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## Shakespeare's Use of the Supernatural.

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**Shakespeare's Development**

by

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A Thesis presented at the College  
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Masters of Arts

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**Shakespeare:** Titus Andronicus  
Love's Labour's Lost  
Romeo and Juliet  
MidSummer Night's Dream  
As You Like It  
Hamlet  
Othello  
Measure for Measure  
A Winter's Tale  
The Tempest

**Sherman:** What Is Shakespeare - An Introduction to  
the Great Plays

**Still:** Shakespeare's Mystery Play - A Study of  
The Tempest

**Tolman:** Falstaff and Other Shakespearean Topics

**Wendell:** William Shakespeare

**White:** Life and Genius of Shakespeare

- The Development of Shakespeare -

"The name of Shakespeare is the greatest in all literature. No man ever came near to him in the creative power of the mind; no man ever had such strength and such variety of imagination."  
Hallam.

Shakespeare is considered the greatest English dramatist and poet of all ages. He has left a tremendous impression upon the world. He wrote in his day some thirty-seven plays and a few poems. Some of his greatest poems are found in the dramas. Hundreds of volumes have been written in praise of his accomplishments. Long says, "Most of the eulogists begin or end their volumes with the remark that Shakespeare is so great as to be above praise or criticism. As Taine writes, before plunging into his own analysis, 'Lofty words, eulogies are all used in vain; Shakespeare needs not praise but comprehension merely.'"

The exact order in which Shakespeare wrote his plays is uncertain, but there is very little doubt regarding the general order in which they were given to the public. We may gather from the internal, external, and internal-external evidence a possible chronology of the plays. The internal evidence is derived from a critical study of the meter and language used in the plays. The external evidence is furnished by the dates of the earliest publication of some of the plays in quarto edition, the entries in the Register of the Stationers' Company, and the references to the plays in contemporaneous books and manuscripts. The internal-external evidence is obtained from a reference in the drama of something that took place during that time.

Shakespeare wrote according to his mood and not what the people called for or what the time demanded. Plays of the same type have been shown to fall within the same period of his life. His early boisterous comedies and his prentice-work on history are followed by his joyous comedies and mature histories; these are followed by his tragedies and painful comedies; and last, at the close of his career, he turns to Comedy, but the comedy in this period is very different from that in the early period. Modern critics have invented another name for these last plays, and have called them romances.

If the people asked for a comedy when he was writing his great tragedies, they got Measure for Measure; if they asked for a tragedy when he was writing his happiest comedies, they got Romeo and Juliet.

Long gives the following chronological order of Shakespeare's plays:

First Period, Early Experiment (1590 - 1595).

Titus Andronicus, Henry VI, Love's Labor's Lost, Comedy of Errors, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Richard III, Richard II, King John.

Second Period, Development (1595 - 1600).

Romeo and Juliet, Midsummer Night's Dream, Merchant of Venius, Henry IV, Henry V, Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, As you Like It.

Third Period, Maturity and Trouble (1600 - 1610).

Twelfth Night, Taming of the Shrew, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida, All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens.

Fourth Period, Later Experiment (1610 - 1616).

Carolanus, Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, The Tempest, Henry VIII (left unfinished, completed probably by Fletcher).

To the first period belong Shakespeare's early tentative

efforts in revising and partially in rewriting plays which were produced by others who already had possession of the stage.

Titus Andronicus is considered very un-Shakespearean. Shakespeare may have written, touched and strengthened parts of it, but it is chiefly the work of Christopher Marlowe, and probably George Peele, two playwrights who were his elder contemporaries, and with whom he worked at the beginning of his theatrical life. Nevertheless this play serves as a connecting link between the drama as Shakespeare found it and his own dramas.

If he wrote it at all, it is very unlike any other plays which Shakespeare wrote during his first period. This play is a horrible, coarse, and childishly constructed tragedy, filled with bombastic language and bloody deeds. One critic says that Shakespeare's tragedies have been termed as tragedies of terror; this is a tragedy of horror. "It reeks blood, it smells of blood; we almost feel that we have handled blood - it is so gross."

