of advantage over the others. Watching closely from his hiding place, he sees them going through a period of change. Previously, Longaville and Dumain were in agreement with their King. They signed their names in support of the general pledge. Moreover, they explained their action on religious grounds. Here, however, they declare their respective perjuries, each thinking himself the bearer of all shame.

In this again, Longaville and Dumain resort to religion not only recalling verbal parallels in scriptures, but also using familiar Christian words to justify their new motives. Longaville does something comparable to Proteus in The Two Gentlemen upon being charged with negligence. As Proteus does with Julia,

Longaville, forced also into an act of perjury, fixes the responsibility on 'sweet Maria, empress of [his] love' (52).

'Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye, ...  
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?'  
56-8.

Longaville, too, endeavours to overcome his own sense of guilt -

'Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.  
A woman I forswore: but I will prove,  
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:  
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;  
Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me.'  
59-63.

Longaville plays with such ideas in the Bible as - 'he that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that commeth from heauen, is aboue all' (John. iii.31); and '(But are) iustified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Iesu' (Romans. iii.24). He also plays with the biblical theme of losing and finding, which starts to gain special significance from that point onwards.

'Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is ...  
If broken, then it is no fault of mine;  
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise  
To lose an oath to win a paradise?'  
64-9; my own italics.

The lines, particularly the last, are reminiscent of St. Luke's parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son, used to typify the



Ironically, Longaville cannot tolerate Dumain's revealing his love-longing. Hardly has the latter recited his sonnet (to Katharine) in which he begs her not to 'call it sin in me/ That I am forsworn for thee' (111-12), before Longaville comes forward to surprise him in this act of perjury. Because Longaville has been hiding his own defection, the King - having had the advantage of both - appears and taunts them. The King goes too far in his chastisement of Longaville - 'You would for paradise break faith and troth,' and of Dumain - 'And Jove for your love would infringe an oath' (139, 140). This makes Berowne leap out of ambush to confront all 'hypocrisy' (147). His reproof may sound serious in so far as his fellow-sinners are concerned -

You found his mote; the King your mote did see;  
But I a beam do find in each of three.  
157-58.

For the audience, however, his words provide a mocking echo of Christ's exhortations against hypocrisy - 'And why seest thou a mote in thy brother's eye, and considerest not the beam that is in thine owne eye' (Luke.vi.41). The funny thing here is that Berowne preaches these Christian teachings but does not in the least practise them. Christ exhorts again 'Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in

thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye' (Luke.vi.42). We may see Berowne as another sinner; yet he is not certainly so in the eyes of the others -

I that am honest, I that hold it sin  
To break the vow I am engaged in;  
I am betrayed by keeping company  
With men like you.

173-76.

The references to some religious texts (Proverbs.xiii.20; Ecclesiastes.v.4) with their warnings of bad company and exaltation of vow-keeping are unmistakable.

Berowne is soon reduced, upon the arrival of an intercepted letter, to the level of his friends - as 'guilty' of 'treason' (200, 187). Costard, who comes with Jaquenetta and the letter, remarks rather sharply - 'Walk aside the true folk, and let the traitors stay' (209), contrasting himself and his beloved with the now-embarrassed courtiers. This line holds the key to the courtiers' embarrassment. Costard cannot as yet have forgotten the exposure of his love affair in the opening scene. He expressed, though only confidentially, his bewilderment at the sentence inflicted on him. In an aside he told Berowne that he could not understand why he had to be prosecuted for simply trying to be true to himself, his nature, his instincts - 'I suffer for the

truth, sir; for true it is I was taken with Jaquenetta, and Jaquenetta is a true girl' (I.i.288-89). Now he deliberately implies to the courtiers that they have perverted in forswearing women, their own human desires.

Berowne, nevertheless, reassures his friends that they are true, 'As true ... as flesh and blood can be' (IV.iii.211), and that 'Young blood doth not obey an old decree' (211, 213). Suddenly, the courtiers find themselves renouncing their own pledges. These pledges have proved precisely as suggested in Dumain's poem - 'for youth unmeet' (109), which is what Berowne has so far indicated. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is the latter who enters his argument over again that it is foolish to continue 'keeping what is sworn' (252) -

Consider what you first did swear unto:  
To fast, to study, and to see no woman -  
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.  
287-89.

The following resolve on the courtiers' part to devote themselves sworn or not sworn to the immediate business of courtship, leads them to an intriguing conclusion. They must face a question of choice - one regarding ways of living. The crux of this question now is, as it happens, the place to be conceded to women in their lives. And since women are naturally associated with love, so this term is to be also granted place in



the men's book of life. To come to grips with these rudimentary truths is to attain 'the light of truth' - wisdom. Berowne's language playfully expresses the whole transaction -

Then fools you were these women to forswear;  
Or, keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.  
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love; ...  
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women;  
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men.

