M.A. THESIS

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE : THE FOOLS AND FOLLY IN "AS YOU LIKE IT", THE FIRST PART OF "HENRY THE FOURTH", "TWELFTH NIGHT" AND "KING LEAR"

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
Departamento de Lîngua e Literatura Estrangeiras

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Tese submetida à Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
para a Obtenção do Grau de Mestre em Letras

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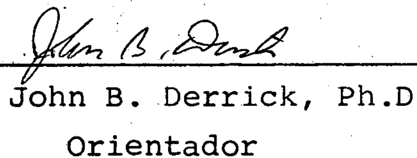
Florianópolis
Santa Catarina, Brasil
Outubro de 1980

Esta tese foi julgada adequada para a obtenção do grau de

--Mestre em Letras--

opção Inglês e Literatura Correspondente e aprovada em sua forma final pelo programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.



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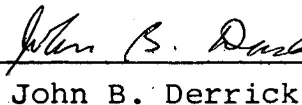

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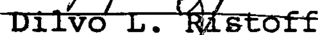

Dilvo L. Ristoff

À memória de Max Heinrich Ludwig
Ernst Flos, meu pai, de quem me é
proveniente o gosto pelas Letras,
e à Erica Maria Elisabeth, fruto
do meu ventre.

AGRADECIMENTOS

--À Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, de modo especial ao Professor Hilário Inácio Bohn, Coordenador da Pós-Graduação em Inglês e Literatura correspondente;
--Ao Professor e orientador John B. Derrick, por seu apoio e incentivo, e, sem o qual, esta tese jamais estaria acabada. Igualmente, por sua inteira disponibilidade nas revisões desta, meu perene reconhecimento;
--À exma. sra, Elza Lemos, por seu carinho;
--Às exmas. sras. Frida Hoeller e Irma Riggenbah, por todo vigor moral que me legaram;
--Ao exmo. Barão Hans von Wangenheim, por sua perserverança;
--Aos exmos. drs. Alfredo Martins, Luizemir Wolney Carvalho Lago, Fransico da Costa Batista Neto e Denise Tubino, por acreditarem em mim;
--Ao exmo. Sr. Mário Ralph Correa todo meu reconhecimento

AGRADECIMENTO ESPECIAL:

--Aos exmos. Professores Heinrich, Clélia Nascimento, Schultze

--À exma. srta. Eva Ruth Silberger

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with Shakespeare's treatment of the Fool and Folly in 1 Henry IV, As You Like It, Twelfth Night and King Lear.

It aims to identify the "natural" and the "intellectual" components in the characters of the fools, and to analyse the function of these components in the plays.

Sir John Falstaff in 1 Henry IV is an instance of a "natural" fool, while the characters of the other plays under discussion (Touchstone in As You Like It, Feste in Twelfth Night and Lear's Fool In King Lear are examples of the "intellectual" (and Hence melancholy) types.

Drawing on the authority of Enid Welsford and C.L.Barber especially, we argue that all these figures of entertainment (whether they appear in a play of the historical, comic or tragic genre) pose a serious criticism of society according to the models of Erasmus' In Praise of Folly. The mad fool, inhabiting a still madder society, actually serves as a touchstone whereby that society may discover the way back to a natural harmony that it has abused. Despite this potentially redemptive function as social "exorcist" however, we may conclude that the fool himself is an outsider in the world of the play whose end, if not actually tragic, is most of the time, sad.

RESUMO

Esta tese versa sobre alguém empregado, durante a Idade Média, como Palhaço que tinha por obrigação, entreter as pessoas e Algo que nos pareça ridículo.

Esta dissertação visa identificar os componentes "naturais" e "intelectuais" nos caráteres destes bobos, e analizar a função destes componentes nas obras.

"Sir" John Falstaff em 1 Henry IV é um examplo de bobo "natural", enquanto as personagens das outras peças discutidas (Touchstone em As You Like It, Feste em Twelfth Night e Lear's Fool em King Lear) constituem examplos dos tipos "intelectuais" (e, por isso, melancólicos).

Baseados em Enid Welsford e C.L. Barber, especialmente, argumentamos que todas estas figuras de entertimento (quer apareçam em obras do genero histórico, cômico ou trágico) impoëm severas críticas da sociedade de acordo com os modelos da obra de Eramus In Praise of Folly.

O maluco ou louco , convivendo numa sociedade ainda mais insana, serve realmente como norma pela qual aquela sociedade poderá descobrir o caminho para uma harmonia natural, que tem sido até então desrespeitada. Apesar desta função altamente redentadora como "exorcista" social, podemos concluir que o bobo é em alheio as mundo das peças e que cujo final, se não trágico realmente, é na maioria das vezes triste.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTORY

Statement of Problem:

As a point of departure, our dissertation takes Theseus' statement in A Midsummer Night's Dream: "The lunatic, the lover and the poet/ Are of imagination all compact."[1] That is to say the poet (and presumably Shakespeare is including himself here) is often held to be mad by his contemporaries - but conversely, those who appear to be mad, may also (like the poet) be inspired truth-tellers. In this category, we find the fool, the object of our study.

We will examine 1 Henry IV, As You Like It, Twelfth Night and King Lear with special attention to the theme which all of them have in common: the fool and his folly.

It is the fool's function, socially and in the drama, "to juggle with words until everything, often including the truth, is upside down and inside out."[2] Yet those scholars of the subject who derive from the Cambridge School of Classical Anthropology might be called Laingian in the sense that they do not see the fool's madness as a real disease, but a form of social criticism. According to Enid Welsford, the fool is an

> all licensed critic who points out to others the dangerous possibility of a reversal of position between the wise man and the fool. The fool suggests that there is ambiguity in the words wisdom and folly

> and folly...Here he is hinting at thoughts which are vitally connected with the central theme of the tragedy.[3]

The subject of the fool's knowledge is the folly of Mankind, and dramatically it is the fool's role to purge spurious wise men of the pomposity and false wisdom.

It was Deriderius Erasmus van Rotterdam, the Dutch humanist, who in his Praise of Folly (1509) laid the foundation for this view of the fool. Erasmus suggests that folly evokes folly in order to raise folly: it is on the one hand, the exorcist and, on the other, the object exorsized. As purgative, folly is synonomous with the instinct to play, found in children and fools, while as a thing exorcized, it is rather a fixation, an inflexibility in character.

We will entertain sevral primary questions in this thesis and will attempt to find answers for them in our conclusions. How is it possible for the fool to dramatically function outside of comedy, in plays of a historical and tragic genre (Henry IV and King Lear)? What sort of contrasts and similarities de we find in the operation of folly in the four plays to be examined? What is the fundamental difference between the natural fool whom Enid Welsford describes, and the intellectual court-fool whom we find elsewhere? How does the fool use logical inversion and the device of the disguise to achieve his catharic aim? Finally, however, we must ask why (even in comedy itself) purgation is often shown to be incomplete. The fool is

often demonstrated to be a cousin to the melancholy man and presented as a protypical Hamlet. How does this element of despair, alienation and sarcasm enter the character of a figure who the nãive reader supposes is merely there to make us laugh?

Review of Previous Criticism

Three main schools of criticism will be discussed here, having in mind a history play with a comic sub-plot, two comedies and one tragedy.

The first one is the so-called 'new critic' school. The critic of this school accepts the piece of work as it is, putting aside judgements based on biography and historical background. He is much more concerned with the play's language and it's imagery. Norman Holland in The Shakespearean Imagination says that "any real appreciation of the play involves understanding all of it, both story and poetry, more properly, story as poetry."

For the study of King Lear, we made use of the 'psychological school' in order to isolate the psycho-logical or psychoanalitical viewpoints concerning the play under discussion. It was A.C.Bradley who made this school predominant, in giving emphasis to the 'character analysis' technique. He was followed by Freud and his psychoanalysis. Nowadays , however, the Laingian 'existenial phenomenonological' critics, upon whom our dissertation turns, are also called Laingain.

These 'anthropological' critics concentrate their works on the elements of social ritual in the drama and, especially, on the Fool. Mrs.Enid Welsford author of The Fool: Social and Literary History, C.L.Barber's Shakespeare's Festive Comedy and Glennys McMullen's The Fool as Entertainer and Satirist are the main figures of this school.

The Critics

The first critic to be analyzed is Mrs.Welsford who in her book The Fool: His Social and Literary History,

(1935), draws a clear picture of the fool as a figure of the Elizabethan drama and as a social Lord of Misrule. According to her, fools range from the more natural to the more intellectual, and as the fool becomes more artificial and courtly, he also becomes more pessimistic and critical of the society.

Desiderius Erasmus van Rotterdam who wrote In Praise of Folly (1509), made the distinction between the foolish wiseman (the butt or object of humor) and the wise foolish man(the fool). An example of the former is Malvolio and of the latter, Feste (both in the play Twelfth Night). As Mrs. Welsford says, the fool is an 'all licensed' critic who points out to the others the dangerous possibility of a reversal of position between the wise man and the fool:

> The fool suggests that there is ambiguity in the words wisdom and folly...Here he is hinting at thoughts which are vitally connected with the central theme of tragedy. [4]

It is he, the fool, who sees clearly into the nature of things and people, reporting what he sees. Nevertheless, he is not believed because he's a fool and people don't believe in the words of a fool; furthermore they regard the fool's words as jokes, not as true advice. This is the cause for him to be 'all-licensed': there is never the possibility of offence in an innocent joke. Yet those who laugh at a fool's joke may themselves be fools, without knowing it. There is an instance in King Lear, (I,IV), when the fool has taught Lear the difference between the bitter and the sweet fool, the King asks:

> Lear: Dost thou call me a fool, boy?
> Fool: All thy other titles thou hast given away;
> that thou wast born with. [5]

Mr. C.L.Barber, who edited his Shakespeare's Festive Comedy

in 1963, brings up the terms rule and misrule, which can be synonomous to everyday and holiday. Rule or everyday might suggest hard work, while misrule or holiday expresses rather the oblivion of release from this hard work; the forgetting of everyday restrains. The terms are used by Shakespeare himself: Prince Hal affirms in 1 Henry IV: "If all the year were playing holidays/ To sport would be as tedious as to work."[6]

Mr. C.L.Barber, as a good follower of the Cambridge School of Classical Anthropology, draws another viewpoint concerning Shakespeare's festive commedies: in the chapter entitled "Through release to clarification" he explains a dialectical pattern he finds in the plays which traces the cathartic restoration of the deluded character to a sense of reality.

All these critics, and also George Santayana, Northop Frye and Gilbert Murray, will be treated further in Chapter Two, the background chapter.

Statement of Purpose

Shakespeare's Fools, as Enid Welsford points out, can be classified from the more 'natural' or 'carnal' to the more 'artificial' or 'intellectual'.

All manifest themselves as outsiders and observers. Yet, in their folly and their outside criticism, they see truly into the nature of things and serve, under the mask of foolishness, as society's severest critics.

The characters and the plays which will be under discussion are: Sir John Falstaff - 1 Henry IV; Touchstone in As You Like It; Feste in Twelfth Night and Lear's Fool in The Tragedy of King Lear.

This thesis aims to identify the 'natural' and 'intellectual' components in the characters of these fools, and to analyze the function of these components in the plays. It will be shown that Falstaff is an example of the 'natural' fool, while Touchstone, Feste and Lear's Fool are examples of the 'intellectual' (and hence melancholic types).

Also we will explore the idea that at the plays' ends, the fool's situations are unhappy. However, we note that the fools lack the qualities of tragic complexity and full catharsis, which belong to the tragic hero.

For Welsford, the comic fool ends tragically in the role of the scapegoat; and H.B.Charlton, in his article "Shakespeare, Politics and Politians"[7] agrees with her idea.

Touchstone, as well as Jaques, represents a certain shade of melancholy. Although having been married to Audrey, he shows his independence and freedom from the comic marriage-resolutions.

Jaques: But for the seventh course: how did you find the quarrel on the seventh course?

Touchstone: Upon a lie seven times removed: - bear your body more seeming, Audrey: - as thus, sir. 8

Since the beginning of the play, Sir John Falstaff is used by Prince Hal as a means to achieve his own popularity as the future king is never a true Fool in the sense he does not 'purge' Hal of his own cold pride.

> Falstaff: Well, God give thee the spirit of persuation and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest, may move, and what he hears, he may be believed, and that the true prince may (for revocarion's sake), prove a false thief, for the poor abuses of the time want countenance: farewell, you shall see me in Eastcheap.
>
> Prince: Farewell the late spring, farewell All-hallown summer. 9

Furthermore, in 2 Henry IV Falstaff is sent to the fleet as an actual scapegoat, as Mrs. Welsford observes. Indeed he looks sacrificial when sent away. Though as the spirit of comedy and freedom, he is 'resurrected' in the first part of the play, in the second, he accepts passively his fate, meeting his melancholic end.

Feste, in Twelfth Night, might be called a parasite in Welsfordian nomenclature, because he asks for money. He is aware of his humiliated position as well as of his superiority, and he has grown tired of the role of the fool.