As for the characters in the play, Tamora is the presiding genius of the piece. In her we see the beginning of the wonderful conception of the union of powerful intellect and moral depravity, which Shakespeare afterwards made manifest with much wisdom. Tamora is not like the ordinary woman, for she has strong passions, ready wit, perfect self-possession, and a sort of oriente& imagination. It is through her that we get, for the most part, what one would call the poetical language of the play as:

"My lovely Aaron, wherefore look'st thou sad,  
 When everything doth make a gleeful boast?  
 The birds chant melody on every bush;  
 The snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun;  
 The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,  
 And make a chequer'd shadow on the ground:  
 Under their sweet shade, Aaron, let us sit,  
 And, whilst the babbling echo mocks the hounds,



Replying shrilly to the well-tuned horns,  
 As if a double hunt were heard at once,  
 Let us sit down and mark their yellowing noise;  
 And, after conflict such as was supposed  
 The wandering prince and Dido once enjoy'd,  
 When with a happy storm they were surprised,  
 And curtain'd with a counsel-keeping cave,  
 We may, each wreathed in the other's arms,  
 Our pastimes done, possess a golden slumber;  
 While hounds and horns and sweet melodious birds  
 Be unto us as is a nurse's song  
 Of lullaby to bring her babe asleep."  
 (Act V.Sc. 11)

It would be just to say that such lines as these are  
 Shakespearean, but what could seem more un-Shakespearean than  
 Titus' speech in the Fifth Act? Titus says:

"This one hand yet is left to cut your throats,  
 Whilst that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold  
 The basin that receives your guilty blood.  
 You know your mother means to feast with me,  
 And calls herself Revenge, and thinks me mad:  
 Hark, villains! I will grind your bones to dust,  
 And with your blood and it I'll make a paste;  
 And of the paste a coffin I will rear,  
 And make two pasties of your shameful heads;  
 And bid that strumpet, your unhallow'd dam,  
 Like to the earth, swallow her own increase.  
 This is the feast that I have bid her to,  
 And this the banquet she shall surfeit on;  
 For worse than Philomel you used my daughter,  
 And worse than Progne I will be revenged:  
 And now prepare your throats, Lavinia, come,  
 (He cuts their throats.  
 Receive the blood: and when that they are dead,  
 Let me go grind their bones to powder small,  
 And with this hateful liquor temper it;  
 And in that paste let their vile heads be baked."  
 (Act V.Sc.II)

What could be more horrible than this? Some think that  
 only Marlowe could have written such a drama.

This play belongs to that period when bloody tragedy was  
 popular. The signs of youthful effort are apparent, not only in the  
 acceptance of so coarse a type of tragedy, but in the crude handling  
 of character and motive, and the want of harmony in working out the

details of the dramatic conception. There are many rhymes considering the nature of the play, and eighty-eight percent of the lines are end-stopped.

Love's Labour's Lost, we may be sure, is the first existing play that Shakespeare wrote single-handed; an almost boyish production. Yet we find in this play touches of fancy, of humor, and even of wisdom, which we know could have come from no other hand. This play contains a remarkable store of human nature in one so young as its author was. The whole play is stiff and crude; its personages show germs of character or imperfect outlines, rather than character, and they are book-made; it lacks dramatic interest in its construction and its dialogue; it is full of cold conceits; the blank verse is not of variety and beauty; the pauses and the ends of the verses almost always coincide; and the rhythm is comparatively formal and constrained, but the unities of time and place are preserved. The wordly wisdom which appears in this work of the young author is represented by the following lines:

"A jest's prosperity lies in the ear  
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue  
Of him that makes it."

Act V. Sc. ii.

The following is, also, a good example of this  
wisdom:

"Small have continual plodders ever won  
Save base authority from other's books.  
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights  
That give a name to every fixed star  
Have no more profit at their shining night  
Than those that walk and wot not what they are."  
Act I. Sc. i.

Rosaline disciplines Birone with wisdom, and, as one

critic puts it, almost "chastising him with the valor of her tongue". She preaches to him too much, but nevertheless, it is great sermonizing to come from so young an author. This play is the only one in which Shakespeare praises a woman. No other poet or dramatist could create women equal to Shakespeare's women; but only in this play, of all the thirty-seven, does he speak one word in praise of them, and that not very highly, so that it does not amount to praise of Women in the abstract. Note the following lines:

"From women's eyes this doctrine I derive;  
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;  
They are the books, the arts, the academies,  
That show, contain and nourish all the world:  
Else none at all in aught proves excellent."

Act IV. Sc.iii.

Many maintain that Shakespeare neglected to pay tribute of praise to the women because of his ill fortune in his wife and afterwards in his mistress - that beautiful dark lady whom he reproaches so bitterly in his sonnets.

We may notice that in this play some of the songs, such as On a Day, are more or less artificial.

"On a day - alack the day! -  
Love, whose month is ever May,  
Spied a blossom passing fair  
Playing in the wanton air:  
Through the velvet leaves the wind,  
All unseen, can passage find;  
That the lover, sick to death,  
Wish himself the heaven's breath.  
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow,  
Air, would I might triumph so!  
But, alack, my hand is sworn  
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn;  
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet,  
Youth so apt to pluck asweet!  
Do not call it sin in me,  
That I am forsworn for thee;  
Those for whom Jove would swear  
Juno but an Ethiop were;  
And deny himself for Jove,  
Turning mortal for thy love."