351-56.

The biblical theme of losing and finding as seen through the parables cited earlier, is characterised by a spirit of rejoicing. When, for instance, the shepherd recovers his lost sheep, he 'layeth it on his shoulder, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he callth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.' Here, upon Berowne's reference to the theme, the same spirit of joy is captured. Berowne's 'Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,/ Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths' (357-58), suggest a free play on Christ's words to his disciples - 'For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: againe, whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it' (Matthew.xvi.25).

In his next lines (359-61), Berowne tells his friends that devotion to 'love' which is inseparable from 'charity' clears them of the very guilt of forswearing their initial vows. This gives great satisfaction

and delight to the lords, who immediately look forward to sharing their joy with their lady-loves - 'let us devise/ Some entertainment for them in their tents' (368-69).

Berowne is hopeful that all will be back to normal when 'homeward every man attach the hand/ Of his fair mistress' (371-72). Nevertheless, he fears lest the 'Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn' (381).

The man must have been perceptive; for when we next see the ladies, we learn about Rosaline's predetermination to 'torture' him. 'How I would make him fawn and beg, and seek,/ And wait the seasons, and observe the times,' Rosaline says (V.ii.60, 62-3), her words echoing Paul's address to the Galatians - 'Ye observe days and months and times' (iv.10). Rosaline probably suspects that Berowne's 'nimble spirit of joking will never leave him,' even after going through his ordeal.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Paul fears that his efforts with the Galatians may after all go unharvested - 'I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain' (11).

Rosaline is concerned with Berowne's fallen state evident in his choice of 'affectation' as 'a way of life' (which also equally applies to his friends).<sup>17</sup> She, therefore, ponders the man's possible reformation. This may identify Rosaline, as well as the other three ladies, by analogy, with the daughters of God (in the Morality theme), with the Princess being closest to the

throne. Even Navarre refers to the latter as 'an angel' (103), and so does Moth 'An Angel is not evil;/ I should have fear'd her had she been a devil' (105-06). Some lines later, Moth addresses the ladies as 'A holy parcel of the fairest dames,' and as 'heavenly spirits' (160, 165). Berowne and his friends, on the other hand, may be identified with individual versions of 'prodigal son,' moving toward that crucial moment when each will reform and banish all profusion of wit and verbal extravagance.

These impressions are, however, contradicted by the ladies' general conduct in this final scene, not to speak of the lords'. The latter, having realised the impossibility of their initial ascetic ideal of study and contemplation, approach the ladies seeking 'peace and gentle visitation' (179). Berowne explains to intermediary Boyet the purpose of the visit thus -

Our duty is so rich, so infinite,  
That we may do it still without accompt.  
Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,  
That we, like savages, may worship it.  
199-202.

As audience, we do not doubt the sincerity of these words. Yet the ladies most certainly do. I find this surprising. Even their secret agent, Boyet, has made them privy to the noblemen's 'purpose' of the visit -

Their purpose is to parley, court, and dance;  
And every one his love-feat will advance  
Unto his several mistress; which they'll know

By favours several which they did bestow.  
122-25.

Somehow the Princess ignores this, misreading the gentlemen's pursuits in terms of 'mockery' (139-40). She decides not only to shame but also to confuse the visitors, intensifying in this way their moral dilemma.

Rudely, thus, the ladies receives their opposite numbers, with the result that the men, even in Boyet's words, are exposed to 'harsh indignity' (289). When the ladies exult in their cheap victory, they use expressions which are common for lovers' oaths to describe the lords' bafflements. Rosaline, for instance, says - 'The King is my love sworn' (282), and the Princess - 'quick Berowne hath plighted faith to me' (283). Even Boyet cannot refrain from spurring the ladies on to more humiliation of the lords. He tells the Princess how Navarre and his men will return 'In their own shapes' (288), 'And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows' (292).

Boyet quotes expressions from the Bible used to describe people who - similar to the Navarrese gentlemen - have experienced some affliction. Luke's 'Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy' (vi.23) are addressed to men who have been 'hated,' 'separated' from all company, and 'reproached' (22); and Isaiah's 'Then shall the lame men leape as an Hart' (xxxv.6), follows an all-

usion to other people suffering from seeing and hearing handicaps (5). Suggesting they should design further scorns for the already dispirited young men, Boyet perfectly fulfils Berowne's opinion of him - 'This gallant pins the wenches on his sleeve;/ Had he been Adam, he had tempted Eve' (321-22). This direct scriptural reference to the Temptation and the Fall comments more or less upon Berowne himself and his comrades.