Part of the function of the court fool is to be a parasite, and it is this which causes Feste to grow bitter:

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day. [10]

The last sad verse of Feste's song in Twelfth Night might be the voice of Shakespeare, for we see him several times speaking as a playwright. So, the playwright himself identifies with some of the characteristics of the fool. According to Enid Welsford:

a) The fools are conspicuously classless, at very least, difficult to place in the social hierarchies. Although they may haunt the houses of the mighty and the high, they are obviously neither of the upperclass nor distinctly of any other. [11]

b) The fools are a law unto themselves; that is, they do speak what they think, they are expected, even incited to do so, and yet they can be punished for it. [12]

c) The fools' utterances are not simple. 13

d) They manifest a conspicious withdrawl syndrome. [14]

This withdrawl syndrome might be that of the author himself for:

a) The fool was an entertainer; so was Shakespeare .[15]

b) The fool, as a part of his professional function, lived in and helped sustain a world of illusion; so did Shakespeare. [16]

c) The fool used the mask of folly to hide his lonely aprehension of truth behind illusion; Shakespeare, as a dramatist, is the greatest examplar of the way in which the artist uses the illusion in the name of reality. 17

The fourth fool considered in the dissertation under discussion is Lear's Fool, who disappears in Act I, scene V:

Lear: Come, boy.

Fool: She that's a maid now and laughs at my departure/ Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter. 18

The fool vanishes when King Lear becomes insane; when mad, it seems that Lear is really sane and is able to see things clearer. A possible explanation for the fool's disappearing is that he may be considered his 'nuncle's double':

> Lear: Who is it that can tell me who I am?
> Fool: Lear's double.[19]

In her master's thesis, Ana Maria Kessler Rocha makes some pertinent comments on madness and folly:

> Both fool and madmen are the guardians of the truth; the former is a kind of chorus, one who warns, criticizes and confounds. The madman, on the other hand, can be said to be the embodiment of the fool's words. He reminds each man of his own truth, but not through satirical commentaries or logic games. His mere presence is enough, for he is a living example of man's misfortunes. It is very signifigant in King Lear, that the first manifestation of Lear's madness should come as catches sight of Mad Tom. 20

Enid Welsford states that the fool ends tragically, as a scapegoat. We personally, however, think that the comic 'hero' is not tragic, since there is not a tragic recognition or true catharsis. In a tragic catharsis, we identify with the protagonist, feeling pity or horror; but in comedy, we do not identify with the person purged. Instead of the feelings mentioned above, we feel scorn, sorrow or amusement. There is no death, so there can be no true pity or horror. The comic 'butt' is a flat character who represents a quality to be exorcized. The tragic has been called a 'scapegoat', but the scapegoats of comedy are simpler and not so sympathetic. Life, George Meredith observed, is a tragedy to those who feel and a comedy to those who think. So, like the 'intellectual' fool, the reader keeps at a certain distance from the action of the comedy.

Structurally, our dissertation is divided into six chapters with a conclusion and a bibliography.

The first chapter deals with the Statement of Problem, the Review of Previous Criticism and , finally, with the Statement of Purpose.

Chapter Two, a background chapter, is divided into three major sections:

1) Comedy, as defined by Aristotle, Conford, Northorp Frye and Gilbert Murray;

2) Folly, which is described by writers such as Enid Welsford, C.L.Barber. It's relationship to cosmology (described by Norman Holland and E.M.Tilyard) will be pointed out in Chapter Six: King Lear.

3) Carnival Traditions, especially those of the Lord of Misrule. Here our main sources will be Enid Welsford, C.L.Barber and George Santayana.

Chapter Three is concerned with 1 Henry IV, especially the connection of the serious plot - the world of politics - and the comic subplot.

The fourth chapter takes the reader to the sunny world, where it seems there is no doomsday: As You Like It.

The fifth chapter examines a play written as Puritanism began to cast it's shadow over the Elizabethan age. Twelfth Night is the last of Shakespeare's happy comedies.

The last play considered in chapter six is King Lear, where the fool tries to perform his comic function in a tragic universe.

In our conclusion, we will return to the questions asked in Chapter One, and summarize the findings of the proceeding chapters.

Notes to Chapter One

1) Quotation is taken from the Glasglow, Brook and Co edition of A Midsummer Night's Dream. (V,I,84)

2) Harold Goddard The Meaning of Shakespeare, p.301

3) Cited by Edward Arnold in Shakespearean Comedy, p.77

4) Enid Welsford. The Fool: His Social and Literary History, p.256

5) Quotation is taken from the Bigelow, Smith and Co edition of King Lear. (I,IV,163-165)

6) Quotation is taken from Penguin Shakespeare esition of The First Part of Henry the Fourth. (I,II,32)

7) Cited by G.K.Hunter in Henry IV - Parts I and II, p.81

8) Quotation taken from the Bigelow, Smith and Co. edition of As You Like It. (V,IV,320-343)

9) Quotation taken from the Penguin Shakespeare esition of The First Part of Henry the Fourth op.cit.I,II,31.

10) Quotation taken from the New Swan Shakespeare edition of Twelfth Night. (V,I,385-388)

11) Ibid. cited by ibid. Op.cit., p.147

12) Ibid.cited by ibid,Op.cit., p.148

13) Ibid. cited by ibid.Op.cit., ibid.

14) Ibid. cited by ibid.Op.cit., p.149

15) Ibid. cited by ibid.Op.cit., p.158

16) Ibid. cited by ibid.Op.cit., p.159

17) Ibid.Ibid. Op.cit., ibid.

18) Quotation taken from ibid. edition of Op.cit., (I,V,51)

19) Quotation taken from ibid. edition of Op.cit. (I,IV,42)

20) Glenys McMullen. "The Fool as Entertainer and Satirist". Dalhousie Review, p.16

CHAPTER TWO

THE BACKGROUND OF FOLLY

This chapter will be divided into three items, as follows: First we will examine Comedy and diagnose the nature of the sense of humor. Then, via Eric Bentley and Gilbert Murray, we will examine the Aristotelian and Freudian ideas of catharsis or purgation; finally, we will treat Aristotle and Conford's viewpoint concerning comedy.

The second section of this chapter will be concerned with FOLLY, considering the ideas of Enid Welsford, Erasmus, C.L. Barber, as well as Holland and Tilyard, with their notions about the chain of being.

The third and last item of this section will be concerned with CARNIVAL TRADITIONS and the Lord of Misrule, a subject that Mrs.Welsford investigates in depth.

To begin with, we may ask what would become of a person if he didn't own this magnificent gift - the sense of humor, or the ability to try to laugh at melancholy moments of life or, whenever one likes. We are invited to laugh at the absent-minded teacher, not because of his learning, but because of his absent-mindedness. This, of course, is not consistent with his erudition. Kierkegaard affirms

> ...if a man wants to set up an innkeeper and does not succeed, it is not comic. If, on the contrary, a girl asks to be allowed to set up as a prostitute, and she fails, this fact is comic.[1]

If we laugh at this instance, we don't do it because of incongruity:

> ...for incongruity does not necessarily evoke a comic response. It is able to produce emotions as well as great laughter. 2

Eric Bentley analyzes Gilbert Murray, a member of the Cambridge School of Classical Anthropology who has suggested the idea of catharsis is easier to apply to comedy than to tragedy - in the sense that we, the readers, agree to it more easily. Bentley comments:

> Murray has spoken of the close similarity between Aristotle and Freud; and, actually, Freud carried the idea of purgation further than any aristotelian would have dreamt of! 3

For the former, the joke is

> ...an upsurge from the unconscious, a mechanism for releasing powerful archaic impulses, always there below the level of reason...4

so, for Freud, the joke is fundamentally catharic: a release, not a stimulant. Furthermore,

> The comic is capable of being detached from people, if we consider the conditions for this person to be comic. The discovery that one has it in one's power to make someone else comic opens the way to an undreamt of yield of comic pleasure and is the origin of a highly devoloped tecnique. 5

> The methods used to make other people laugh - (comic) -, (for one can make oneself comic, too), are: putting them in a comic situation, mimicry, unmasking, disguise, caricature, parody, travesty, and so on. 6

For Eric Bentley,

> A joke is a purling stream most of the way, then suddenly from one of it's pools rises up a veritable geyser. 7

The same critic goes on to say:

> Men and women need a sense of humor for they have inhibited many of their strongest wishes. 8

The aim of a sense of humor is to gratify our forbidden wishes, the repression of our id. We cannot get rid of anxiety and guilt, but there are tricks for eluding them, and the commonest is the sense of humor. The gratification of the forbidden wish is then slipped in as a surprise. Before our anxiety and guilt have time to go into action, we have felt forbidden pleasure. Inhibitions are momentarily lifted and we experience a release into joy. Hence, the immense contribution of humor to the survival of the species.

> Hence, also a paradox, through the funny we tap infantile sources of pleasure, we become infants again finding the intensest satisfaction in the smallestof things. Humor has much to do with the distance between the infancy returned and the point from which the return journey is undertaken. 9

As Mr.Bentley points out as well,

> Children develop a sense of humor as they move away from primal innocence. They have to hear a few songs of experience. Innocence is whole and single, while with experience comes division and duality - without which there is no humor, no wit, no farce, no comedy. 10

Bentley spoke of pleasure; Aristotle defines this feeling, in Chapter XXI of Book I of RHETORICS,

> ...as a movement by which the soul as a whole is consciously brought into it's normal state of being. 11

Mr.Scott observes in his article "The Bias of Comedy":

> Tragedy arouses emotions in order to be purged: tragic pleasure, in other words, is an affair of Katarsis of the tragic emotions: it is something essentially therapeutic. 12

Scott also agrees that Aristotle

> ...also conceived the ultimate effect of comedy to involve a special sort of pleasure, a pleasure partaking of a comic catharsis. 13

And in Aristotle's words, comedy would be:

> ...an organically complete imitation of an action which is ludicrous; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in seperate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; with incidents arousing pleasure and laughter, wherewith to accomplish it's Khatarsis of such emotions. 14 (pgs.88-89)

Aurelio Buarque de Hollanda Ferreira in his NOVO DICIONÁRIO DA LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA defines Khatarsis:

> It is the moral and purifying effect of the classic tragedy, whose dramatic situations of extreme intensity and violence, bring up the spectator's feelings of pity and horror, giving them oblivion or purgation of these feelings. 15

Aristotle considered comedy "a primal rite, a rite transformed to art;"[16] on the other hand, Conford saw it as "a scene of sacrifice and a feast."[17] In his Poetics, the former states that both, tragedy and comedy, are improvisations; the one rising from Dithyramb, the other from the phallic songs. It's clear that Aristotle traces the origins of drama to a kind of fertility rite - Dionysiac or phallic - or the primitive sacrifice and feast, mentioned by Conford. Comedy has strong elements from ritual present; rituals which involve fertility, as mentioned above; so it can be stated that the ritual origins of drama are based upon the fertility cult; furthermore, they are associated with spring and summer rites, which are rights

of growth and nothing else than elements of rebirth. Thus, in contrast to the tragic rites of win ter, comedy constitutes a spring festival. As the great philosopher affirmed, the typical form of the archaic fertility ceremony, (death or sacrifice of the hero-god, the rebirth of a new one and the purging of evil by driving out a scapegoat), requires a contest between the old and the new heroes, a feast and a marriage to celebrate the initiation or ressurection with the killed god or hero, and a final triumphal procession with the songs of joy. Behind the marriage ceremonial probably lies the myth of the union between earth-mother and heaven-father.

As Northrop Frye points out,"Dramatic comedy has been remarkably tenacious of it's structural principles and character types."[18] The plot struture of Greek New Comedy, transmitted by Plautus and Terence, has become the basis for most comedy, especially in its more highly conventionalized forms up to our days. What normally happens is that a young man (Demetrius, in A Midsummer Night's Dream) wants a girl (Hermia); that his desire is frustrated by some opposition, mostly paternal (Egeus); yet, near the end of the play, the hero gets his aim (Demetrius marries Hermia and Lysander, Helena). In this simple pattern, the elements, that also seem simple, are complex, indeed. Firstly the movement of comedy is

that from one society to another. At the beginning, the obstruction figure seems to be the "godfather" of the society. Frye states when the point of resolution exists in the action, there is the "Cognition".

> Thus, the movement from a society controlled by ritual bondage, arbitrary law and the older characters to a society controlled by youth and pragmatic freedom is a movement from illusion to reality. 19

Illusion is whatever is fixed or definable, and reality is best understood as it's negation: whatever reality is, it's not fixed. Hence the importance of the theme of creating and dispelling illusion in comedy: "illusions which are caused by disguise, obsession, hypocricy or unknown parentage."[20]

The first stage of a play embodies a repressive community; the second a purgatorial process, through which the characters become better people; and the third one represents the new society which is symbolized by a festive ritual that usually happens at the end of the play. Weddings are common rites which resolve comic complications. In As You Like It there are four of them: that of Oliver and Celia's, Orlando and Rosalind's, Phebe and Silvius' Touchstone and Audrey's . In Twelfth Night there are Orsino and Viola's, Sebastian and Olivia's marriages. In the tragedy of Lear the marriages come, by contrast at the beginning of the play and progressively disslolve. The last words here are divorce and death.

Mr.Frye says,

> There are two ways of developing the form of comedy: one is to throw the main emphasis on the blocking figures, as the comedy of manners does it; the other is ro throw it forwards on the scenes of discovery and reconcilliation. Comedy regularly illustrates a victory of arbitrary plot over consistency of character.[21]

The structure of a comedy requires a ocmic resolution and a consistent comic mood. Concerning characters, he lists three types of them: a) the alazons or imposters (Egeus in A Midsummer Night's Dream); b) the eirons or self-deprecaters (Bottom, who falls in love with the Fairy Queen, Titania); c) the buffons - professional fools, clowns, pages, singers and incidental characters with forgein accents. Instances of this last type are: Sir John Falstaff in 1 King Henry the Fourth, and Feste in Twelfth Night, who are also parasites; moreover, there are Lear's Fool in King Lear and Touchstone in As You Like It.