The youthfulness of the writer of this play is shown by the many lines which rhyme and by its marked lyrical character. Three sonnets and a song are introduced because they are the natural forms of expression for a young poet. The note of youthfulness is shown also in the extravagance of speed which runs through it, and which was not only satirical, but full of attractiveness for the poet.

Also, we find in this play the earliest examples of his free and expressive character - drawing; for Biron and Rosaline are preliminary studies for Benedict and Beatrice; the love-making of Armado and Jaquenetta is the earliest example of a by-play of comedy which reaches perfection in As You Like It.

The early plays do not show the development of character, the action and reaction of circumstances and forces within the movement of them, the subordination of incident to action, and the development of action in character, which give the dramas of his maturity their reality and authority. The poet was not concerned with these things, for he was chiefly interested in the beauty, the variety, and the humor of the spectacle. He delighted in rhyme for its own sake, and in classical allusions because they pleased his fancy.

In Love's Labour's Lost he lightly but keenly satirized the extravagances of his time in learning, speech, and style. It seems that he was not sure of himself in this early period, and was afraid to take too much liberty. We see this in the grouping of the characters, which is mechanical. In this play the King and his three fellow-students balance the Princess and her three ladies. This arrangement is too geometrical; the groups are artificial, not organic and vital. He endeavors to attain unity of effect less by

the inspiration of a common life than by the mechanical placing of parts.

In this play, we find the introduction of the standing characters of the older plays; "the pedant, the braggart, the hedge-priest, the fool and the boy". Quibbling, word-play, and sketchy characterizations are <sup>characteristics of this play</sup> ("Biron and Rosalind are rough drafts of Benedick and Beatrice; Armado and Jaquenetta anticipate Touchstone and Audrey"). Finally, no other play gives us an account of Shakespeare's youth; none has such delightful reminiscences of his child-life at Stratford. In more than one sense Love's Labour's Lost is "a portrait taken of him in his boyhood!"

The characters in this play are such as a country town and schoolboy's observation might supply: the curate and the schoolmaster.

In the second period of his works, we see that there has been some development. In this period Shakespeare constructs his plots with better skill, shows a greater mastery of blank verse, creates some original characters, and especially does he give free rein to his romantic imagination.

All the time that Shakespeare was writing comedies, and while he was engaged upon his first great tragedy, he continued also steadily at work upon his series of English historical plays. The culture which he gained by writing these plays at this period of his career is highly important. The matter used in these plays helped the dramatist in his relation between the imaginative and actual world. He was strengthened by the labor of moulding these historical facts in artistic shape.

The culture obtained by the historical dramas acted as a safeguard for him while he was writing his first tragedy, Romeo and Juliet. If he realized that he was giving too much lyric quality to the play, he could check it.

About this period of his life Shakespeare's attention seems

to have been chiefly given to Italian literature, at that time the first and almost the only national literature in the world. There was an Italian story of a pair of hapless lovers, which had been repeated in a long and tedious English ballad version, that Shakespeare took for his plot for his first tragedy. Romeo and Juliet is the most youthful of all Shakespeare's plays in its spirit and sentiment. Love's Labour's Lost, his first play, is much older in its cast of thought, much graver, and more sententious in style than this tragedy. This appearance of greater youthfulness of feeling in Romeo and Juliet comes from the fact that the poet had a greater experience of life. It is a sign that the poet had grown a few years older. As he grew older, he realized that life and the world were young. And so at the age of thirty-two Shakespeare gave us this tragedy. One critic says that it is the freshest, sweetest breath of life's springtime that ever was uttered by a poet's lips.

Yet, we can see that he has not developed in bringing in his characters. He finds that he can bring them in, one after another, more readily when they are numbered and introduced in definite order. In the opening scene of his first tragedy, two Capulet men-servants are first introduced; next, two Montague men-servants; then, Benvolio on the Montague side, then Tybalt on the Capulet side; then on each side citizens; then, old Capulet and Lady Capulet; then Montague and Lady Montague; finally, as keystone to bind all together, the Prince. In the plays which belong to Shakespeare's period of mastership, he can dispense with such an artificial method. The unity in the later plays is not merely structural but vital. In these early plays structure determines function; in the later plays organization is preceded by life.