The biblical reference to follow is also associated with temptation and betrayal.

King. All hail, sweet madam, and fair time of day!  
 Prin. 'Fair' in 'all hail' is foul, as I conceive.  
 339-40.

When Judas Iscariot came to Christ he saluted him thus - 'Hayle, Master' (Mark.xiv.45). 'Hail,' to be sure, is not an uncommon greeting. But it is possible that the King may have been preoccupied with his own betrayal of the oath which he himself was first to take. As this betrayal is soon to be made public when he invites the ladies to the court they had been barred from (343-44), Navarre cannot conceal his sense of guilt. The Princess twists his words and throws them back again at him. Playing with the same theme of betrayal, the Princess continues taunting the King, not only using thought and word comparable to scriptures (e.g. Proverbs.xii.22), but also setting herself on equal footing with the 'Lord' - 'Nor

God, nor I, delights in perjur'd men' (346). The same thing obviously goes for the attendant ladies and lords as well.

The side-theme of betrayal is brought out most overtly at the entry of Holofernes during the Nine Worthies pageant. When this character whose name is, incidentally, 'to be found in the Book of Judith' <sup>18</sup> declares - 'Judas I am - ' (589), most of the male characters get involved at once in an amused play on the word 'Judas,' with direct references from scripture (Matthew.xxvi.14, ii.5; Luke.vi.16). Besides the amusement derived at the expense of Holofernes, the lords become capable, on the psychological level, of getting over their deep sense of guilt. Making a joke of Holofernes-Judas, and trifling with the biblical act of perjury, are likely to relieve the lords of their heart-sorrow and attain to them confidence.

It is not only the lords who make the best of the joke. The Princess, too, it seems to me, learns a lesson. The fact that she is the only character in the scene to sympathise with discomfited 'Judas' betrays her changing frame of mind. She probably thinks, when she utters her memorable 'Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited' (623), of the recent discomfitures which she and her attendant ladies have caused the lords. They have

already dismissed the honest men, even after admitting perjury, making their sincere love suits 'perish in their birth' (518).

This point is thoroughly pressed home by an external event that could never have been averted by the ladies. As both parties are about to achieve some unprecedented harmony, tragedy erupts. The gorgeous and youthful 'merriment' as the Princess herself calls it (705), is disrupted by Marcade's advent, with news 'heavy in [his] tongue' (707).

The King seems as much affected by Marcade's message of death as the Princess herself. It occurs to him that his love for the Princess may perish with her deceased father. He, therefore, intercedes, on behalf of the others, to save their threatened love affairs. Wisely, the King refers to his own relationship with the new 'queen' as 'holy suit' (734), to protect it against any accusation of triviality. And cautiously, he indicates to the royal lady the importance of being discreet despite 'the cloud of sorrow' that may then 'justle' her judgement (736). The way he makes the whole point recalls over again the biblical theme of losing and finding -

since to wail friends lost  
Is not by much wholesome-profitable  
As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

737-39.

Unfortunately for the King, the Princess misses the point, making his argument sound nothing but clumsy - 'I understand you not; my griefs are double' (740).

In a last, desperate effort, the King appeals to the departing Princess and courtly ladies - 'Now, at the latest minute of the hour;/ Grant us your loves' (775-76). Lacking no consideration this time, the Princess's reply is very interesting - 'A time, methinks, too short/ To make a world-without-end bargain in' (777-78). These two lines point straight to the binding character of marriage particularly extolled by Christianity. In terms of the play's scriptural language, they point back to Nathaniel's verbal observation about man's summum bonum being partially reliant on marriage. Most important of all, the lines refer us back to the beginning of the play. The lords have sought an artificial segregation from the world of love and women, and that is what they ultimately get - though only for a year.

It is noteworthy that of the four young courtiers, Berowne is the one who is not assigned to a year of seclusion. Instead, he is ordered to spend the appointed period in a hospital, visiting 'the speechless sick' (839), and pleasing 'groaning wretches' (840) by his witty conversation. He is bound to find out about the value of consolation to the desolate. His companions, too, will



explore in their 'forlorn and naked hermitage' (783) the significance of 'society' to 'the happiness of life,' in line with Nathaniel's previous remark.

The year of 'divorce' which the would-be bridegrooms are asked to respect, is balanced by a year's period of mourning declared by the Princess and her ladies-in-waiting. In their self-imposed isolation, the royal ladies will also presumably learn how to restrain the 'liberality' of their 'spirits' (721), and how to reward the lords for their 'gentleness' (723).