Aristotle points out a fourth type of comic character: the agroikos or churlish, rustic. "The contest of eiron and alazon," says he, "forms the basis of comic action, while the buffoon and the churl polarize the comic mood."[22] The humorous blocking figures belong to the alazon group. Such is the senex iratus who seems closely related to some of the demoniac characters of romance.

A type of eiron figure, according to Frye's classification is the spiritual being such as Ariel in The Tempest. These beings are the spirits of comedy as well as vices. In Roman comedies they were called "tricky slaves"[23]. In Shakespeare, the vice is rarely the actual architect of the action. For example, Ariel acts under the orders of Oberon, the king of the fairies.

In the third phase of comedy Frye explains "the senex iratus gives into the young man's desires."[24] Pericles contains an example of a Shakespearian father-daughter relationship "where it forms the demoniac antithesis of the hero's union with his wife and daughter at the end"[25]

In the fourth phase of comedy, the world of experience is replaced by that of innocene. This occurs when the old and closed society is transformed through a purgatorial process, a return to nature and a new, open and more tolerant form of human society. The "green world" (an island, a forest) where the great changes in the characters occur, is associated with instinct and dream, the unconscious as illustrated by the Forest of Arden in As You Like It.

In the fifth phase of the comedy,

> the world is still more romantic, less festive, less utopian and more Arcadian, and the comic ending is less a matter of the way the plot turns out than of perspective of the audience. 26

These five phases of comedy, Frye explains, might be considered as a sequence of stages in the life of a redeemed society. The reader finds an up-side-

down society; the best way for the characters, either old or young, is to re-establish peace through a purgatorial process, which in the plays is represented by the green world, or by the sea, which has the same symbolic effect. As was already pointed out, the forest and the sea are emblematic of man's instincts, in fact. In short, in these five phases, the comedy society has run from infancy to death; psychologically, this transition could mean the return to the mother's womb, or more accurately put, the being in the mother's womb put into the world.

In Northrop Frye's words, comedy is "an escape not from truth, but from despair: a narrow escape into faith."[27] It is a belief in a universal delight. In tragedy, every moment is eternity; in comedy, eternity is a moment. In tragedy we feel pain; in comedy, pain is a fool, suffered gladly. If the comic action is a "sacrifice and a feast"[28], as Conford suggests, then it also suggests the unruliness of the flesh and its vitality. The comic ritual is presided over by a Lord of Misrule. In Henry the Fourth, Part I, this is Falstaff; in As You Like It, Touchstone; in Twelfth Night, Feste, and in King Lear, Lear's Fool.

As Miss Rocha states in her thesis, citing Foucault, "by the time Shakespeare started his work, Folly was an organize institution throughout Europe."[29]

England, mainly Elizabethan England seems to have entered the cult of Folly more than any other European country. In the various holidays and festivals then celebrated there were dances, plays, mock-ceremonies and other pastimes where the Lord of Misrule led his court through the streets of town. Of course, the Fool occupied an important role in these festivals. This function had been born in the early theatrical clowning of the Middle Ages where the clown stood as one among the vices. In the Renaissance, however, he comes to fore: "Folly now leads the joyous throng of all human weaknesses."[30]

All this "saturnalian pattern", as C.L.Barber calls ot, formed the source of Shakespeare's Festive comedies. Not only the clown of the comedies, but also the court-fool of the romances and tragedies use their folly for witty commentaries, expressed by a powerful weapon - their tounge.

Leszek Kolakowsky remarks:

> The clown is he who, although moving on high society, is not part of it, and tells unpleasant things to everybody in it; he who desputes everything regarded as evident. He'd not be able to do this, if he were part of that society himself. At the same time he must move in good society in order to know its sacred cows and occasionally tell unpleasant things, already pointed out. 31

In such an enviorment, the Fool is not a mere participant in the town's festivities, nevertheless, "hired under a master in whose household he is kept to amuse and entertain."[32] Generally, behind the pretence of innocence,

he speaks the truth, and in some cases, gives real advice to the foolish.

Desiderius Erasmus van Rotterdam, the Dutch humanist was the first one to express the idea that folly expressed truth, criticism of society or moral advice. He wrote The Praise of Folly in 1509, against theologians and Church dignitaries. There he plays on various meaning and relations of the words "fool", "knave" and "wisdom",(emphasizing their ambiguity; furthermore, it is Erasmus who invents the expressions "wise fool" and "foolish wiseman". Jan Kott says:

> A fool who is recognized for a fool, who has accepted the fact that he's only a jester in somebody's household, ceases to be a clown. But his philosophy is based on the assumption that every man is a fool; and the greatest fool is he who does not know he's a fool. That's why the fool has to make fun of others; otherwise he ceases to be a clown. 32

Mr.Goddard in l The Meaning of Shakespeare, suggests that the fool's function is to "juggle with words until everything often including the truth is upside down and inside out."[33]

The fool, who belongs to a lower social class has the license to criticize the ills of society, but without offense, because he is only a fool and nobody can take him seriously. Yet his satire is expressed with so much wit that he is able to turn others into fools

without noticing it. This is where an inversion of meanings takes place and the roles change between the wise fool and the foolish wiseman. Thus he is a reminder of the Folly present in every man, even as, in King Lear, the king himself. McCullen affirms:

> Here we may notice the close similarity between the fool and the madman. Speaking about the crazy logic of the fool the author states:"This logic associated as it is with obsessive images, brings the fool close to the madmen. Both express tangenital thoughts on staccato phrases, flashing truth through the certain juxaposition of ideas. It's exciting for an audience, and produces a restless feeling, even an easy sense the table of sanity is turning. 34

I must agree with Miss Rocha's statement that,

> During the Renaissance, the alliance between madness and folly was very strong. Either because of their neighboring position in the chain of being, or because they planned similar functions , being, in society (or maybe both); the madman and the fool has always been seen as kingsmen, as cousins, so to speak, of the medieval vices. 35

C.L.Barber writes about Folly: and as we have seen terms Shakespeare's comedies are "festive" ones, which contain a "saturnalian pattern".[36] Shakespeare's style "is more Aristophonic than of any other great comic dramatist,"[37] although he also followed Plautus and Terence. "The Old Comedy tone of Shakespeare's world results, Barber says, from the dramatists participation in his native saturnalian traditions of the popular theaters and holidays. He used the resources of a

*all quotes on this and the following page are from C.L.Barber's Shakespeare's Festive Comedy. pgs.3-4 See notes on Chapter 2

sophisticated theater to express in his clown's ironic misrule, the experience of moving to humorous release."[38]

Examples of Shakespearian Festive comedies are: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Henry IV and Twelfth Night. The saturnalian pattern maybe divided into three steps: inversion, statement and counterstatement and, finally, the formula "through release to clarification".[39] Barber says, "the saturnalian pattern came to Shakespeare from many sources, both in social and artistic. It appeared in the theatrical institution of clowning, the clown oe Vice a recognized anarchist who made abberation devious by carrying release to absurd extremes. The same happened with the cult of fools ans folly, which was half social, half literary."[40] C.L.Barber concludes: "One could formulate the saturnalian pattern by first refering to these traditions: Shakespeare's first completely masterful comic scenes were written for the clowns."[41] But, he affirms: "it is the festival occasion that provides the clearest paradigm."[42] It includes not only comedies with holiday motifs like A Love's Labor's Lost, A Midsummer Night's Dream, but also those with little direct use of holidays as in As You Like It and Henry IV.

2.2 Folly according to C.L.Barber and Enid Welsford

C.L.Barber points out the connection between holiday folly and the Bacchic tradition. When the author Nashe presents his character Bacchus, Barber draws the parallel with Shakespeare's Falstaff: both are festival lords. Bacchus' speech might be the twin brother to Falstaff's: "Abstinence endenders maladies;"[43] "It makes us fall into a sort of greensickness."[44] Bacchus, as god of wine, expresses the Erasmian paradox: "there is no exellent knowledge without mixture of madness. And what makes a man more mad in his head than wine."[45] Falstaff, Barber notes, makes the same "burlesque parade of logic and authority"[46] when he discusses wine's contribution to valour and wit.

In The Fool, Mrs.Welsford specifically defines the court fool as a type. After the War of Roses, she claims, the fool flourished in the courts of the Tudor monarchs. Elizabeth of York, for example, had as court fool one William Worthy or "Phip", while Henry VIII kept a fool called Lobe:

> The losse of thee, Lobe, maketh manye sorrye,
> Throughe ye be not able for thyn own sake,
> But the King and the queen thou mayest so merrye,
> With the many good pastimes that thou dydest make.
>
> Yet foolys be ignoble, thoughe thou be gone.
> Now Lobe, Lobe, God have mercy on thy merrye node,
> And Lobe, God have thy mercye on thy foolish face...
>
> For follyes be alyve, Lobe, thoughe thou be gone.[47]

Lobe, evidentaly, is considered a "natural" and not an "intellectual" fool.

Mrs.Welsford proceeds, stating that the most lively picture of the sixteenth and seventeenth century fools in England was provided by Robert Armin's book Foole upon Foole (1605), published four years later under the equally entertaining title The Nest of Ninnies. Armin himself was a clown who acted in Shakespeare's company. He discusses several famous fools of the time, including Jack Oates and Jack Miller; but Willaim Sommers (who was the fool of three monarches: Edward VI, Queen Mary and Queen Eliabeth I) is the most important. Will was the most lovable of court fools, and his rhymes show his wit.

> A road in the school
> And a whip for the fool
> Are already in season.
> A halter and a rope
> For him that would be Pope
> Against all right and reason.[48]

Again, Sommers is responsible for the epitaph:

> But whether he was fool or knave
> He now lies sleeping in his grave.[49]

The Priesthood sometimes was actively hostile to the fool, as under Richelieu, for instance. Welsford discusses the case of Archibald Amstrong, who was banished form the English court for his disrespect towards the daughters of a bishop and the fool commented on his own dillema in verses:

> You which the dreame of Archy have now read,
> Will surely talke of him when he is dead.
> He knowes his foes in prison whilst that hee
> By no man interrupted but goes free.
> His fooles coate now is in far better case,
> Than he which yesterday had no much Grace:
> Changes of time surely cannot be small
> When jesters rise and Archbishops fall.[50]

Thus we see that despite his "license" to mock established insitutions, the fool often got into trouble because his criticism became a little too direct or telling.

Mrs.Welsford suggests that As You Like It and Twelfth Night are 'poems of escape'. In the former, we evade reality in the name of dream, while the latter was written for Christmas celebrations. In the first play mentioned, there is holiday from everyday restrains, while in the second on a Feast of Revels took place. Yet even in comedy there is melancholy: in Twelfth Night there is the April sport Malvolio, who reminds us of Jaques in As You Like It. And when Malvolio's exorcist, Feste, sings his last song, he sings the sad

song of Humanity.

> A great while ago the world began;
> With hey-ho, the wind and the rain;
> But that's all one, our play is done,
> And we'll strive to please you every day.[51]

According to Welsford, Lear's Fool had a more intellectual than emotional signifigance. Because King Lear is a tragedy, the Fool is not only a commentator about what he sees, but "also a prominent figure caught up into the drama, whose rôle and nature form a vital part of the tragic central theme." He is not only a comic fool who "juggles with words, until everything, often including the truth, is upside down and inside out"; but he also emphasizes the reverseal of psition between the wise man and the fool. It is he who advises the Earl of Kent, Regan's husband, that the knave who runs away turns fool; however, not the fool himself: the fool is a wise man, then. Moreover, it is the fool who proclaims reality: the wise man is the fool, not the knave. We have already pointed out, Lear's good

boy is not the same as Touchstone and Jaques.

> In Illyria and in Arden, it is regarded as sufficiently good joke that the madman should be the spokesman of sanity. But Lear's Fool goes farther than this. Like others of his profession, he is ready to profess his coxcomb, nevertheless, in doing so, he does not merely raise a laugh or score a point; he raises the question: "What am I? What is madness?"[52]

Examining King Lear, Welsford finds that it deals with the conflicts between "good and evil, of wisdom and folly, the hopeless cry of the Heavens for justice." In this play, the word knave refers to the fool, and Shakespeare seems to emphasize more the bad characters than the good ones.

> Goneril: (to Albany, her husband) O vain fool!
> Albany : Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame, Be-monster not thy feature.[53]

Mrs.Enid Welsford observes that Lear is respons-ible for his madness. Being an absolute king, choleric by temperment, and superficial in his actions, he is accustomed to flattery, pride and vnaity. He is a good

character in the play, but has to undergo a purgitorial process to recuperate, at least, his self-respect, since he has given away his kingdom and even his clothes. In his madness, he proclaims:

> I am a very foolish old man.
> . . . and, to deal plainly,
> I fear I am not in my mind.[54]

The fool in King Lear might be considered not only as a helper or a good Samarithan, but also as Lear's double: as soon as the monarch starts being mad, the fool disappears and it is in his madness that he, Lear, seems more sane.

> O let me not go mad, not mad sweet heaven!
> Keep me in temper, I would not be mad!
> O fool, I shall go mad![55]

says the king in the beginning of his catharsis from pride and selfishness.