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In Romeo and Juliet we find frequent use of rhymes and the tendency to play with words; above all, the essentially lyric quality of the play. There are passages of pure and unsurpassed singing quality in it. The first meeting of the lovers in Capulet's house is described in sonnet form; Juliet's prayer in her father's orchard for the coming of night reminds one of the Evening song. The parting of the lovers is the most tender and beautiful morning song in the language. It goes as follows:

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

The external atmosphere of the tragedy, and its Italian color and warmth as portrayed by M. Philart Charles, is given as follows:

"Who does not recall those lovely summer nights in which the forces of nature seem eager for development, and constrained to remain in drowsy languor - a mingling of intense heat, superabundant energy, impetuous power, and silent freshness?"

"The nightingale sings in the depths of the woods. The flower-cups are half closed. A pale lustre is shed over the foliage of the forests and upon the brow of the hills. The deep repose conceals, we are aware, a procreant force; the melancholy reserve of nature is the mask of a passionate emotion. Under the paleness and the coolness of the night, you divine restrained ardors, and the flowers which brood in silence, impatient to shine forth.

"Such is the peculiar atmosphere with which Shakespeare has enveloped one of his most wonderful creations - Romeo and Juliet.

"Not only the substance, but the forms of the language come from the South. Italy was the inventor of the tale: she drew it from her national memorials, her old family feuds, her annals filled with amorous and bloody intrigues. In its lyric accent, its blindness of

passion, its blossoming and abundant vitality, in the brilliant imagery, in the bold composition, no one can fail to recognize Italy. Romeo utters himself like a sonnet of Petrarch, with the same refined choice and the same antitheses; there is the same grace and the same pleasure in versifying passion in allegorical stanzas. Juliet, too, is wholly the woman of Italy; with small gift of forethought, and absolutely ingenuous in her abandon, she is at once vehement and pure."

There are three chief forms of medieval love poetry found in the play; namely, the Sonnet form found in the first meeting of the lovers; the Serena or evening-song of Juliet (Act III.Sc.II. 1-33) the Alba or dawn-song, of the parting lovers (Act III.Sc V.1-36).

So we see that the play was written while the dramatist was still young, but there is shown a little development in the verse form. This play is lyrical, passionate and not bloody. It contains more prose than his first plays, and the characters are more developed. Romeo lives and moves, but has not his being in the world of action, like Henry V, nor in the world of the mind, like Hamlet; but he lives, moves and has his being in the world of mere emotion. This emotion, apart from thought and apart from action, is an end in itself. Therefore, he broods over his own sentiment and feeds upon it.

Juliet is one of Shakespeare's best characters. Mrs. Jameson says, "The love that is so chaste and dignified in Portia - so airy - delicate and fearless in Miranda - so sweetly confiding in Perdita - so playfully fond in Rosalind - so constant in Imogen - so devoted in Desdemona - so fervent in Helen - so tender in Viola - is each and all of these in Juliet."



There is a marked development even in the plays of this period. Take, for instance, the following lines from Midsummer Night's Dream:

"In maiden meditation, fancy-free."  
Act II. Sc.1.

This line is the most beautiful example in all literature of the beauty of alliteration.

In this play Shakespeare brings together truth, wisdom, and fancy, so that they are essentially one, and it is impossible to distinguish the one from the other. Take, for example, the passage upon imagination:

"Lovers and madmen have such seething brains", etc.  
Act V. Sc. 1.

In this play, we, also, see poetical progress. The blank verse changes in character. Take the passage:

Oberon. "Those rememb' rest  
Since once I sat upon a promontory,  
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
To hear the sea-maid's music?"

Puck "I remember."  
Oberon. "That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,  
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal throned by the west,  
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,  
And the imperial votaress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free."

Note the structure and easy flow in this passage. See how the pauses are varied, how the course of the thought and of the rhythm is carried on into the body of the next line. We see that the answer of Puck completes a verse left incomplete by Oberon. Love's

Labour's Lost has no blank verse equal to this in variety or beauty. In Love's Labour's Lost the pauses and the ends of the verses almost always coincide; and the rhythm is mostly formal and constrained. The unities of time and place are preserved in both of them.

The Dream seems to be in substance and in structure entirely Shakespeare's. No prototype of it is known either in drama or in story, and it is in these respects of very much higher quality than any of his other early plays. Like them, it is fantastical and impossible; but unlike them, it has a real human interest. The poetry is very far beyond that of the other plays in beauty both of form and of spirit. For the first time we have here a personage whose character has made him a widely known and accepted type; namely, Nick Bottom. Here in him we see represented in literature the conceited, pretentious man of some ability, who is yet an ass. In this play we have, also, for the first time the author's ability to clothe his fancies in phrases of beauty and sweetness.