For us - the audience - the end of the year is reached by the end of the play in the antiphony between Ver and Hiems. Significantly, the song reveals within its realistic setting the very passage of time, or rather, 'the twelve celestial signs' (785) which the Princess has, for her part, assigned to her King-lover. The song carries us over the bridge of Time to the near future, when the curtain will rise anew to reveal the French ladies in their court being asked to fulfil their promises of matrimony. The noblemen will then have all the time in the world to sue for the hands of their loves and 'make the world-without-end bargains.' But the King may still have to remind the then established queen of France of her majesty's words uttered but a year before -



PART II: NOTES

For full references, see the first  
mention of books.

## Chapter 5

- 1 London: Vision and Barnes & Noble, 1981, p. 9.
- 2 August Strindberg: Eight Famous Plays, trans. Edwin Bjorkman and N. Erichsen (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1949), introd. (Alan Harris), p. 12.
- 3 Juliet Dusinberre is perhaps the only recent critic to pay attention to this thematic element in the play. Her study (to which I am indebted for a number of suggestions) is, however, brief, not to say general, and thus leaves plenty of ground to cover. See Shakespeare and the Nature of Women (London: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 77-82, 102-05, 111-12.
- 4 See Bullough, p. 61.
- 5 This anonymous ballad was printed by Hugh Jackson about 1550 under the title Here Begynneth a Mery Jest of a Shrewde and Curst Wyfe, Lapped in Morrelles Skin, for Her Good Behavvour. Richard Hosley, 'Sources and Analogues of The Taming of the Shrew,' Huntington Library Quarterly, 27 (1963-4), 295. See Rabaa al-Khateeb, The Taming of the Shrew: A Survey of Literary and Textual Criticism, M.A. Dissert. (University of Birmingham: Shakespeare Institute, 1979), p. 1.
- 6 See Derek Pearsall, John Lydgate (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), pp. 187-88.
- 7 Martial Rose (ed.), The Wakefield Mystery Plays (London: Evans Brothers, 1961), p. 140.
- 8 See Parrott, p. 131.
- 9 See Wright, pp. 202, 203, 202, 209, 224.
- 10 Op.cit., pp. 77-82, 111-12.

- 11 See K.M. Lea, Italian Popular Comedy (Oxford: Clarendon, 1934), Vol. 1, p. 171; Foakes (ed.), The Comedy of Errors, p. xxxii; Bullough, p. 7; and Salinger, p. 88.
- 12 P. 66.
- 13 Ibid., p.67
- 14 Quoted from Bullough.
- 15 Ibid., p. 8.
- 16 E.g. Foakes, op.cit., 113 ff.
- 17 See E. Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, ed. W. Schneemelcher (London: SCM, 1963), Vol. 2, p. 338. See, also, Parrott, p. 104.
- 18 James Hastings (ed.), Dictionary of the Bible (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 2 nd edn., p. 261, summarises some of the conflicting views regarding this Epistle.
- 19 Cited in Bullough, p. 9.
- 20 See Charlton, p. 67.
- 21 See Parrott, p. 103; Bullough, pp. 8-9; Foakes, pp. xlii-xliii. See, also, Traversi, p. 11.
- 22 See Lloyd, Critical Essays on the Plays of Shakespeare (London: George Bell, 1875), p. 78; Charlton, pp. 70-1; and Pettet, Shakespeare and the Romance Tradition, p. 70.
- 23 For a brief account of the sisters' characters in the Antigone, see E.S. Shuckburgh (ed.), The Antigone of Sophocles (London & New York: CUP, 1902), 12 th rpt., pp. xxii-xxiii.
- 24 P. 58.
- 25 It is noteworthy that the sisters in King Lear are three; but they still represent the two-sister types. Both Goneril and Regan are understood to be descendants of one and the same family. Regan says - 'I am

made of that self metal as my sister' (I.i.68). As one character, the two women contrast with their younger sister, Cordelia, especially in the qualities of fidelity.