Once mad, Lear realizes the sufferings of other people, even of the Earl of Gloucester:

> . . . heavens, dear so still!
> Let the superfluous and dieted man
> That slaves of your ordinance, that will not see
> Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
> So distribution should under excess,
> And each man have enough.[56]

At the beginning of the play, Welsford points out that both, Lear and Gloucester, are actual fools. There is the reversal of wisdom and folly, as a matter of fact:

> O Lear, Lear, Lear!
> Beat at the gate that let folly in
> And thy dear judgement out.[57]

At the start of King Lear, the fool makes a statement concerning Lear's folly: "Thou wouldst make a good fool."[58]

When mad, the king realizes that from his cradle to his tombstone there is not poetic justice in the world.

> When we are born, we cry that we are come
> To this great stage of fools.[59]

Welsford links king and fool when she states:

> Shakespeare was indebted to his contemporaries
> as well as to his ancestors. In his day, they
> were still a part of the practical structure

of a living religion. The king was the representative of the Divine Goverment, while the Fool was laughed at as a popular entertainer and moralized over as an embodiment of a Christian paradox.[60]

2.3 The Conventions of the Fool and Folly

Now I come to the third section of this Background Chapter, which is concerned with Carnival Traditions and the Lord of Misrule.

In considering the clown, we should first mention Harlequin, the original clown. He was a character in commedia dell'arte and still today remains as one of the characteristic types of carnival. There's something mixed in the character of Harlequin, who is an animal, a fawn and a devil; that's why he uses his black mask. The laws of space and time seem not to apply to him. He's a servant who really serves nobody. He makes fun of love and ambition. He's wiser than his masters, though he seems only more clever. He's independent, because he has realized the world to be simple folly. Feste, the wise fool of Twelfth Night , has the qualities just pointed out. There is one qualification,

however: although Feste has never ceased to be Harlequin, he does not perform anymore; he does not even take part in the action, but just comments on it. That is the cause of his bitterness.

The clown is the primitive comedian. Sometimes in the exuberance of animal life, a spirit of merriment comes over a man. For a moment, he may be wreathed in smiles and extremely pleased about nothing. All this he does without any reason, by sort of a mad inspiration.

In Twelfth Night, the one who embodies the spirit of merriment is Sir Andrew Aquecheek, who sings and drinks with Sir Toby Belch and the jester, Feste. There is a scene in which those three are together till late at night and Malvolio, the steward to Countess Olivia, comes in to advise them to be silent. Sir Toby asks him then: "Art thou any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?"[61], to which Feste wisely answers: "Yes, by Saint Anne; and ginger shall be hot i'the

mouth too."[62] The clown may thus turn his fooling into mimicry of anything or anybody. In fact, Feste's fooling is a pretense

> Because the actor is able to revert from those assumed attitudes to his natural self; whilst his models have no natural self save that imitable attitude, and can never disown it, so that the fool feels himself superior in his rôle of universal satirist, to all actual men, and he belabours at them unmercifully."[63]

After mentioning Carnival Traditions, we must discuss the Lord of Misrule, according to Enid Welsford and C.L.Barber. According to Mrs.Welsford, during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the festival fool, i.e., the Lord of Misrule, really had as serious function as any poet or philosopher. Welsford discusses the similarities between the fools of the traditional festivals and the court-fool: the former, using his motley and cap, keeps on talking nonsense while the latter is the butt of a household. "They are both professedly fools

and their folly is regarded not merely as a defect as the quality which endears them to the community."[64] As Mrs. Welsford suggests, both fools have a common relative:

> the sacred, possessed man who is out of his normal wits only because he is inspired with a higher wisdom.[65]

However, by the fifteenth century, there was no longer much connection between them, and they have evolved into the fool and the jester. Throughout the passing of time, the fool became a figure of pure nonsense, while the court jester devoloped as a serious critic of social abuses, especially during the Dark Ages and the first part of the medieval period.

With the growth of towns, the roles of the festival fool was confused with the office of the court jester, so by Shakespeare's time, the Lord of Misrule showed signs of thus double descent from both clown and jester.

Welsford locates the earlier origins of the Lord

of Misrule among pre-Christian customs, particularly in the Kalend and in the pagan Roman saturnalia. Furthermore, these festival customs were "survivals from an intercalary period inserted into the calander to fill the gap between the solar and lunar year."[66] Moreover, the old rites (which were amusements in the very deep sense of the word) involved clerical saturnalia, where, sacred things were prophaned by a ritual leader: the Bishop of Fools.

Where Christendom is concerned, the octave of the Epiphany is the Feast of Fools. Mrs.Welsford points out that the festival, concerning the Lord of Misrule, flourished in France, mainly although there are traces of it in other countries too.

The pagan character of the Feast of Fools is obvious. Since the old custom of festival was in the hands of the uneducated, and "since the vicars were of humble origins"[67], the church sanctioned the festival. "The composition of burlesque sermons

gave the fool the chance to insist on the idea of folly as a sign of increased intellegence."[68] The unruly clergy did not celebrate the kalends in earnest but in fun. Nevertheless, sometimes, they used folly as a stalking horse, under which their wit is hidden.

Enid Welsford agrees that the "Feast of Fools was an annual interruption of ordinary routine, marked by a temporary reversal of moral judgements."[69] That is to say, during the festival, people held holiday from everyday's restrains.

The time came when the eclesiastic Feast of Fools was replaced by the Societée Joyeuse, which thrived in France for the most part from the end of the 15th century to the middle of the 17th, these

> were associations of young men who adapted the traditional fool's dress of motley, eared hoods, bells and bauble and organized themselves into kingdoms under the rule of an annually elected monarch known as _Prince des Sots_, _Mère-Folle_, _Abbé de Malgouverne_, etc. with the object of celebrating certain traditional customs...[70]

which gave them scope for satire and social criticism.

Mère-Folle, a man dressed as a woman, was always nicely received wherever "she" went; those who followed before "her" wore garments of red, green and yellow. Her reception in the Infanterie was formal. Furthermore, it was "she" who provided for public morality and her best weapon was the satire. In 1603 Louis XIII supressed the society for the disorders it provoked in town; but because Mère-Folle was a conventional and respected authority "she" survived the edict. By the end of the 17th century "she" had died.

Like any other fool societies, such as the Societée Joyeuse, the Basochiens and the Enfants-sans-souci were linked to scandel and satire; never-the less, many times in trouble, they operated at ease under the good-natured regime of Louis XIII

who allowed them to criticize his court. No more activities are heard of after 1552.

The English Lord of Misrule was either a temporary court official appointed to provide entertainment for Christmas holidays, or a leader elected by young students at the Universities or Inns of Court to preside over their rejoicing at Christmas.

Mrs.Welsford points out that the English fools like the lower class Parisians, celebrated the twelve days of Christmas, and choose a Lord of Misrule. A clear example of what I mean is Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, which witnesses the virtual end of festivity as a stage tradition. After the death of Edward VI, the Lord of Misrule disappeared from the English court.

The use of motley by the fools, like the Basochians and Enfants-sans-souci is understandable

for they were assuming the rôle of the licensed court-fool; furthermore, if they wore the garments of a fool, nobody could critcize them.

Finally we might state that not only the French Lord of Misrule, but also that of other nationalities (the English, the German), refined himself to a philosopher, an satirist and a comic poet.

Now let us examine C.L.Barber's viewpoint of the Lord of Misrule. Barber sees him as the ritual spirit of comedy. This spirit was present in summer, "when a holiday group asserts its liberty"[71] or in winter, "when he resided over the eating and drinking indoors,"[72]mostly at night. The author goes on saying that on the twelfth night (January 6), the Lord of Misrule became the king of the Bean. Furthermore, this custom was held not only at Christmastime, but also at Shrovetide and at the harvest.

These traditional celebrations seem to be a version of the Feast of Fools, as Barber points out.

> In creating Falstaff, Shakespeare fused the clown with the Lord of Misrule, working out the saturnalian implications of both traditions. In I Henry IV, holiday is balanced everyday and the doomsday of a battle.[73]

Holiday would be the release from everyday's restrains and everyday, the clarification, the whole week in which one is expected to work. "Here, comedy and political life are contrapuntal,"[74] by contrast in the history 2 Henry IV there is no holiday, just everyday.

During the Renaissance, the Lord of Misrule still existed, but during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, of Edward VI and Henry VIII, the spirit of comedy was forced to withdraw.

Although officially forbidden, the Lord of Misrule continued alive in people's minds, as for example, mock-majesty improvised in taverns,

as was already pointed out in the discussion, Hal and his 'bacchic' companion, Falstaff.

C.L.Barber proceeds:

> The morris-dance was thoroughly traditional: the dance typically included . . .,the hobby-horse Maid Marian, who dressed himself up as a woman and the fool, usually the leading dancer.[75]

By this account, he who didn't want to be a Lord of Misrule (in other words, a 'kill joy') was mocked and flouted not a little. Here we see, then, the birth of satire and festive abuse.

There are great links between the holiday rites and Shakespeare's comedies, according to the critic who defines "release in idylic comedies as that which transmute the experience of the play into that of a revel. As an instance of release we may cite the point in <u>As You Like It</u> where Rosalind says to Orlando: "Come woo me, woo me, for now I am in hol-

iday humour, and like enough to consent."[76]

Cornford, in his Origins of Attic Comedy, suggested invecation and abuse based on a vestigial nature-worship, "still practiced in the folly of Elizabethan May-Game or Winter Revel."[77] 'Invocation' means comedy to be a spring festival; while 'abuse' the license to do things that day which are forbidden to others.

In order to provoke release, the same invocation-abuse appears in Shakespeare's festive comedies, "where the poetry about the pleasures of nature and the naturalness of pleasure serves to evoke beneficent natural impulses."[78] Through the pattern of release and clarification, the festive comedy makes us aware of the relationship between man and nature, "the nature celebrated on holidays."[79] C.L.Barber affirms: "It is the present myth and laughter of the

festive plays that reconcile feeling, without recourse to sentimentality or cynicism, to the clarification conveyed about nature's limitations."[80]

Notes to Chapter Two: Background Chapter

1) Robert W.Corrigan. Comedy: Meaning and Form, p.61
2) Ibid. Op. cit; p.69
3) Eric Bentley cited by Corrigan. Op. cit., p.285
4) Sigmund Freud cited by Corrigan. Op. cit., p.253
5) Ibid. Op. cit., p.255
6) Aristotle cited by Corrigan. Op. cit., p.
7) Eric Bentley cited by ibid. Op. cit., p.286
8) Ibid. Op. cit., p.286
9) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
10) Ibid. cited by ibid, Op. cit., p.287
11) Aristotle cited by ibid. Op. cit., p.88
12) Nathan A.Scott Jr, cited by ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
13) Ibid. mentioning Freud cited by Corrigan. Op. cit., p.89
14) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
15) Aurélio Buarque de Hollanda Ferreira. Novo Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa, p.296
16) Aristotle cited by Corrigan. Op. cit.,p.33
17) Conford cited by Ibid. Op. cit.,ibid.
18) Northorp Frye cited by Corrigan. Op. cit., p.141
19) Ibid. cited by ibid. Op.cit., p.147
20) Ibid. cited by ibid.Op. cit., ibid.
21) Ibid. cited by ibid. Op. cit., pp.144-145
22) Ibid. cited by ibid. Op. cit., p.150
23) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.151
24) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.157
25) Ibid. in his article "The Mythes of Spring: Comedy", cited by ibid. Op. cit.,p.158
26) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.160
27)
28) Conford, mentioned by Wylie Sypher in his article "The Meanings of Comedy", cited by Corrigan,p.33
29) Michel Foucault. Madness and Civilization,p.24
30) Leszek Kolakowsky cited by Edward Arnold. Shakes-

pearian Comedy, p.150

31) Enid Welsford. The Fool: His Social and Literary History, p.241
32) Jan Kott. Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p.35
33) Harold Goddard. 1 The Meaning of Shakespeare, p.301
34) Glenys McMullen. The Fool as Entertainer and Satirist, p.16
35) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
36) C.L.Barber. Shakespeare's Happy Comedy, p.4
37) Northrop Frye cited by Corrigan, p,141
38) C.L.Barber. Op. cit., pp.3-4
39) Ibid. Op. cit., p.6
40) Ibid. Op. cit., p.5
41) Ibid. Op. cit., p.5
42) Ibid. Op. cit., p.5
43) C.L.Barber. Op. cit., p.69
44)
45) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
46) Ibid. Ibid., Ibid.
47) Enid Welsford. Op. cit.,p.159
48) Ibid. Op. cit., p.167
49) Ibid. Op. cit., p.171
50) Ibid. Op. cit., p.181
51) William Shakespeare. Twelfth Night, p.251
52) Ibid. King Lear,(II,iv,120)
53) Ibid. Op. cit.(V,III,153-158)
54) Ibid. Op. cit.(IV,VII,60-63)
55) Ibid. Op. cit.(III,II,58)
56) Ibid. Op. cit.(IV,IV,150-156)
57) Ibid. Op. cit.(I,295,IV)
58) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,IV,152)
59) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,IV,181-2)
60) Enid Welsford. Op. cit.,p.174
61) William Shakespeare. Op. cit.,p.79
62) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.
63) George Santayana in the article "The Comic Mask and Carnival" cited by Corrigan, p.73

64) Enid Welsford. *Op. cit.*, p.239
65) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,ibid.
66) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.199
67) Ibid. *Op. cit.* p.201
68) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.202
69) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.203
70) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,ibid.
71) C.L.Barber. *Op. cit.*, p.24
72) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,ibid.
73) Ibid. Op. cit., p.8
74) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.6
75) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.28
76) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.8
77) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,p.9
78) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,p.9
79) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, ibid.
80) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.8
81) Ibid. *Op. cit.*,p.10

CHAPTER THREE
THE FOOLS AND FOLLY IN HENRY IV, PART ONE

1 Henry IV is the story in which the plans of Henry IV for a crusade are broken off by news of rebellions in Wales and Scotland. Henry Percy, Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland, is victorious over the Scots under Douglas at Homildon. The king demands the prisoners from the general, but Hotspur refuses to give them up unless Henry IV will ransom his kinsman, Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, who is held prisoner by the Welsh. This the king will not do, for he fears Mortimer may claim the crown. Then, Hotspur sends his prisoners home without a ransom, and joins the plot of the Welsh and Scots to overthrow Henry IV.