After Shakespeare had written Romeo and Juliet and Mid-Summer Night's Dream, he returned to the histories, in which, doubtless, he was aware that he was receiving the best possible culture for future tragedy. After he had completed these historical plays, he needed rest for his imagination; and in such a mood craving refreshment and recreation, he wrote his play of As you Like It and several others in which his mirth obtains its highest and most complete expression. These comedies are marked by brilliance in the dialogue; wholesomeness, capacity, and high spirits in the main

characters; and a feeling of good-humor. Rhymes have become less frequent, and the blank verse has freed itself from the bondage of the end-stopped lines. More than half of As You Like It is written in prose.

But to understand the spirit of As You Like It, one must bear in mind that it was written immediately after Shakespeare's great histories and before he began the great series of terrible tragedies. Shakespeare turned with relief from the oppressive subjects of history, so grave and so massive, and found freedom and pleasure in the Forest of Arden:

"Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to live in the sun,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither."

"Like the banished Duke, Shakespeare himself found the forest life of Arden more sweet than that of painted pomp; a life 'exempt from public haunt', in a quiet retreat, whose far turbulent citizens, the deer, 'poor dappled fools', are the only native burghers," as a critic says.

Upon the whole, As You Like It is the sweetest and happiest of all Shakespeare's comedies. No one suffers; no one lives a hard life; there is not any tragic interest in it. It is mirthful, but the mirth is graceful. There is an open-air feeling throughout the play. The dialogue gets its freedom and freshness from the atmosphere. Here we get the sweet, pastoral strain so bright, so tender, so lovable in contrast to the trumpet-tones of Henry V.

This play is a combination of the bright imagination and

fascinating grace of Shakespeare's youth and the thoughtfulness of his maturer age. Now Shakespeare had turned his eyes to the mysteries of human nature.

Orlando is the beauty and strength of early manhood. In Rosalind we find purity, passion, and freedom. In her speech love finds a new language, which is continually saved from extravagance by its vivacity and humor. These two lovers are the successors of a long line of pastoral lovers, but they are alone in their kind because they really live.

At the close of this second period in the development, we may say that Shakespeare was interested in human life, and that he saw life not from one point but from all; we seem to hear him say this:

"All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players."

In these years were created many characters, such as, Rosalind and Viola, Jaques and Malvolio, Beatrice and Benedick. The essential characteristic is that Shakespeare had left behind him his spirit of clever "Youngmanishness". Now he had become interested in life, but he had not started into investigating the deeper and more terrible problems of life and evil.

In the third period we find Shakespeare in the depths. This was a period of sorrow for him. His only son, Hammet, died in 1596, and in 1601 his father died. The dramatist had studied and knew life; now he was to learn much of death also. Now he wrote his most terrible tragedies: Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, and one comedy Measure for Measure, which is really tragic in nature.

Shakespeare studied deep into the mystery and evil in the

world. His vision was enlarged, his thought was deeper and wider, and his experiences were deeper than ever before. He seems to have a greater moral struggle. The plays of this period are not the light, joyfull, and pleasant plays of the other years; but, instead, they are heavy, compacted with thought, revealing the deepest mysteries and problems of life. In these four tragedies Shakespeare reached his highest dramatic power.

When Hamlet was written, Shakespeare had become a master-dramatist. The style in which it is written stands midway between his early and his latest works. The rapid dialogue in verse, which occurs when Hamlet questions his friends respecting the appearance of the Ghost, is remarkable for the "verisimilitude with artistic metrical effects".

Ham. "Indeed, indeed sirs, but this troubles me.  
Hold you the watch tonight?"

Mar. } "We do my lord."  
Bar. }

Ham. "Arm'd, say you?"

Mar. } "Arm'd my lord."  
Bar. }

Ham. "From top to toe?"

Mar. } "My lord, from head to foot."  
Bar. }

Ham. "Then saw you not his face?"

Mar. "O.yes,my lord; he wore his beaver up." etc.

(Act 1. Sc.ii.)

Shakespeare gives us in Hamlet's soliloquies that slow verse in which he expresses the thought in solitude. In these plays there are excellent examples of pieces of prose; for instance, take

the speed in which Hamlet describes his melancholy to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Act 11, Sc. ii.

This is a mystery play and shows a great development over his earlier works. In this play he does not make known his intention. He has gotten out of the stage in which he distrusted himself, and always kept his plan before him. Even there is a vital obscurity of the character of its chief person.

We may see in this play that the characters are far more developed and real than in any of his preceding works. Hamlet himself has a genius which is remarkable. He is wise and witty, abstract and practical, a great thinker; he mingles playful jest and biting satire with thoughts which are the deepest and darkest that one could have.

The dreams which Hamlet had are more real than those in the Mid-Summer Night with their perfect temper. Hamlet cries, "O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams."