- 26 Quoted from Rose, op.cit.
- 27 English Domestic Relations 1487-1653 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1917), reissued 1972, p. 129.
- 28 Trans. David Clapam, 1534. This treatise was written in 1509, its theme being devised then to earn the good-will of the fair Regent of Burgundy. But twenty years went by before it was published.
- 29 See H[enry] C[are], Agrippa's Female-Pre-eminence (London: Printed for T.R. and M.D., 1670), Preface.
- 30 See Wright, p. 204; and Powell, op.cit., p. 148.
- 31 Hamilton, p. 107.
- 32 Powell, p. 149.
- 33 Wright, p. 206.
- 34 Traversi, p. 11.
- 35 Powell, pp. 107, 128.
- 36 Wright, pp. 209-10.
- 37 Trans. David Clapam, 1534. This treatise was probably written in 1524, to be published in Latin in 1532, before it was translated into English. See, also, the Nobilitie and excellencye of woman kynde.
- 38 Cited in Powell, p. 104.
- 39 See Henry Smith, A Preparatiue To Marriage, 1591. Cited in Powell, p. 32.
- 40 Caxton's Boke of Good Manners includes a whole chapter providing moralisation on matrimony. See Powell, p. 103; see, also, p. 128.
- 41 Cited in Powell, p. 104. See, also, Wright, p. 210.

- 42 See Agrippa, Commendation of Matrimony, see, esp., Clapam's 'Dedication' of the treatise to Gregory Cromwell.
- 43 E.g. John Stockwood, A Bartholomew Fairing for Parents ... (1589); Smith, A Preparatiue To Marriage .. (1591). Such writers drew in the meantime upon their Bibles. See Wright, p. 203, n. 3; pp. 208, 209.
- 44 See Riemer's observations on the Abbess in Antic Fables, pp. 113, 114.
- 45 Bullough, p. 10, finds the presence of the Abbess in Ephesus inexplicable.
- 46 Cited in Powell, p. 105.
- 47 Pp. 59 ff.
- 48 See Parrott, pp. 106-07.
- 49 See Powell, pp. 102, 139. See, also, n. 43 above.
- 50 Traversi, p. 13.
- 51 Ed. The Comedy of Errors, p. 9.

## Chapter 6

- 1 Morris is probably the first recent critic to take some serious interest in 'education' as one of the play's major themes. See pp. 129-33.
- 2 New York: Norton, 1949, p. 44.
- 3 SQ, 14 (1963), 15-30.
- 4 See Traversi, p. 17; and Salinger, p. 222.
- 5 See Tillyard, pp. 104-09; and Ribner, 'The Morality of Farce: The Taming of the Shrew,' Essays in American and English Literature, presented to Bruce R. McElderry, ed. Max F. Schulz (Ohio: University Press, 1967), p. 67.
- 6 See Bullough, pp. 58-61; and H.J. Oliver (ed.), The Taming of the Shrew, Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), pp. 34 ff.
- 7 For a different view see Huston, p. 66.
- 8 See The Uses of Drama, ed. J. Hodgson (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), pp. 134, 145.
- 9 Ibid., p. 145.
- 10 An Interpretation of Shakespeare (Columbia, Missouri: Columbia University Press, 1948), p. 95.
- 11 Gordon, p. 47.
- 12 Cited in Clare Howard, English Travellers of the Renaissance (London: John Lane, 1914), p. 14.
- 13 Ibid., pp. 3, 18.
- 14 George B. Parks, 'Travel as Education,' in The Seventeenth Century, ed. Richard Foster Jones et al in his Honour (Stanford: University Press, 1965), 2 nd edn., p. 264.
- 15 Howard, op.cit., p. ix.



- 16 Parks, op.cit., p. 264.
- 17 Riemer, Antic Fables, p. 66.
- 18 New Haven: Yale, 1972, p. 132.
- 19 Pp. 52, 7, 8, 9.
- 20 London: Constable, 1911, p. 53.
- 21 Howard, pp. 21, x.
- 22 Justus Lipsius, A Direction for Trauailers, (London: imprinted by R.B. for Cutbert Burbie, 1592).
- 23 P. 266.
- 24 The Breath of Clowns and Kings (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), p. 54.
- 25 Talbert, p. 159.
- 26 Mark Van Doren, Shakespeare (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1941), p. 48.
- 27 See Bates, Touring in 1600, p. 3.
- 28 See Weld, Meaning in Comedy, p. 178.
- 29 Cited in Stradling's Direction for Trauailers.
- 30 P. 167.
- 31 P. 47.
- 32 Weiss, p.56.
- 33 London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, p. 213.
- 34 Ibid., p. 205.
- 35 Cambridge: CUP, 1966, p. 157
- 36 Kenneth Charlton, Education in Renaissance England, pp. 211-12.
- 37 Ibid., p. 204.
- 38 See Laggatt, p. 49
- 39 Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women, ed. Foster Watson (London: Edward Arnold, 1912), pp. 203 ff; esp. 195-210. See, also, pp. 137-49, and 10-11.
- 40 The English Grammar Schools to 1660 (London: Frank Cass, 1968), p. 30.