The Prince of Wales is a wild youth; his favorite companion is Sir John Falstaff, whose

main occupations are talking and drinking wine at the tavern in Eastcheap. Poins, one of Falstaff's group, informs Hal that there are pilgrims going to Canterbury "with rich offerings and traders riding" the next morning. In short, he invites the Prince to be a thief, a purse taker. Harry agrees and, disguised, attacks Falstaff who, after having fled, does not tell the truth, but rather lies, telling Hal that he was attacked by eight or nine robbers. When the Prince and his group return to London, their merriment is cut short because of Hotspur's departure for the battlefield in Shrewbury.

Furthermore, the King wishes his son to behave better as King-to-come. When Hal promises to be worthier of his position, he is entrusted with the royal forces. Before the battle, the King offers to pardon the rebels if they will lay down their arms, but his message is distorted before

it reaches Hotspur and the latter gives battle. The rebels are defeated, Hotspur being slain by Hal. Father and son (Henry IV and Hal) then go to Wales to quell the insurrection there.

> "When thou art king, let us be called thieves of Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, and let men say we be men of good goverment, being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress, the moon, under whose contenance we steal."[25]

If we consider the way in which Falstaff loves, but is unloved by Hal, we might dare to affirm the parallel between Sir John and the Prince on one hand, and between Shakespeare and his patron, the third Earl of Southampton.

Francis G.Stokes observes: "Henry Wriothesley became a patron of literature and the intimacy of his relations with Shakespeare, who was some years his senior, is beyond dispute."[26] We find evidence in the fact that _Venus and Adonis_ (1593) and _Lucrece_ (1594) are both inscribed "To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley,

Eal

Earl of Southampton and Baron of Tichfield."[27] In dedication to the letter Shakespeare writes "What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have devoted yours."[28] The first work related here is a study of female lust and boyish coldness, while the second is the picture of male lust and womanly chastity.

The most important evidence of the parallel between Falstaff and Shakespear however are the Shakepearian sonnets dedicated to Henry Wriothesley. The same tenderness with which the author wrote for his patron is found in Sir John Falstaff's attitude towards Prince Hal; in both cases, the poet and the clown were not heard and recognized.

Let's examine Sonnet XXVI:

"Lord of my love in whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty stongly knit,
To Thee I send this written ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine

In thy soul's thoughts, all naked, will bestow it.
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect.
Then may I boast I do love thee;
Till then not to show my head where thou mayst prove me."[29]

Although he is the Earl's puppet-on-a-string, Shakespeare doesn't mind it because of love. The same attitude is found in Sir John's attitude towards Hal.

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my son, grounded on sinful loving:
Oh, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find its merits not reproving,
Or, if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments
And sealed false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others' beds revenue of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee as thou lovest those
Whom their eyes woo as mine importune thee
Root pity in thy heart, that when it grows
If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By self-example mayest be denied. (Sonnet CXLII)[30]

William Shakespeare had a great passion for his patron; nevertheless, he is not loved in return, and neither is Falstaff. Furthermore, the difference in class between the poet-commoner and his noble patron is implied by the social gap between Falstaff and the prince.

Sonnet LXXI tells us:

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall he the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with villest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it: for I love you so,
I that your sweet thoughts would be forgot
If thinking on me then I should make you woe.
Oh if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse
But let your love even my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your morn,
And mock you with me after I am gone.[31]

Shakespeare, as well as Sir John, advised his patron and the Prince of Wales not to mourn for their death, because, as a matter of fact, neither the former nor the latter will cry the death of a fool. More sonnets demonstrating Shakespeare's "love" towards the Earl of Southampton (and very applicable from author to Henry Wriothesley) are those numbered: LXI, LVII, LXII, LXXVII, XCII,CV,CXV, and CXVI.

Shakespeare's melancholy over his rejection by Southampton may be reflected by Falstaff's sad end,

when Hal (as Henry V) sends the old man to the fleet. This occurs in 2 Henry IV. Falstaff goes, not like a scapegoat but, simply in obedience to the orders of the man he so dearly loves and who has made him a puppet-on-a-string. An instance of Falstaff's loyalty to the new-crowned King occurs, when in part2, the procession of the coronation streams out and there is a shout within the Abbey. Here Falstaff affirms:

> "God save thy grace, King Hal, my royal Hal! God save thee my sweet boy!
> King: My Lord Chief Justice, speak to that vain man.
> C.Justice: Have you your wits? Know you what, 'tis you speak?
> Falstaff: My King, my jove! I speak to thee my heart!
> How ill white hairs become a fool and a jester!
> I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,
> So surfeit - swell'd, so old and so profane;
> But being awake, I do despise my dream."[32]

The procession passes out of sight, but Falstaff and his friends remain. It is not the King who sends Falstaff to fleet, but the Lord Chief Justice: "Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the fleet; Take all of his company

with him."[33] The "Prince's dog" exclaims: "My Lord, my lord,"[34] however he is cut short and taken away. Falstaff, then, is the supremest symbol of loyalty, a loyalty not recognized by the one he so loved - King Henry V.

Prince Hal is being educated according the the tradition of the "books of courtesy" in order to be the future King of Britian. We don't think at all that the prince is really secondary to the comic protagonist, Falstaff. Not even in the least: we agree that Falstaff assumes in the low plot the same importance Hal assumes in the high plot.

We will mention two authors, each favoring a protagonist: Mr.G. Dover Wilson emphasizes the traditional, historical theme of princely education, while Mr.William Empson favors the humanity and centrality of Falstaff. Of course, as prince, Hal shall act princelike; but this gives him no right to treat Falstaff coldly and without feeling, making of him simply a means for his

popularity.

> Prince: Well, come what it will, I'll tarry at home.
> Falstaff: By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then when thou art king.
> Prince: I care not.[1]

Disagreeing at times with Mr. Wilson, we affirm that it is Falstaff, and not Hal, who links the low life to the high life, the scenes at Eastcheap with those of Westminster, the tavern with the battlefield.

Another point under discussion by the critics is the prodigality fo the prince: it is machiavelism towards his father that drives him rather than actual tenderness. (The prince is waiting for the king's death to imerge to usurp his crown and throne, since the father, Henry IV, did this to the lawful king, Richard II.)

> "So please your Majesty, I would I could quit all offences with as clear excuse, as well I an doubtless I can purge myself of many I am charged withal; yet such extenuation let me beg, as in reproof of many tales devis'd which of the ear of greatness needs hear by smiling pickthanks, and base newsmongers, I may for some things true, wherein my youth, hath faulty wander'd, and irregular, find pardon on my true submission. I shall hereafter, my trice gracious Lord, be more myself."[2]

I know u

"I know you all, and will a while hold the unyok'd
humour of idleness, yet herein I'll imitate the sun."[3]

(This the prince states after Falstaff and his companion Poins have left in Act One, scene two, 32.

It was already said that Hal was biding his time, waithing for the right time to emerge:

"I'll so offend to make offense a skill,
Redeeming time when men think least I will."[4]

This means that he's waiting for something which does not belong to him. Falstaff calls the Machiavelian spirit, Hal, a <u>true</u> prince while he is in fact a false thief:

"Why Hal,'tis my vocation Hal,'tis no sin for a man
to labour in his vocation."[5]

In a sense, Henry V, the Machiavel, is like most of those of the court, pretending to be different from what they are. But Hal's pretense is quite the reverse of theirs. Henry pretends to be better than his son is, nevertheless convinces nobody. On the other hand, Hal pretends to be far worse and convinces everybody. "In a bad time, one must protect oneself and one's purpose

conceals one's true identity,"[6] says he. Thus, the king-to-come is the ablest actor of the whole court and deceives all. Really, he is a royal counterfeit on behalf of truth, honor and order.

William Hazlitt opens his criticism of 1 Henry IV stating: "Falstaff's wit is an emanation of a fine constitution, an exuberance of good humor and good nature; an overflowing of his love and laughter and good fellowship; a giving vent to his heart's ease and overcontentment with himself and others."[7] This gentleman, based on Sir John Oldcastle of the British aristcracy, embodies zest for life and an entire moral irresponsibility. He represents the spirit of freedom, the spirit of comedy.

Sir John Falstaff's heart and vitality contrast with Prince Hal's head, Falstaff's corpulence, his eating and drinking, and later on, in his resurrection from death, marks him as the Adam, the natural man who never tried to be an "artificial" or "intellectual"

fool. On the contrary, he shows more fidelity to the prince than anybody can imagine. He may even be called "the Prince's dog", as the critic W.H.Auden points out. Besides his loyalty, as Lord of Misrule, he shows the exuberance of his love for laughter and good fellowship. His tounge drops fatness, and "in the chambers of his brain it snores of meat and drink."[8] Sir John's old age and obesity gives him a melancholy retrospective quality. And the disparity between his inclinations and his capacity for enjoyment, makes him still more ludicrous.

Comparing Falstaff among the other fools in this study, (Touchstone, Feste and Lear's Fool) we come to the conclusion that he is the most natural of all.

A fool is not an aristocrat, while Sir John is it, at least, a nominally one; yet his energy and speech are the very opposite of formal manners. In function, he is after all a fool whose exclusion from high society is a sign of his vitality. Falstaff is "noble in name", but "vital in function", we see this in a non-royal

speech between him and Hal:

> Prince: "Out ye roge shall I be your Ostler?
> Falstaff: Hang thyself in thy own heir apparent garters; if I be ta'en, I'll peach for this: I have not ballads made on you all, and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison, when a jest is so forward, and afoot too I hate it."[9]

Arisotle defines comedy "an artistic imitation of men of moral bent"[10], while to Conford it is a "sacrifice and a feast".[11] According to these twe concepts, comedy suggests saturnalia, the unruliness of the flesh and its vitality; furthermore, it is presided over a Lord of Misrule, who, in the play in discussion, is Sir John Falstaff. An example of him as Lord of Misrule, who presides over the inversion of order is the scene in which the fool plays the king and the future king remains the prince.

> Falstaff: "that thou art my son I have partly thy mother's words, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villanous trick of thine eye and a foolish hanging of thine nether lip, that dost warrent me. If then thou be son to me, shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses? Harry, yet there is a virtuous man, whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

<u>Prince</u>: What manner of man and did it like your Majesty? A goodly, and partly i'faith, and a corpulent, of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage; and as I think of his age, fifty, or a birlady inclining to three score, and now I remember me, if that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me."[12]

This speech between Hal and Falstaff foreshadows, in fact, the actual speech between King Henry and his son Hal, which is speech number 2:

"I know not whether God will have it so for some displeasing service I have done, that in his secret doom out of my blood, he'll breed revengement and a scourge for me: But thou dost in thy passages of life, make me believe that thou art only mark'd for the hot vengeance, and the rod of heaven, to punish my mistreadings. As thou art match'd withal, and grafted to, accompany the greatness of thy blood and hold their level with thy princely heart."[13]

Notes to Chapter Three

1) Willaim Shakepeare. 1 Henry IV (I,II,30).

2) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,II,80)

3) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,II,32)

4) Ibid. Op. cit.(I,II,33).

5) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,II,29).

6) William Hazlitt. Characters of Shakespeare's Plays p.148.

7) Ibid. Op. cit. p.149.

8) William Shakespeare. Op. cit., (II,IV,57).

9) Aristotle cited by Corrigan. Comedy: Meaning and Form. p.4

10) Conford cited by ibid. Op. cit., p.33.

11) William Shakespeare. Op. cit., (IV,iv,118)

12) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,II,20).

13) Ibid. Op. cit., (I,II,25)

14) Ibid. Op. cit., (I,II,27)

15) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,III,91)

16) Ibid. Op. cit., (V,IV,118)

17) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,II,85)

18) Harold Goddard. 1 The Meaning of Shakespeare, p.161.

19) William Shakespeare. Op. cit. (IV,III,99).

20) Ibid. Op. cit., (II,III,52).

21) Ibid. Op. cit., (IV,II,96).

22) Ibid. Op. cit. (V,IV,117).

23) Ibid. Op, cit. (V,II,108).

24) Ibid. Op. cit., (I,II,27).

25) Ibid. Op. cit., (ibid.).

26) Francis Griffin Stokes. A Dictionary of the Characters and Proper Names in the Works of Shakespeare.,p.347.

27) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.

28) Ibid. Op. cit., p.348.

29) Willaim Shakespeare. The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, p.1o46.

30) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.1060.

31) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.1051.

32) William Shakespeare. 2 Henry IV, pp.159-160).