In Romeo and Juliet the lovers are in harmony with one another, but the world is against them. This same case applies to Hamlet:

"The time is out of joint: O cursed  
 spite,  
 That ever I was born to set it  
 right."

Hamlet lives in a world of corruption and evil, but he was honest and tried to set it right, and fell in trying to do so.

It is Hamlet's intellect which distinguishes him from

Romeo. Romeo was ruled by emotion, while Hamlet was governed by his intellect. Thus, we see in Hamlet that Shakespeare had become a master over his arts; that he trusted himself and needed no mechanical outline to follow; his characters are more developed; he keeps his imagination concealed; he gives us a drama pertaining to real life; there is a depth in his thought and philosophy; he presents us with the mystery and problems of life; the evil and the good in the world. There is not any high-flown language in the play, but the language is serious, such as thoughtful people talk. The central problem is a moral one, as Baynes says, "We learn that there is something infinitely more precious in life than social ease or worldly success - nobleness of soul, fidelity to truth and honour, human love and loyalty, strength and tenderness, and trust to the very end".

Measure for Measure is considered his only comedy in this period. It is not as light and airy comedy as any preceding one, but it is dark and gloomy. Shakespeare knew the dark side of the life of Bankside. When this play was given in the Globe Theatre in the suburb of the Bankside, the people knew very well what the clown in play meant, when he said that all houses of ill-repute in the suburb of Vienna must be plucked down; as for those in the city, "they shall stand for seed, they had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them".

When Shakespeare wrote this play he was evidently departing from mirth. The play is grave and earnest. The humorous scenes are not like those of his other comedies. The humorous scenes in this

play would be repulsive if it were not for presenting to us the life and terrible conditions of the people; and out of these conditions we see one lovely creature, Isabella, whom one praises for her virginal strength, severity, and beauty. She stands as a light in the dark and tragic world.

In this play Shakespeare is presenting to us the same story of the wrong and miseries which afflict humanity, as is in his tragedies. In writing this comedy, although it is dark, Shakespeare lightened his mind somewhat from the terrible tragedies. If he had not written this comedy, the results of his tragedies might have been fatal to him; for this comedy relieved his burdensome heart a little.

In the plays of this period Shakespeare had investigated into the mystery of evil. He had studied the injuries of man upon man. He had seen the innocent suffering with the guilty. Death came and removed the criminal and his victim.

Now in the last period of his authorship he remained grave, but his severity was lightened and purified. He still thought of the wrongs which man inflicts on man and of the trial and tests of life, therefore, the subjects chosen are tragic in their nature, but they are shaped to a fortunate result. Prospero is driven from his inheritance; yet there is no force of destruction, and the end brings forgiveness and reunion! Shakespeare's outlook on life has widened, and he gives free rein to humor and fantasy. Now he was at the top of his profession and felt free to write what he liked and how he liked to. He was no longer held down by conventions of the stage.



The style of these last plays is a further development of the style of the tragedies. The thought is often more packed and hurried, the expression more various, at the expense of a full logical order. The early rhetorical style has now disappeared; the syntax is the syntax of thought rather than of language; constructions are mixed, grammatical links are dropped, the meaning of many sentences is compressed into one; hints and impressions are used as much as full given propositions. As an example of this late style take the scene in the Tempest, when Antonio, the usurping Duke of Milan, tries to persuade Sebastian to murder his brother Alonso, and to seize upon the kingdom of Naples; Ferdinand, the heir to the kingdom, is believed to have perished in the ship-wreck, and Antonio points to the sleeping king:

Ant. "Who's the next heir of Naples?"

Seb. "Claribel"

Ant. "She that is Queen of Tunia: she  
           that dwells  
 Ten leagues beyond man's life;  
           she that Naples  
 Can have no note, unless the  
           sun were past, -  
 The man i' the moon's too slow, -  
           till new-born chins  
 Be rough and razorable; she  
           that from whom  
 We all were sea-swallow'd,  
           though some cast again,  
 And by that destiny, to perform an act  
 Whereof what's past is prologue;  
           what to come,  
 In yours and my discharge."

Here is a bundle of thoughts packed into one. There are many other examples of the same thing; take, for instance, Prospero in his speech to Miranda.

In Shakespeare's earlier verse we see that the easy flow of rhythm and the pause at the end of the line favored clear syntax, while in these last plays it is different.

In the Winter's Tale, with the exception of the prologue (like chorus scene of Act IV), no five measure lines are rhymed; but there are many run-on lines; the logical structure is more elliptical, involved, and perplexing than that of any other of Shakespeare's works; there is a two-fold structure in this play.

The subject of this play would make a great tragedy, and it was only by the remarkable genius of Shakespeare that he turned it into a comedy.