- 41 Vives, pp. 207 ff.
- 42 Leggatt, p. 42.
- 43 Ed. The Taming of the Shrew, Penguin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 22.
- 44 P. 39.
- 45 See Charles Brooks, 'Shakespeare's Dramatic Shrews,' SQ, 11 (1960), 353.
- 46 Brown, p. 98; and Richard Henze, 'Role Playing in The Taming of the Shrew,' Southern Humanities Review, 4 (Summer 1970), 234. Cited in Huston, p. 70, n.
- 47 Brooks, op.cit., 353, 354.
- 48 Leggatt, p. 61; and Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society (New York: Norton, 1963), 2nd edn., p. 214. Cited in Huston, p. 68, n.

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup> P. 40.

<sup>2</sup> I am aware that the play's status on stage before audiences is equally important. After all, this is what at least Shakespeare and his contemporaries wrote their comedies in particular for. 'Comedies are writ to be spoken, not read,' John Marston enlightens us, cautioning - 'Remember the life of these things consists in action.' The Plays of John Marston, ed. H.H. Wood (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1934-39), Vol. 2, p. 144. Cited in Malcolm Evans, 'Mercury versus Apollo: A Reading of Love's Labour's Lost,' SQ, 26 (1975), 126.

<sup>3</sup> The term anomie was first introduced by the French sociologist, and one of the founding fathers of modern sociology, Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), in Suicide (1897), by far a pioneering study in social statistics. The term is still in use. Alienation is now understood as a pathological feeling of self-estrangement and loss of moral purpose. It overlaps the concept of anomie in that it applies to situations in which people feel alienated from society, considering themselves to be outsiders with no sense of belonging to a community. But alienation has other meanings which include disaff<sup>e</sup>ction, withdrawal, disengagement, separation, apathy, non-involvement, indifference, and neutralism. See n. 4.

- 4 For my understanding of the concept of alienation and the several meanings attached to it, I am indebted in part to my colleague, Dr. Shebl El-Komy's Dissertation on The Theme of Alienation in Matthew Arnold (Glasgow University, 1978).
- 5 Leslie A. Fiedler, The Stranger in Shakespeare (Herts: Paladin, 1974), 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., p. 15.
- 6 The term 'alien' and several of its forms are available in Shakespeare's vocabulary, not to mention that of his fellow-playwrights. See J. Bartlett, Concordance (London & New York: Macmillan, 1894); Onions, Glossary; and OED.
- 7 'The Argument of Comedy.'
- 8 P. 17.
- 9 See Bullough, pp. 203-09; Bertrand Evans (ed.), The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Signet Classic Shakespeare (New York & London: Signet Classics, 1964), pp. 129-30; and Leech (ed.), pp. xxxv-xlv.
- 10 S. Harrison Thomson, Europe in Renaissance and Reformation (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), p. 680.
- 11 Castiglione was also trained at the court of Gonzago at Mantua.
- 12 A Life of Shakespeare (London: John Murray, 1931), 14<sup>th</sup> edn., p. 86.
- 13 See Bruce W. Wardropper, 'The Diana of Montemayor: Revaluation and Interpretation,' SP, 48 (1951), 126-44, esp. 127-31; and Walter R. Davis, 'A Map of Arcadia: Sidney's Romance in Its Tradition,' in Sidney's Arcadia, by Walter R. Davis and Richard A. Lenham (New Haven: Yale, 1965), esp. 38-9.
- 14 El-Komy, op.cit., p. iv.

- 15 Ibid., p. iii.
- 16 Essays, published in World's Classics (London: OUP, 1949), 2 nd rpt., p. 204.
- 17 See Fiedler, op.cit., p. 16.
- 18 Matthew Arnold. Cited in El-Komy, p. xix.
- 19 P. 228.
- 20 Ibid., p. 220.
- 21 Evans, op.cit., p. xxviii.
- 22 Pp. 222, 223.
- 23 For the significance of 'gloves' as 'gifts' among sixteenth century lovers, see William G. Meader, Courtship in Shakespeare (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), pp. 143-45, esp. 143.
- 24 Shakespeare uses this character most obviously in The Taming of the Shrew, where Gremio is described as a 'Pantalowne' (First Folio). For an account of this comic type of character and its role in Italian popular comedy of the sixteenth century, see Pierre Louis Duchartre, The Italian Comedy, trans. Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), pp. 179-85.
- 25 Proteus's earlier line to Silvia - 'And to your shadow will I make true love' (IV.ii.121), shows the degradation of the man's lustful love. Failing to have an intercourse with her, he takes, as his words imply, to masturbation.
- 26 Thomson, op.cit., p. 483.
- 27 Meader, op.cit., p. 138
- 28 El-Komy, p. xviii.
- 29 See Charlton's interpretation of the play. See, also, Stanley Wells, 'The Failure of The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' SJ, 99 (1963), 161-73.
- 30 V.Y. Kantak, 'An Approach to Shakespearian Comedy,' Essays Literary and Educational (1962), 11.