33) Ibid. Op. cit., p.162

34) Ibid. Op. cit., p.162

CHAPTER FOUR
AS YOU LIKE IT

Scholars assign As You Like It to the year 1599: the plot is probobly derived from a work by one of Shakespeare's contemporaries, Thomas Lodge, calles Rosalynde, Euphues' Golden Legacy[1] which was first printed in 1590.

In the comments to follow we will attempt to combine a summary of the play with analysis. In the first act we see that the rightful Duke of France, Duke Senior, has been forced by his usurping younger brother, Frederick, to leave for the Forest of Arden. Rosalind, daughter of the banished Duke, stays at court with Celia her cousin (Fredrick's daughter) whom she appreciates dearly. Symbolic of the violence of the new regime, a wrestler named Charles has just maimed three challengers and is about to take on a fourth. This is Orlando, the son of Roland de Bois who is an ally of Duke Senior and who shares his exile. To his embarassment, Duke

Frederick is forced to pronounce Orlando victor in the sport, but determines to kill the young man by other means. Orlando determines to flee to the Forest of Arden to join the exiles. Rosalind meanwhile confesses her love for Orlando to Celia. The girls decide to leave for the forest too, wearing disguises. Rosalind passes as a man ("Ganymede") while Celia masks as "Aliena", the lost girl. Touchstone, the court fool of the old Duke, decides to accompany them in their exile.

In the terms used by Northrop Frye, the play now passes into its middle or purgatorial phase: the comic confusion of the Green world where the divisions between lovers and friends, forests and children, brother and brother will be heightend, but ultimately resolved. The forest , as the realm of nature, stands in contrast to the court with its artificiality and political corruption. It forms a "natural perspective" from which the court is criticized: "Here the present is compared to its dis-

advantages with a golden past."[2] Yet it is not presented by Shakespeare as an earthly paradise: he continually reminds us that it is a place where life is hard and where the winter winds blow fiercely. Yet for all of this, it seems to be better than the court, where other kinds of "winds" destroy the soul more subtly.

In the forest Touchstone, the critic of urban corruption, encounters Jaques, the melancholy philosopher who is attached to the court-in-exile of Duke Senior. The two of them form an interesting parallel and contrast for our purposes.

> "On the whole if in Touchstone there be much of the philosopher in the fool, in Jaques there is not less of the fool in the philosopher."[3]

In the association of the two, Shakespeare links the fool with his seeming opposite, the thinker. When Jaque overhears Touchsone engaged in his follu he is filled with admiration and envy at the freedom with

which the fool can criticize the evils of the world. Jaques wishes that he too were a fool, and had the fools license to criticize the 'sacred cows' of a corrupt society. Thus we see that the natural setting is now a base for satirical thought. Touchstone is a court fool who is not really at home in nature and Jaques is even less of a 'natural'. But both are critical of the unnatural vices of court which have put them where they are, and both would prefer a revised and reconstituted society where nature and custom are in harmony instead of at odds.

The play provides in fact all shades of opinion concerning the pastoral ideal (an ideal very "courtly" in its inception). Amiens, an attendent of the banished Duke, expresses an orthodox pastoralism when he sings:

> Under the Greenwood tree
> Who loves to lie with me,
> And tune his very note
> Unto the sweet bird's throat

Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.[4]

Jaques, on the other hand, is a bitter man of thought, a puritan in fact who will remain outside the marriages at the play's end. He asks Amiens for more song in order to parody pastoral sentiment:

If it do come to pass
That any man turns ass
Leaving his wealth and ease
A stubborn will to please,
Ducdame,ducdame, ducdame;
Here shall he see
Gross fools as he,
And if he will come to Ami.[5]

Jaques thinks that "all the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players."[6] His cynicism resembles Hamlet's melancholy in fact, and its metaphysical overtones imply that life if the staff of illusion: if life is a dream, it is a black and farcical one. His taste runs toward the tragic, and in his famous speech on the seven ages of man, we have the

tragic sense that all ideal are subject to time, that all flesh is grass, that all splendor ends in mud and ashes. In his scepticism, Jaque often seems merely moody and perverse, however, and the authority that his meditations often have in the reader's ear is not consistent. Touchstone's view of his situation seems better balanced in fact than that of Amiens or of Jaques. While the former is too gullible and the latter too acidic, Touchstone demonstrates that the fool can be intellegently resigned:

> Aye, now I am in Arden; the more fool am I;
> when I was at home, I was in a better place; but
> travellers must be content.[7]

In the carnival atmosphere of the play's central (or 'green world') section masking is an important adjunct to folly, whoses workings lead us back to wisdom. While the fool, Touchstone remains detached by his critical wit, Rosalind (the real protagonist of the play) is simultaneously in the action and beyond it by means of her disguise as Ganymede. We should remember the com-

plexity of this disguise involves, according to Jan Kott, not two but three levels: "Rosalind" is really a boy actor pretending to be a girl who is pretending to be a boy. Thus in one sense, if loss of identity lies at the heart of the comic experience, Rosalind has lost her identity in the forest. She is part of the general chaos, and perhaps her disguise is an indication that as a young girl, still dedicated most closely to Celia and her father, she does not have a clear idea of her sexual rôle. She shares, that is to say, in the whole atmosphere of folly that must be experienced in the Green world or dream world, but which is a stage in Barber's development "through release to clarification." By the end of the play, Rosalind will have overcome her ambivalence and be ready for mature marriage, a state which mirrors the larger pattern of reformed comic society.

In another sense however Rosalind is even more than Touchstone in control of her folly and an instigator

of actions which she understands or "overpeers". Rosalind is thus a "Touchstone" who brings others to a realization of their true worth and nature. Like the fool she induces the comic catharsis of those who live in the delusion of their wisdom. In Bertrand Evans' terms, she "over peers" the other characters; she does not confuse herself with her mask, but sees things as they are. Yet others cannot see through her mask. One of Shakespeare's most lively heroins, she is the unseen seer, the master of the revels which she has set into movement.

She retains this superiority, for example, in the scenes with Orlando who is clearly less mature and knowing than she is. She is in effect testing her future lover when she pretends to be herself. Orlando thinks he is kissing and courting Ganymede as a rehearsal for real, hetrosexual love and does not realize that the mock-situation is in fact the real one. We shall see the same charade of sex-changes in Twelfth Night later on

and there too we may read ot as a sign of the inhibitions and narcissism of the young lovers in whom love is in a state of "frozen immobility awaiting a spring thaw."[9]

Through a series of miraculous events the evil duo of the play - Duke Frederick and Orlando's brother, Oliver - experience sudden conversions, and the way is finally cleard for the reconstituted society of Duke Senior to arise amid a series of marriages. Rosalind drops her trans-sexual disguise and weds Orlando who has proved himself worthy of this clever girl. Celia is partioned off to Oliver. Silvius and Phebe, the past-orals are married and even Touchstone is drawn into the biological flux when he marries Audrey. All receive the benediction of Duke Frederick (the opposite of the original <u>senex iratus</u>):

> Wedding is great June's crown:
> O blessed bond of board and bed!
> 'tis Hymen peoples every town;
> High wedlock then be honored:
> Honor, high honor, and renoun
> to Hymen, god of every town.[10]

We must make some exception to this happy finale however in the case of Jaques, the dour, sceptical man. Like Malvolio in Twelfth Night, this puritanical thinker is left outside the pattern of marriages and almost outside the redeemed society. Jaques elects to stay in the woods with the now self-exiled Duke Senior. His place is with the tragic and the alienated. And there is a trace of his final melancholy even in the union of Touchstone and Audrey. The fool is not to be strictly separated from the satirical and sceptical thinker, as we have seen. As Jaques has identified with and envied Touchstone, so the latter shows his intellectual detachment in the disillusioned and realistic manner in which he accepts Audrey. Touchstone seems to fondly patronize her as a poor but necessary thing and to look at marriage in the chilly light of St.Pauls advice: it is "better to marry than to burn:" Thus even Touchstone, surely one of Shakespeare's jollier creations, we

find signifigant links with the disillusioned and sceptical mind of tragedy which stands outside the cyclical getting and begetting of the life-process, rather appalled after all by the physical world. We shall see the tendency even more exaggerated in the character of Feste, Shakespeare's last fool within the comic genre. "Oh that I were a fool! I am ambitious for a motley coat "[11] says Jaques in envy of Touchstone. But Jaques wants not the festivity of comedy so much as freedom to punish folly with the string of satire like Hamlet, who uses madness as a mask to assail the corruption of the sane court, Shakespeare's mature fools grow away from the simple celebration of nature toward the realization that there may be something "rotton" at the heart of things which laughter cannot exorcise.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1) Henry Norman Hudson *As You Like It*, p.xvii

2) William Shakespeare *Op. cit*. p.

3) Henry N. Hudson *Op. cit*. p.x/ii

4) William Shakespeare *Op. cit.* (II,v,47)

5) Ibid. *Op. cit*. (II,vii,2-9)

6) Ibid. *Op. cit*. (II,vii,139-140)

7) Ibid. *Op. cit*. (II,iv,16-18)

8) C.L.Barber *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy* , p.6

9) Ibid. *Op. cit*. p.112

10) William Shakespeare *Op. cit*. (II,vii,42-43)

CHAPTER FIVE
TWELFTH NIGHT

In this chapter, I will study Feste, the court-fool of Twelfth Night, in relationship to his enviroment.

Twelfth Night, or What You Will, was probobly written for the performance on the twelfth night, that is, the last night of Christmas holiday, January 6th, 1601; morever, it was first printed in the first Folio, where it occupies pages 255-7 in the division of comedies. The plot may be summarized as follows: Viola and Sebastian, twin brother and sister, are shipwrecked and thrown ashore at different places on the coast of Illyria, each believing the other is drowned. Viola disguises herself as a boy, (Cesario) and becomes the page of Orsino, the Duke of the island. She falls in love with him. However, he wants to marry Countess Olivia and sends 'Cesario' to persuade the lady to wed him. But Olivia falls in love with the page, instead. Meanwhile, exploring the

town, Sebastian is followed by the sea-captain who rescued him, Antonio. Antonio appears before Viola, whom he takes for Sebastian, and is arrested by Orsino's officers. Later on, Olivia persuades Viola's brother to marry the Countess, thinking that she is 'Cesario', and at last, when brother and sister are together, the mistakes are explained and Viola marries Duke Orsino, while Sebastian becomes Olivia's husband.

In the 'low' plot, Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's uncle, Sir Andrew Aqucheeck and her maid Maria play a trick on the Countess' steward, Malvolio. They send him a letter which he thinks to be a loveletter from Olivia; in it he is told to dress and act in a strange way to gain her love. When he appears as was recommended, he is treated as a madman, and much fun is made of him by the foolish wiseman, Feste, who is Olivia's clown.

As a clown, Feste (whose name suggests fête - feast) should embody the carnival spirit. Yet, Feste is not really the representative of fantasy and holiday,

but of remorseless and strictly counted time. It is he who makes us feel and face the world beyond holiday. Feste is a different kind of festive spirit, and his name seems rather ironic.

Feste is the professional jester in Countess Olivia's household. As a clown, his main function is to juggle with words until everthing, including the truth, is upside down and inside out. Feste not only jests, but perceives and states the fact of his jesting: "A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit; how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward."[1] Furthermore, his humor is intellectual rather than comic: "he is not Olivia's fool, but her corrupter of words."[2] With what quickness of brain he pretends to misunderstand 'Cesario's' question: "Dost thou live by thy labor?/ No, sir, I live by the church."[3] For these and other reasons, Viola is right in saying to Feste: "This fellow is wise enough to play a fool."[4]

The clown may turn his foolery into mimicry of anybody or anything. In fact, Festes fooling is a pretense. G.Santayana affirms, in his article "The Comic Mask",

> "for the actor is able to revert from those assumed attitudes to his natural self; whilst his models have no natural self save that imitable attitude and can never disown it, so that the fool feels himself superior as universal satirist, to all actual men, and the belabours at them unmercifully."[5]

In the section on Carnival traditions, we mentioned the clown. But we should now observe that clowning is connected with the use of the mask. Feste is the only professional among a crowd of amateurs; he clowns for a living. He never commits the amateur's mistake of confusing his personality with his mask. Mentally, he is not a fool: "Lady, no cuccullus non facit monachum," that's as much as to say "I swear no motley in my brain,"[6] he tells his mistress Olivia. He wears the mask of folly

rather to hide his lonely apprehension of truth behind illusion. Although he may have deliberately chosen his role, society determines its conditions; now that he is growing old, (he had already jested for Olivia's father) his life is becoming difficult. Olivia spurns him: "Go to, you're a dry fool. I'll no more of you; besides, you grow dishonest."[7] Again she explains, "Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old and people dislike it."[8] Sir Toby Belch's niece seems to imply that people of her own generation don't have the same sense of humor which the previous generation had.

It is important to emphasize a point, which has already been mentioned and this point is Jan Kot's:

> "A fool who is recognized for a fool, who has accepted the fact that he's only a jester in the service of the prince(in our case, of Olivia's) ceases to be a clown. But his assumption is that every man is a fool; and the greatest fool is he who does not know he is a fool."[9]

This ironically fits Olivia herself.

Feste is able to penatrate the mask of all the

characters in Twelfth Night and, yet, he succeeds in retaining his own. He sees through the disguises of society because he is above and beyond it; he succeeds in keeping his own mask for he is above and beyond it; he succeeds in keeping his own mask for he is a purveyor of illusion, after all, an actor, whose main function is not to be himself.