The jealousy of Leontes is not less, but more fierce and unjust, than that of Othello. There is no Iago here to whisper vile and wretched things to Leontes. His wife is not untried. She does not give her heart to him as Desdemona did to Othello:

"Three crabbed months had sour'd  
 themselves to death  
 Ere I could make thee open thy  
 white-hand,  
 And clap thyself my love; then  
 didst thou utter,  
 'I am yours forever!' "

But Othello does not repent and forgive while Leontes does:

"Whilst I remember  
 Her and her virtues, I cannot forget  
 My blemishes in them, and so still  
 think of  
 The wrong I did myself; which was  
 so much  
 That heirless it hath made my  
 kingdom and,  
 Destroy'd the sweet'st companion  
 that e'er man  
 Bred his hopes out of."

Hermione has more self-command, patience, courage, and is more collected than Desdemona. Hermione has a fortitude of heart which years of suffering are unable to subdue:

"There's some ill planet reigns;  
 I must be patient till the heavens look  
 With an aspect more favourable. Good  
   my lords,  
 I am not prone to weeping, as our sex  
 Commonly are; the want of which vain  
   dew  
 Perchance shall dry your pities; but I  
   have  
 That honourable grief lodged here, which  
   burns  
 Worse than tears drown. Beseech you all,  
   my lords,  
 With thoughts so qualified as your  
   charities  
 Shall best instruct you, measure me;  
   and so  
 The king's will be performed!"

In contrast to As You Like It the general foundation and plan of the whole - the jealousy of Leontes, the exposure of the infant, the seclusion of the Queen and the repentance of her husband, the young Prince's love for the beautiful shepherdess, etc. - although unusual, are in accordance with reality. The characters in "A Winter's Tale" are more developed.

The Tempest is considered as Shakespeare's last play, and it is fitting that he should close with such a drama. It is a purely romantic drama; it is the birth of imagination. One critic says that this play should never be acted because the seeing and hearing of it would cause the spiritual vision to languish. This is one of the shortest of his plays; it contains only two thousand and sixty-five lines.

It is constructed with strict regard to the unities of place and time; its plot is simple; surpasses others in brilliancy and poetic fancy; the most perfect of all, as a work of art; the most unbroken unity of effect and sustained majesty of intellect; the most purely original deriving nothing of any consequence from any other source for the plot; it has no prototype in literature of the more important personages; has no model for the thoughts and language, beyond the materials presented by actual and living human nature; it is full of beautiful songs, such as Ariel sings:

"Full fathom five thy father lies;  
 Of his bones are coral made;  
 Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
 Nothing of him that doth fade;  
 But doth suffer a sea-change  
 Into something rich and strange.  
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:"

Act 1. Sc.ii.

Miranda exceeds Viola in tender delicacy, Perdita in ideal grace, and Ophelia in simplicity. Here in her we have the purely natural and the purely ideal blended into each other. She has been described as beautiful, modest, and tender. It has been said that if any of Shakespeare's own loveliest and sweetest creations were placed beside Miranda they would appear somewhat coarse or artificial, when brought into immediate contact with this pure child of nature, this "Eve of an enchanted Paradise". Here she has lived under the heaven and with nature, not with the world and its vanities. In speaking of Miranda as a child of nature, she reminds me of Wordsworth's lovely picture of the child whom nature has adopted as her own:

"Three years she grew in sun and shower,  
 Then nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
 On earth was never sown;  
 This child I to myself withtake;  
 She shall be mine, and I will make  
 A lady of my own.'"

She has a great effect on others who have never seen anything resembling her. They approach her as a "wonder", as something celestial:

"What is the maid?  
 Is she the goddess who hath severed us,  
 And brought us thus together."

Miss O'Brien, in her classification of "Shakespeare's Young Men", puts Ferdinand and Florizel (of the Winter's Tale) together: "They are as much alike in nature as their charming companions, Miranda and Perdita. Both are wonderfully fresh and natural for the products of court training; both fall in love swiftly and completely; both have that tender grace, that purity of affection, shown in many others, but never more perfectly than in them. Theirs is not the wild passion of Romeo and Juliet; there is nothing high-wrought and feverish about their love-making; it is the simple outcome of pure and healthy feeling; and it is difficult to say which gives us the prettier picture - Ferdinand holding Miranda's little hands on the lonely shore, or Florizel receiving Perdita's flowers among the bustle of the harvesting. Ferdinand has the most fire and energy, though he should not have been the first to desert the ship in the magic storm. He has the best character altogether, showing much affection for his father, and a manly, straightforward way of going to work generally. Florizel is grace and charm personified, and has the most bewitching tongue; but he is too pliant,

too taken up with one idea, to be quite so satisfactory."