## Chapter 8

- <sup>1</sup> For all scriptural references, I am indebted to the catalogues outstandingly done by both Thomas Carter and Richmond Noble respectively. See Shakespeare and Holy Scripture (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1905), pp. 29-38; and Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1935), pp. 142-47. Both authors draw largely upon the versions of the Bible used by Shakespeare (e.g. the Genevan edition of 1560 and the Bishops' of 1568). I am also partly indebted to The Holy Bible (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, n.d.).
- <sup>2</sup> See Carter, op.cit., p. 31.
- <sup>3</sup> These statements are used by Peter Milward but in connection with King Lear. To Milward I am indebted not only for a few ideas but for the title of my Chapter also. See 'The Religious Dimension of King Lear,' Shakespeare Studies, The Shakespeare Society of Japan, 8 (1969-70), 61.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., 73.
- <sup>5</sup> See James Black, "Edified by the Margent:" Shakespeare and the Bible (Calgary: Faculty of Humanities, 1979), p. 7.
- <sup>6</sup> See M.C. Bradbrook, The School of Night (Cambridge: CUP, 1936); F. Yates, A Study of Love's Labour's Lost (Cambridge: CUP, 1936); Robert Gittings, 'Love's Labour's Lost,' in Shakespeare's Rival (London: Heinemann, 1960); Walter Oakeshott, 'Raleigh and Love's Labour's Lost,' in The Queen and the Poet

- (London: Faber & Faber, 1960); and Carroll.
- 7 See Black, op.cit., p. 9.
- 8 Black, ibid., says this specifically of Macbeth. The words are, in a sense, applicable to Love's Labour's Lost.
- 9 See Barnet et al (eds.), The Genius of the English Theater, p. 67.
- 10 Ibid., pp. 95 ff.
- 11 See Paul E. Memmo, 'The Poetry of the Stilnovisti and Love's Labour's Lost,' Comparative Literature, 18 (1966), 8.
- 12 John M. Steadman, '"Like two Spirits:" Shakespeare and Ficino,' SQ, 10 (1959), 244.
- 13 See Steadman, 244 ff, for an account of this point.
- 14 Black, p. 12.
- 15 Trevor Lennam advances the interesting possibility that 'when Shakespeare first drafted the play, he had in mind the moral pattern of the "Wit" moralities.' 'The ventricle of memory:" Wit and Wisdom in Love's Labour's Lost,' SQ, 24 (1973), 54-60. See, esp., his statements on 54.
- 16 The view that Berowne 'will remain a satirist and humorist till the end of his life' is strongly held by James Hisao Kodama. 'Armado's "You that way; we this way,"' Shakespeare Studies, The Shakespeare Society of Japan, 8 (1969-70), 7.
- 17 See Anderson, 'The Morality of Love's Labour's Lost,' 61
- 18 Noble, op.cit., p. 147.
- 19 See 'The Energies of Endurance: Biblical Echo in King Lear,' in Some Facets of "King Lear:" Essays in Prismatic Criticism, ed. Colie et al (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 21. I am indebted for both thought and reference to Black, pp. 5, 19: n. 7.

### Conclusion

It is no longer easy to make fresh discoveries about Shakespeare or to work on entirely new Shakespearian material. But we can still attempt a new synthesis - a new perception, a way of looking at the pre-existing material from a different perspective. It should be shown how any synthesis varies from and relates to the already available criticisms.

In the process of this examination of Shakespeare's early comedies, new windows have been opened on to some of the plays' underrated potentials - not to mention their neglected, inherent qualities.

The Comedy of Errors is seen, through its quest pattern, to contribute directly to the age-old tradition of travels. It humanises the basic objective of quest by involving a six-person family. But it also christianises the quest's pagan background descended from Greek and Roman mythology in a way that is bound to appeal to an Elizabethan spectator. And, though the play may treat the tradition of quest rather cynically, it infuses a set of wonders with the happy resolution of its journeys. This, undoubtedly, secures



a quality of wonder and myth indispensable to the tradition.