Earlier we observed the following points:

a) "The fools are conspicuously classless, or at very least difficult to place in the social hierarchies."[10] Although, like Feste, they may haunt the houses of the mighty, they are neither of the upperclass nor distinctly of any other;

b) "The fools are a law unto themselves; that is, they so speak what they think, they're expected, even incited to do so, and yet they can be punished for it."[11] Feste is not punished, just warned by Maria that he will

be hanged for being a truant. He replies: "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage."[12] The critic Edward Arnold affirms that:

> "this ironic right to speak is often referred to as the fool's license and it's usually assumed that it is a tradition and not a palpable reality. Whether or not the artist's license has created a fool's license - depicting something that did not exist, but was well known as a tradition or whether some fools did possess a written license is not known."[13]

Feste's highly omniscient character: as soon as he is presented in the play, Maria's secret is no secret for him anymore. He chastizes his lady in the sense of showing Olivia the artificiality of her mourning her dead brother: "The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul in heaven."[14] He certainly realizes that her mourning is an excuse for not accepting Duke Orsino, who "loves" her, or, rather is in love with the idea of being in love. As a clown, Feste's philosophy demands that he show the truth and abolish myths.

That is what he does with Orsino, Duke of Illyria: "Now the melancholy god protect thee, and the tailor make thy doublet changeable tafetta, for my mind is very opal."[15] The clown claims that as changeable in color as opal might be, so changeable in love and behavior is he, the Duke. We see Orsino's folly in his opening speech:

> If music be the food of love, play on;
> Give me excess of it, that surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken and so die.
> Enough! no more.[16]

Listening to music, it seems that Orsino want to capture a moment of intense delight he had in the past. "That strain again."[17] Since he concludes the re-capture to be impossible, the Duke replies: "It had a dying fall."[18] It looks like as if Orsino is wrapped in colored paper and cannot distinguish between actual and delirious love. This "being in love with the idea of being in love" is rather a fixed idea of being in love with the idea of being in love. Reason is necessary for

love to succeed; however reasoning is something impossible for Orsino. Indeed, he's changeable, for, on one hand, he is in love with Countess Olivia, while five minutes later, his heart belongs to Viola. As a matter of fact, there is a separation between those two loves of the Duke: a bridge of self-contradiction and self-destruction.

Proof of Feste's omniscience in Twelfth Night is the fact that he foresees Malvolio's fate:

> Malvolio:"infirmity, that decays the wise,
> doth ever make the better fool.
> Feste:God send you, sir, a speady infirmity,
> for the better increasing of your folly."[19]

Even though Feste knows the masks of all characters, he never discovered Viola's; Shakespeare implies with this that Viola as 'Cesario' is wholly in the truth and knows exactly who she is.

The third characteristic of the court-fool, according to Enid Welsford, is "that despite an assumed simplicity, his utterances are unsimple."[20] We may see

this when Sir Toby Belch and Andrew Aquecheeck are eating in Olivia's house, and Feste, the jester, appears. Sir Andrew anounces: "Here comes the fool, i'faith," but Feste replies: "Did you never see a picture of we three?"[21], meaning that all three are fools. How foolish are Countess Olivia's uncle and his companion not to see the clown's wisdom, which proves them to be examples of foolish wisemenm, in Erasmian nomenclature. Feste's philosophy is that everybody is a fool and, as we have often observed, the greatest fool is he who does not realize his foolishness.

Sir Andrew Aquecheek might stand for Sir Toby's parrot, since he repeats his words and imitates him, without even understanding what he says. He is too far below Feste to apprehend the depth of the jester's wisdom, which is the fruit of bitterness, of pretending to be what he is not in order to survive.

Sir Toby calls Feste an ass; later on, towards

the end of the play, when mostly all the characters have been unmasked, Feste, in a language of grief and sorrow, tells Duke Orsino that he does what he does for his profession, and not because he likes it.

> "Marry sir, they praise me and make an ass of me; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass; so that by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my friends I am abused."[22]

Viola, disguised as 'Cesario', thinks of Feste as the merry fellow who makes his living by playing tricks on others, and, so, doesn't care for anything. However, he does care for something, as he himself replies. By speaking in superficial terms, he implies a "deep structure". Only he has the gift of wisdom, for wisdom is something that just concerns him after all: He is the one who, unseen, sees almost everything.

Furthermore, Feste's statements to Sebastian "I am afraid this great lubber, the world, will prove a cockney"[23] and "The whirgling of time brings in his revenges"[24] show that if the actual fool saw life with

the eyes of the wise fool, they would have understood the meaning of his words. Since they do not, they are 'buts' and we laugh at them rather than with them. Aqe-cheeck and his friends were unable to understand the fact that the fool's heart can suffer even while clowning.

The fourth characteristic of the court-fools, according to Welsford, is that "they express a with-drawl syndrome."[25] Their involvement in the action, incidents and tensions of the play is peripheral. Edward Arnold says: "this posture is implicitly comprehended on the reading of the play, but becomes explicit when they're experienced."[26] The withdrawl syndrome suggests that the fool may represent the author himself, (Shakespeare), for:
a) "the fool was an entertainer; so was Shakespeare;[27]
b) the fool, as part of his professional function, lived in and helped to sustain a world of illusion; so did Shakespeare, as a dramatist, is the greatest examplar of the way in which the artist uses illusion in the name of reality."[28]

There are two characters in Twelfth Night who are contraries to each other: Feste, the wise fool, and Malvolio, the foolish wise man. Feste is Olivia's jester and the aim of his profession is to provide entertainment. On the other hand, Malvolio represents the Puritanism which was beginning to flourish at the time the play in discussion was written. As a puritan, Malvolio is strict in morals and regards fun and pleasure as sinful. For example, when the trio-Feste, Sir Andrew Aquecheek and Sir Toby Belch are singing and drinking until late, Malvolio's intervention is unsympathetic. Malvolio, who despises folly, such as the fooling of Sir Toby Belch and Andrew Aqucheeck and the comments of Feste, himself emerges as a fool in his solemnity:

> "My masters you are mad, or what are you? Have you no wit, no manner, no honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do you make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you."[29]

Because Malvolio, on one hand, speaks in the name of decorum; he refuses, on the other hand, to see things in the way that good-humored society incites him to see. He was considered mad, not in clinical terms, however, but in the sense that he didn't follow the perscriptions of society. This is what the quotation implies. We might sau that Malvolio, because of this fact, is inprisoned in the Dark Room, which stands for his closed self.

It is Feste's job to purge Malvolio from his puritanical ideas, from his 'self-love' as Mrs.Helen O'Neil puts it. He attempts Malvolio's catharsis under the mask of Sir Topaz.(The topaz was a jewel thought to cure mad people.) The clown enters the Dark House to purge Countess Olivia's steward; Malvolio cannot see the jester because of the darkness; besides, Festes is a master in the management of his voice. He baits Malvolio unmercifully:

Feste (singing):"Hey Robin, jolly Robin. Tell me

how thou lady does.
Malvolio: Fool!"[30]

Feste:"My lady is unkind, perdy.
Malvolio: Fool!"[31]

Feste:"Alas! Why is she so?
Malvolio: Fool, I say!" [32]

Feste fails to purge Malvolio, for the strict rules of Puritanism will never allow Malvolio to release his true self. Mrs.Helen O'Neil affirms: "Malvolio is so sick of self-love that his sufferings cannot reform it."[33] With this character, Shakespeare suggests the limits of comedy: he seems to tell us that comedy is neither written for all people, nor can it solve all their problems. The fool here fails to perform his function and the foolish wise man does not accept the lesson of comedy: "I'll revenge on all the pack of you!"[34]

It has been suggested that Feste, as a kind of Socrates figure, is a relic from the past: he's old and is no longer esteemed by his employer; he does not really act, but just comments on the action rather fatalistically:

"But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain, it rained every day."[35]

Though his conscious philosophy is Erasmain, his soul is weary and sceptical.

Feste is a kind of chameleon - he adjusts himself according to the setting. Nobody likes him, and this fact makes him realize that he has to look out for himself. Therefore, he does not show affection for anybody: his liking for Maria doesn't amount to fondness; he enjoys singing and drinking with Sir Andrew, but he hates drunkenness; his attitude towards strangers is extremely cool, he is not even attracted by Viola.

His attitude, then, seems to fit a withdrawl syndrome, for this fool, (Shakespeare, we suggest), does nothing to improve other characters; he just states facts as a cool-reasoned outsider, who enters a situation, which has nothing to do with him personally. He sees the world, and reasons about it without any private emotional involvement.

As a professional jester, Feste is given to song and music, even though he might not be fond of merriment any more. From song to song, Feste's lyrics show a deepening philosophical melancholy. He is an extreme example of the intellectual fool who has lost his simple roots in nature. He is melancholy because he is intellectual; therefore he makes so many wise observations about life, observations which the 'natural' is unable to think of!

Each of Feste's songs is magnificiantly suitable to the occasion it is sung:

> "O mistress mine!where are you roaming?
> O stay and hear!your true love's coming,
> That can sing both high and low,
> Trip no further, pretty sweetting,
> Journeys end in lovers meeting,
> Every wise man's son doth know."[36] (II,III,33-38)

According to Mrs.Helen O'Neil, this song foreshadows the happy ending of the play: "journeys end in lovers meeting." On the other hand, when Feste sings this tune, Sir Toby Belch and Andrew Aquecheeck listen to him; the

former embodies the carnival spirit and the other, actual unrealized foolishness. This song is an irony towards Sir Andrew, whose love for Countess Olivia is a mere bubble. Lady Olivia would never love such an idiot! Furthermore, the songs of a drunkard could never be masterpeices! In this respect, Sir Toby Belch's neice knew her place. In his second song, also sung to Sir Toby Belch and Andrew Aquecheek,

> "What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
> Present myrth hath present laughter;
> What's to come is still unsure.
> In delay there lies no plenty;
> Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
> Youth's a stuff will not endure."[37] (II,III,41-46)

Feste's change of character begins; that is, his view of fact starts being philosophical. Here, he makes us aware of the similarity between love and comedy. For comedy, time is the condition of present existence; moreover, comedy is immersed in time, in the and and now. The same happens with love, and it is Feste who affirms:

"What is love? T'is not hereafter;
Present myrth hath present laughter;
Youth's a stuff will not endure."[37]

The critic Mrs.O'Neil agrees with this Shakespearian fool, warning those who wait too long. She illustrates this point, the theme of carpe diem, by examplifying Olivia who wasted her uouth in self-imposed seclusion.

Feste's third song is dedicated to Orsino, Duke of Illyria. It represents an invitation to death due to unrequired love. Therefore it shows the pattern of deepening melancholy. As Mrs.O'Neil affirms: "The mood of this song is based upon the convention, but it is exactly what the Duke calls the food of love:"

"Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away breath;
I am slain by a fair maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with you,
O prepare it;
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strewn;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corse, where my bones shall be thrown;

A thousand thousand sights to save,
Lay me O! where
sad true lover never finds my grave,
To weep there."[39] (II,iv,49-64)

Feste's last song is the sad song of Humanity: the clown realizes Mankinds cycle of life - infancy, youth, old age and death. He does not judge, but simply states his thoughts. In the last stanza of Feste's final song we suggest that the jester is like Shakespeare himself, for there are indications that the playwright will turn from the comic genre now toward the darker world of tragedies. The last ballad goes like this:

"When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas, to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
By swaggering , could I never thieve,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day."[40]
(V,I,369-389)

Mrs.O'Neil interprets Feste's last song as follows:

"When he was a tiny boy he knew very well that foolish things were unimportant. But he grew up to become a clown and felt the sadness of being rejected along with the knaves and thieves. Later, Feste got married, but it was an unhappy experience for him. To be a clown, he had to associate with drunkards (like Sir Toby), probobly far into the night, when he should have been home with his wife.(This is a hint to prove his marriage was unhappy).

In the lat verse, Feste begins to philosophize. We remember that he is an old man, towards the end of his career. He realizes that life is not perfect and the world is so old that it is futile to try to change it now. The wind and rain are reminders of harsh reality so different from the "make-believe" of the play. But Feste will not persue these melancholy thoughts. It does not matter; the play is over, and there is pleasure to be had; if not in life, at least in the theatre."[41]

Finishing Chapter V, we dare to say that as the twelfth night, January 6th, marks the end of Christmas celebrations, this is Shakespeare's farewell to wit. Moreover, it is the end of Merry England, of the bright day of the Tudor houses, where hospitality and entertainment were so predominant. It foresees the era of flourishing Puritanism, which caused the theatres to be closed.

For Paul: Chapter Five: Mrs. Helen O'Neill .

We surely agree with Mrs.O'Neill's statements concerning Feste's last song. It concerns Mankind's period of life: during childhood, serious things or problems unimportant to us; when we grow up poorly, nobody likes us. As old people, the "make-believe" world is certainly more pleasant than the harsh one. And being so, dream is more agreeable to our eyes than reality, although if it is only illusory.

Notes to Chapter Five

1) Quotation taken from the New Swan Shakespeare edition of Twelfth Night. (III,I,9-11).

2) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,I,29-30).

3) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,I,1-2).

4) Ibid. Op. cit. (III,I,29-30).

5) George Santayana. The Comic Mask and Carnival in Robert W. Corrigan. Comedy:Meaning and Form, p.73.

6) Quotation from op. cit. (I,v,48-9).

7) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,v,36).

8) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,v,35).

9) Jan Kott. Shakespeare, Our Contemporary, p.241.