Caliban is a poetical creature in that Shakespeare makes him sensible to the power of music. His reply to Trinculo and Stephano, when they are frightened by the mysterious music in the air, is one of the most poetical passages in the drama, and also one of the most pathetic:

"Be not afraid; the isle is full of noises,  
 Sounds and sweet airs that give  
     delight and hurt not,  
 Sometimes a thousand twangling  
     instruments  
 Will hum about mine ears; and  
     sometimes voices  
 That, if I then had wak'd after  
     long sleep,  
 Will make me sleep again; and  
     then, in dreaming,  
 The clouds, methought, would  
     open and show riches  
 Ready to drop upon me, that  
     when I wak'd  
 I cried to dream again."

Prospero had his enemies completely in his power by the use of magic. How should he treat these? They had taken advantage of him; they had taken his dukedom from him; they had exposed him, with his three-year old daughter, in a rotten boat, to the mercy of the waves. Shall he not now avenge himself without remorse? What does he decide?

"Though with their high wrongs I am  
     struck to the quick,  
 Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst  
     my fury  
 Do I take part; the rarer action is  
 In virtue than in vengeance; they  
     being penitent  
 The sole drift of my purpose doth  
     extend  
 Not a frown further."

The wrongs which were inflicted upon Prospero were more cruel and more base than those which Timon suffered; yet, Timon

turned against mankind and hated the wicked race -

"I am misanthropes, and hate mankind."

In the last play there are Hermione, Imogen, and Prospero who are created to extend forgiveness to men. Hermione, as we have seen was clear-sighted and courageous, and has true pity for the man who wronged her.

Prospero's forgiveness is solemn, judicial, and has in it something abstract and impersonal. He cannot wrong his own higher nature and nobler reason by delighting in getting vengeance on his enemies. He pardons Alonzo through having justice and impartial wisdom.

In these plays we can see that Shakespeare does not give us the usual pleasures and sadness of life, but there is a remoteness from them. In these plays we get a beauty of youth and the loved youth in a more clear and tender manner than in any of his other plays. In his earlier plays he wrote about young men and maidens - their loves, their mirth, their griefs - as one who is among them. He can do with them what he pleases. There is nothing in these early plays wonderful, strangely beautiful, or pathetic about youth and its joys and sorrows. In the histories and tragedies the objects are larger and more profound. But in these latest plays, the beautiful and pathetic light is always present. There are the sufferers, aged and experienced; namely, Prospero, Hermione; and over against these are the children absorbed in their joys and sorrows; namely, Perdita and Miranda, Florizel and Ferdinand, and the boy of old Belarius. All of these children are princes or princesses who are lost children, being removed from their court into some scene of rare natural beauty.

Various interpretations have been brought together of the

allegorical significances of Prospero, of Miranda, of Ariel, and of Caliban. Prospero represents wisdom, self-mastery, prosperity and justice; Miranda's very name suggests wonder. Ariel suggests something light and airy; Caliban, says Kreyssig, is the People. He is understanding apart from imagination, declares Professor Lowell. He is the primitive man abandoned to himself, declares M. Mezieres. Some say that he is the missing link between man and brute; his very name suggests cannibal.

A good deal of Shakespeare's life is presented in the drama. When Shakespeare wrote his tragedies, all the world seemed sad to him, but now, when he entered upon a new life in these last romances; life and the world seemed beautiful to him. We find his feeling expressed through Miranda:

"O wonder!  
How many goodly creatures are there here!  
How beauteous mankind is; O brave new  
world  
That has such people in it!"

This play is characterized by complete and harmonious proportion of parts, by every scene and every character being organically complete. There is freedom in it; the style is subordinated to the thought; rhyme almost disappears; weak endings increase in number; iambic regularity of the blank verse is varied by new flexibility; music of the verse gains a richer and fuller movement; there is complete indifference to the traditional unities of time and place; there is an interest of its personages and its situations; it has a simple construction; its poetry is so beautiful that it would give one pleasure just to read it.

The Tempest is regarded in certain respects as his masterpiece. It is the creation of Shakespeare's imagination. As



a drama it falls far below any of his earlier dramas; as a poem, cast in dramatic form, it far excels all others, and it is one of the most beautiful creations in English poetry. It is very easy and light to read, for there is nothing terrible in the drama. The tempest ceases after the first scene, and all the rest is filled with coming happiness.

In this play we see Shakespeare with his enlarged vision, wonderful practice of his art, self-control and serene wisdom "break his magical wand and retire from the scene of his triumphs to the home he had chosen amidst the woods and meadows of Avon, and surrounded by the family and friends he loved."