The 'wonderful' conclusion of the Errors leads logically into the domain of marvels belonging to Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew. This play, for its part, employs a pattern of classical allusions interesting in itself but also suitable for the explanation of the play's thematic preoccupation indicated by the title. For it demonstrates how Shakespeare can turn so common and popular a theme as the taming motif into something out of this world, something unrepeatable - indeed, miraculous. The Shrew uses classical myth and legend to emphasise dramatic plot and elucidate theme, sustaining interest throughout. This is one of the ingredients that raises the play above the region of farce.

In The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Shakespeare reveals a mastery of intellectual construction, one inclined towards experimenting with various structural elements. Harmoniously, these ingredients keep interacting till the coda of the final scene, where they dissolve into joyful reconciliations. The fast tempo of the concluding episode is indeed justifiable on account of the quick pace characterising the action throughout. Skip over this feature of speed, and you will never

forgive Shakespeare for his brief, hurried dénouement.

After the 'romantic' harmony of the 'two gentlemen,' we are presented in Love's Labour's Lost with a different type of harmony - one suggested in the play's Morality pattern. The Morality structure is, in fact, the result of centuries of inquiry into man's position as regards his relationship to God as implicit in the Christian faith. It is a structure with a beauty of its own - i.e. it is aesthetically satisfactory. In form and meaning, the Morality pattern is intellectually satisfactory. But it is also dramatically satisfactory, because it brings the play's action to a logical conclusion. Shakespeare was obviously writing to an audience that would immediately appreciate the Morality structure, and, indeed, be aware of its relevance to the play.

Examined structurally, the plays reveal their value either by contributing to already known traditions, or by successfully experimenting with diverse structural components, or even by presenting the audience with all-round satisfying structures. Approached from their thematic perspective, the plays are equally rewarding. The experiences they dramatise divulge an awareness of the audiences' social reality, e.g. their life outside the theatre with all its domestic, cultural, intellect-

ual, and religious preoccupations.

The Errors shows how Shakespeare uses the domestic situation from Plautus' Menaechmi and Amphitruo in such a way as to contribute to the contemporary debate about marriage. Despite his indebtedness to the Plautine models, Shakespeare manages to integrate his play into its Elizabethan scene, by echoing contemporary moral advice throughout. But his effort goes beyond mere echoing. The play makes a direct contribution by adopting a strong, liberated view about domestic order which has no room for an authoritarian husband or a domineering wife. This view is juxtaposed with the point about marriage made by the Shrew. In the latter play, although Katherina comments on a husband's responsibilities, she, disconcertingly, associates her own husband with authority by subjecting her will to his completely.

In the Shrew, Shakespeare turns his attention to further contemporary preoccupations. The acquisition of learning, whether in private schools at home, or, preferably, at foreign universities, was becoming a characteristic feature of the Elizabethan way of life. Shakespeare, therefore, examines the subject of education, by allowing different characters in his play to register at different learning institutions where they receive different curricula. However, the play's

various ironies whether in speech, character, or event, make it hard for us to determine the dramatist's views on the topic. One can only surmise what these views are. It seems appropriate to presume that his stress is on play-acting as education.

With The Two Gentlemen and Love's Labour's Lost, the scene is clearly transferred from the domestic arena to a courtly environment with its own characteristic concerns. The thematic content is, in effect, modulated so as to tally with the new milieu.

The moving experience of The Two Gentlemen and the emotional effects this experience produces in the dramatic personae centre on the literary theme of alienation. This classical leit-motif is traceable in such paramount products of the Elizabethan age as Sidney's Arcadia, Lyly's complimentary comedies, and Greene's romantic dramas. But it is equally traceable in the continental prose romance - Diana Enamorada, the most important of all the play's sources. As we - the audience - experience this theme in the play, not only do we capture the play's undervalued fascination by identifying emotionally with its alienated (or distanced) male and female characters, but we also come to grips with an aspect of the society of Shakespeare's plays. The sense of social security in Shakespeare is no longer attained

through marriage alone - is, in broader terms, achievable via a state of general communion, marriage being but part of a larger whole.

Yet we should firstly appreciate the prime importance of matrimony as a prerequisite for a happy, secure, and fulfilling life, both spiritually and sexually. This is the thesis of Love's Labour's Lost's thematic argument. The play explores the traditional Christian view of wedlock based on the teaching and imagery of the Holy Scriptures. By so doing, Love's Labour's Lost reveals one more facet of its many attractions. This is the religious dimension so far overshadowed by the play's frolicsome qualities.

When seriously considered, whether structurally or thematically, Shakespeare's early comedies will surely let us into their secret beauties. I hope to have unravelled some of these in the preceding extended dissertation.

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