10) Edward Arnold. Shakesperian Comedy, p.147

11) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.148.

12) Quotation is taken from op. cit. (I,v,16).

13) Edward Arnold. Op. cit.,p.66.

14) Quotation taken from the New Swan Shakespeare Edition Op. cit. (I,v,61)

15) Ibid. Op. cit. (II,IV,70-71).

16) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,I,1-1).

17) Ibid. Op. cit. (ibid.,3).

18) Ibid. Op. cit. (ibid.,4).

19) Ibid. Op. cit. (ibid, v,66-67).

20) Edward Arnold. Op. cit.,p.148.

21) Quotation taken from ibid.,op. cit. (II,III,13-15).

22) Ibid. Op. cit. (V,I,13-17).

23) Ibid. Op. cit. (iv,I-11-12).

24) Ibid. Op. cit., (V,I,356).

25) Edward Arnold. Op. cit., p.149.

26) Ibid. Op. cit., ibid.

27) Ibid. Op. cit., p.158.

28) Ibid. Op. cit.,p.159.

29) Quotation is taken from op. cit. (II,III,75-80).

30) Ibid. Op. cit. (IV, II,62-63).

31) Ibid. Op. cit. (IV,II,65-66).

32) Ibid. Op.cit. (IV,II,67-68).

33) Helen O'Neill. Twelfth Night.p.10.

34) Quotation is taken from Op. cit,(V,I,357).

35) Ibid. Op. cit.(V,I,381-384).

36) Ibid. _Op. cit_. (II,III,33-37).

37) Ibid. _Op. cit_. (II,III,41-46).

38) Helen O'Neill. _Op. cit_., p.9.

39) Quotation is taken from _op. cit_. (II,iv,49-64).

40) Ibid. _Op. cit_.(V,I,369-389).

41) Helen O'Neill. _Op.cit_. p.9.

CHAPTER SIX

KING LEAR

The Tragedy of King Lear was first performed in 1608, based on models whose origins must be sought for in the dim world of celtic legend or the even more remote world of nature-myths. The story is first present in literature in Geoffrey of Monmonths latin history of England, Historia Britonum,[1] composed around 1130. Shakespeare's play was evidently composed between 1605 and 1606.

The sub plot of the Earl of Gloucester and his two sons was certainly based on Sir Phillip Sidney's Arcadia,[2] a collection of romances in the pastorial style (1590). Yet there are many innovations and changes that Shakespeare's imagination added to his models: for example Lear's madness, Cordelia's hanging, and her father's death. In the subplot, Edgar's madness seems to have been Shakespeare's invention.

The plot of the play may be summarized as follows: King Lear of Britian, feeling the burden of his years, decides to divide his kingdom among his three daughters. He tells Goneril, Regan and Cordelia that their share of the inheritance will depend on their love for him, and he asks each for a testemony of this love. The two elder daughters, Goneril and Regan, protest that their love is beyond their power to express and that they have no joy in life besides his love. The younger daughter Cordelia replies, however: "I cannot heave my heart into my mouth: I love your majesty according to my bond, no more nor less."[3] The angry Lear then decides to divide the third (and largest) part he had reserved for Cordelia among her two sisters. The Earl of Kent, who speaks in Cordelia's defense, is banished from Court, though he returns disguised to serve old Lear. The King of France marries Cordelia even though she is disinherited, while Goneril marries the Duke of

Albany and Regan, the Duke of Cornwall.

After a short period, the old king finds out that his oldest daughters are abusing their power, and he realizes his foolishness in dividing his kingdom and giving away his possessions. Driven to distraction by the ingratitude of his daughters who refuse to support his retinue and insult him, he goes off into the stormy night accompanied by his fool and the Earl of Kent. On the heath, they take refuge from the storm in a hovel, where they find Edgar, the legitimate son of the Earl of Gloucester. Edgar has had to flee for his life from the treachery of his brother, the bastard Edmund. For his own safety, Edgar has assumed the disguise of a beggar, "Mad Tom".

After scenes in which Lear touches the depth of his madness, Edgar meets his father Gloucester wandering on the heath and cares for the old man, who has been blinded, without revealing his identity to his father. Edgar agrees to lead Gloucester to Dover,

where the King of France and Cordelia are landing with an army to put Lear on the throne again. Meanwhile Lear too, with the aid of the Duke of Kent, has reached Dover and rejoins Cordelia in the French camp. Lear seems to have regained his sanity through the agency of the Fool, Edgar, and Kent, but just as the play seems to be taking a happy course, the French army loses the battle against Edmunds forces and father and daughter are made prisoners.

The play ends in a series of deaths: Regan is poisoned by Goneril, who loves Edmund, the former's husband. Goneril then kills herself after Edmund is slain by his half-brother Edgar in single combat. Edgar describes how Gloucester's heart 'burst itself' when the latter discovers that 'Mad Tom' is really his loyal son. Then Lear's heart also bursts when he sees the body of Cordelia who has been murdered by Edmund's order.

Folly has several faces in this play and the fool is mirrored by other characters who share his function.

(a) We have Lear himself, the fooish wise-man who does not realize that love cannot be measured. He must be purged of his egotism and pride by the agents of folly.

(b) Principle among these is Lear's fool who from the beginning warns the king of his mistake. From behind the mask of his profession (he is an official court-jester) he implies that it is Lear who is the real fool. In the scenes on the heath, the fool heightens the sense of chaos with his topsy-turvey humor which is ultimately intended to produce Cathartic effects in the king.

(c) Edgar, disguised as Mad Tom carries the deliberate dislocation of Lear's already dislocated mind still further from the fool. Edgar performs the same function later, still disguised, with his own father, Gloucester. Like Lear, Gloucester has been blind to the real nature of love and has favored the false love of Edmund, who like Goneril is purely machiavillain.

Lear has ruled for many years and the habit of power has hardend his heart. Though he wants to give up the office of king, he does not want to surrender his power to command, and believe that he can command love. This selfish blindness constitutes his tragic flaw, for which he must be punished by the fates. But as his nemesk returns to him in the pathetic scenes of exclusion and exposure on the heath we begin to feel that universal justice is in truth being carried too far, and that it may be a devil and not a god at all who is distributing this justice.

It is when he goes mad on the heath that Lear sees himself truly as a "poor, forked creature" who has real links with others of his bird - a fool among fools.

> I am a very foolish old man.
> ...And to deal plainly,
> I fear I am not in my right mind.[4]

Through madness Lear finally catches sight of other people's sufferings - the Duke of Gloucester's, for example:

> Let the superfluous and dieted man
> That slaves of your ordinance,
> That will not see
> Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
> So distribution should under excess,
> And each man have enough.[5]

When he regains his sanity, which he can only do through the tonic experience of folly, he can finally properly value Cordelia's love, and tell the false from the true. Unfortunately, it is a little late: when he sees Cordelia dead, he seems to confuse her with the fool:

> And my poor fool is hanged,
> no, no, no life!
> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
> And the no breath at all?[6]

The fool in King Lear is different from the rest of Shakespeare's fools: Shakespeare made him one of those kindly creatures who, having once received an idea into their brain, are incapable of parting with it. His mental activity consists in going over the same srring, sometimes with ingenuity, sometimes bitterly,

but always calculated. In his grief for Cordelia's banishment, the Fool almost forgets his rôle and makes us readers believe that under a veil of humor, he is deeply serious.

On the other hand, the Fool makes the folly of Lear the aim of his humor: his words are not simply words, but advice which has deep signifigance. When immediately after Goneril's cruel speech to the King, the Fool breaks out, "Out went the candle and we were left darkling,"[7] the light of the moral world has ceased to shine, and the darkness grows relentlessly. As the King descends into madness however, the Fool guides and directs the former's folly: he jests in order to cheer Lear up. In a similar way, he expresses his devotion to Lear in the scene of the storm, where his theme is that those who are fools in the eyes of the world are justified by a higher power. It is important to observe however that the fool has his

place in the tragedy only as long as the King is able to perceive the fool's truth. There is no longer need or room for the Fool after the King actually goes mad. At this point the Fool vanishes, saying, "I'll go to bed at noon."[8] This sudden withdrawl of the Fool, together with the fact that (unlike Shakespeare's other fools) he is nameless suggests that he is like something inside of Lear himself, an alter-ego.

> Lear: Who is it that can tell me who I am?
> Fool: Lear's shadow.[9]

At the moment that Lear crosses into insanity, the Fool is replaced by 'Mad Tom': his catharsis has succeeded only too well and he vanishes forewith from the action.

What G.Wilson Knight calls the 'Lear Universe' is one in which disorder has both comic and tragic dimensions. Thus the chaos of the storm which reveals a derangement of logic which is at the heart of the Fool's joking. In the storm of metaphsical evil and

in the folly which imitates it, the high is made low amd the low is exalted. Whether we weep or laugh at the inversion of the universe seems uncertain. In his Elizabethan World Picture, E.M.Tillyard discusses the chain of being which the Elizabethan believed traced as heirarchical order from God and the angels down to animals, plants, and minerals. He presents the scheme whereby the order of the external, natural universe was exactly reflected in the arrangement of the society. Thus the order that descended from God to the minerals corresponds to the heirarchy of King, nobility, commons, down to the fool and beggar, who are the lowest on the human social scale. The humor of the fool, turning as it does upon the inversion of this fixed conventional pattern, carries with it a suggestion of daemonic chaos which is not so inappropriate in a tragedy as it might first seem.

Early in this thesis we stated that incongruity, which seems to lie at the heart of all joking, is not exclusively a trait of the comic. In *King Lear* we see it may as easily elicit tragic reactions.

Notes to Chapter Six - King Lear

1) Henry Norman Hudson *The Tragedy of King Lear*, p.X

2) Ibid. *Op. cit.*, p.xxii

3) William Shakespeare *Op. cit.* (I,i,96-97)

4) Ibid. *Op. cit.* (I,V,50-52)

5) Ibid. *Op. cit.* (IV,VI,111-116)

6) Ibid. *Op. cit.* (Viii, 307-310)

7) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,iv,213)

8) Ibid. *Op. cit.* (III,vi,93)

9) Ibid. Op. cit. (I,iv,254-255)

CONCLUSION

The subject of folly in renaissance literature is a vast one, which we have attempted to limit by foucussing on four representitive Shakespearean plays and by concentrating on the relationship between the fool and the madman. In our discussion of the plays we have emphasized the 'natural' and 'artificial' components in the fools and traced a spectrum from the more natural (Sir John Falstaff) to the intellectual court fools of As You Like It, Twelfth Night and King Lear.

Drawing chiefly on the anthropological critics who derive from Cambridge School of Classical Anthropology (Welsford, Barber, Frye and Gilbert Murray) we have shown that in the Renaissance and medieval world, madness was associated with inspiration: "the lunatic, the lover and the poet are of imagination all compact." We have seen that under the mask of

folly, the Fool of Shakespeare's dramas presents a higher vision of truth which undercuts the fixed and dogmatic conventions of society and reminds us of our link with nature.

Let us go back now and try to answer the questions we posed in Chapter One, part one.

We have found that it is indeed possible for the fool to function outside of comedy, in the plays of historical and tragic genre. Just as the fact of incongruity can be alternately tragic and comic, so the elements of tragedy can overlap and mix in Shakespeare's rendering of the fool. The fool always is marginal to the action and shows a tendency to withdraw: a fact that can have both comic and tragic signifigance. Indeed we notice that in _Lear_, although the protaginist dies, his catharsis by the fool seems to have succeeded. On the other hand, the comedies paradoxically often show a catharsis that is incomplete (Falstaff, Jaques, Malvolio). So tragedy is hidden

in the heart of comedy, and vice-versa.

Topical inversion and masking are, we have seen, the means by which the fool seeks to induce the catharsis of the deluded 'foolish wiseman'. It is through the Carnival atmosphere of confusion and lost identity that the comedies move toward their 'saturnalian' end: " a through release to clarification", as Barber states. Comic action begins in an 'unredeemed' society where people's true faces are really masks. To get rid of the inner, unconscious mask that inhibits higher consciousness, the fool puts on an artificial mask, and urges the others to do likewise. Thus the 'Green World' (to use Frye's term) is a world both and more natural than the everyday society with which comedy begins. 'Natural' and 'artificial' traits mingle and are confused in the fool - and we see even that adamic man Falstaff can offer stiff satiric criticisms of society and perform the official function of the court fool when he changes places with Hal in The

Tavern Scene.

Finally we want to emphasize the seed of melancholy that lies in the heart of every fool and links him to the figure of the melancholy, philosophical and sceptical man who seems to be his opposite. Despite his great heart, Falstaff is rebuffed and sent to the fleet once he has served the purposes of his Machiavellian Master requires of him. Lears fool induces, through tonic treatment of madness, a clarity in the mind of the old king who sees that he - and all men - are really fools. But the fool disappears and the king dies. Like Old Falstaff, the court fools of As You Like It show signs of age and world-weariness. Touchstone often sounds like Jaques, who envies him, and though this fool marries at the end of the play, he sees this 'resolution' cynically and naturalistically. In Twelfth Night, Feste is old and weary of his job: he looks forward to retirement and scorns his 'merry' companions. At the end of the play he remains alone,

singing sadly of the wind and the rain while his 'patient' Malvolio remains unpurged and still bitterly puritanical. In the heart of 'Joy's grape', the poet John Keats found the taste of melancholy: so it is with Shakespeare's fools.

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