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SHAKESPEARE'S ART OF COMEDY IN *AS YOU LIKE IT*

Beğendiğiniz Gibi Shakespeare'in Komedi Sanatı

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Abstract

Shakespeare differs from other playwrights in many ways; the most prominent of which are creating tragic, comic characters and situations as well as combining traits that are not apparently similar. For example, more than any other satirist, Shakespeare cultivates the myth of romantic marriage in the form of comedy. What makes him so unique is his entry into the minds and hearts of the characters while having orgy or clowning. Shakespeare' comedy is the reflection of his latent desire and it mirrors the bitter social realities of his time to the audience. In addition, Shakespeare's rich imagination is the building block for this masterpiece which is indeed Universal. In general, his comedies are not simply for laughter and entertaining the readers, but they always carry an ontological message that extends the horizon of human thinking. They are a kind of multifunctional medium in which we can find human hardships, philosophy of existence and the transitory aspect of life. However conservative he might be, he mocks the political systems by challenging them through various characters. More specifically, Shakespeare never creates comedy in the form of an accepted customary concept. The secret of his art lies in how he reacts creatively to life. As a matter of fact, this article is an attempt to discuss Shakespeare's art of comedy and his differences from his predecessors, especially classical satirists. The play chosen for this discussion is As You Like It, which has a variety of features in terms of the unadorned scenes, pastoral literature, love and appearance.

Keywords: Classic Comedy, Humor, Pastoral Literature, Romantic Comedy, Shakespeare

Öz

Shakespeare diğer oyun yazarlarından birçok yönden farklıdır; en belirginleri trajik, komik karakterler ve durumlar yaratmanın yanı sıra görünüşte benzer olmayan özellikleri bir araya getirmesidir. Örneğin, Shakespeare romantik evlilik mitini komedi biçimindeki diğer hicivcilerden daha fazla geliştirir. Onu bu kadar benzersiz yapan şey, alem yaparken ya da soytarılık yaparken karakterlerin zihinlerine ve kalplerine girmesidir. Shakespeare'in komedisi, onun gizli arzusunun yansımasıdır ve zamanının acı sosyal gerçeklerini seyirciye yansıtır. Ek olarak, Shakespeare'in zengin hayal gücü, gerçekten Evrensel olan bu başyapıtın yapı taşıdır. Genel olarak, komedileri sadece güldürmek ve okuyucuları eğlendirmek için değildir, her zaman insan düşüncesinin ufkunu genişleten ontolojik bir mesaj taşırlar. Onlar, insanın zorluklarını, varoluş felsefesini ve yaşamın geçici yönünü bulabileceğimiz çok işlevli bir tür ortamdır. Ne kadar muhafazakar olursa olsun, siyasi sistemlere çeşitli karakterler aracılığıyla meydan okuyarak alay eder. Shakespeare, komediyi asla kabul edilmiş bir alışılmış kavram biçiminde yaratmaz. Sanatının sırrı, hayata nasıl yaratıcı bir şekilde tepki verdiğinde yatar. Nitekim bu makale, Shakespeare'in komedi sanatını ve onun seleflerinden, özellikle de klasik hicivcilerden farklılıklarını tartışmaya yönelik bir girişimdir. Bu tartışma için seçilen oyun, süsüz

sahneleri, pastoral edebiyat, aşk ve görünüm açısından çeşitli özellikler taşıyan Beğendiğiniz Gibidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Klasik Komedi, Mizah, Pastoral Edebiyat, Romantik Komedi Shakespeare

1. INTRODUCTION

After his historical plays, Shakespeare wrote three of his most complete comedies: *The Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It* and *Too Much Ado About Nothing*. Of these, *As You Like It* is Shakespeare's the sweetest and cheeriest comedy in which no one suffers, no one is busy with life's hectic vicissitudes, and unlike *The Merchant of Venice*, there is no passion associated with dejection. Shakespeare sends his imagination into the forest to find the answer. Reading this play, one can easily realise that the Arden Forest is more than the background of the scene. "The forest of Arden is itself the product of a fusion of conventions. At times it suggests the playwright's native landscape, at other times the forest of classical pastoral." (Leggatt, 1974, p. 190)

The forest is a spiritual force that soothes the suffering soul of man. In this play, however, most of his characters return to the city, which has an atmosphere of frustration with city life. Undoubtedly, *As You Like It* demonstrates a mirage-like image from outside the city, rather than a real and reasonable picture of the current situation. "Shakespeare's great innovation was to lay a passionate foundation of comedy, a kind of sensory and imaginative experience and an esoteric change of man's nature and identity" (Berry, 1984, p. 4). Indeed, "any discussion of Shakespeare and comedy must begin with the acknowledgement that he inherited a theatrical tradition that was dominated, in all its hybrid kinds and monstrous metamorphoses, by laughter." (Maslen, 2005, p. 38)

2. DISCUSSION

If comedy characters are to cause laughter, they have to be imagined in isolation, just as they must be sympathized with tragic characters. Otherwise, comedy characters will be sadly pathetic or tragic characters will be unreasonably ridiculous. Some satirists boldly assert that they have been filthy and unfeeling hooligans in order to invite us to the humiliating mockery of stupid and bad-tempered people. The major concern of comedy is the correction of excesses, both in the fool and in the philosopher.

The beginning of the debate is not unrelated to the view of Horace Walpole (2009) who believes "some people think that the world is a comedy for them and others suppose it is a sad story" (p.104). Walpole (2009)

maintains that “comedy means judgment” (p.97). We should consider the humorist as a character who has a kind of stupidity in his time or vice in his nature. In comedy, we are invited to watch the actions of mortal human beings, as they must appear in the eyes of a wise person with sufficient impartiality and disinterest, so that we can always find them amusing. We are called into a particular atmosphere to laugh from the bottom of our hearts or smile carelessly at the futility and bad luck that we know from experience for those whose interests, feelings and weaknesses are involved, can be anything but laughter.

Walpole (2009) then reiterates that “when the intellect is at work, the heart is sinful, and when the intellect ceases to function, the heart takes the helm of action” (p.150). The satirist who ridicules his own abhorrent themes calls us to recognize that we are all equally exposed to the errors, arrogance, and obsessions that are the target of the satirist. If we are to ruminate deeply and delve profoundly into the origins of how fun and happiness are, we will see that even in Moliere's comedies, sympathy is more evident than separation. Nonetheless, when we turn to Shakespeare's comedies, this distinction disappears completely. “Every inquiry into Shakespeare, like any other great artist, must end with a glorification of the mystery of the imagination. Shakespeare's surprise is that his forms are not only Elizabethan, but universal.” (Maslen, 2005, p. 200)

Almost the whole secret of his power lies in the fact that, taken from a strong imagination, he easily introduces himself to the reader with all kinds of men and women and their circumstances. In effect, he cannot apply a judgemental approach towards his characters or reader. It should be pointed out that Shakespeare's separation from his characters is absolute, in the sense that he never appears in the form of his own character. His characters after being created, become autonomous. In other words, he distances himself not from the created characters but from himself. He has the ability to penetrate both the mind and heart of the evil man as well as the foolish man.

We can assume, then, that Shakespeare thought long and hard about the nature of comedy. The intrusion of laughter into what are now known as his tragedies and histories is carefully calculated and pays thoughtful homage to a well-established practice of mixing genres on the sixteenth-century stage. (ibid., p. 34)

It can be stated that Shakespearean character distances himself from the scene and the similarity of the character is never allowed to distort the

independence and honesty of the characters. This is what reveals his absolute objectivism. "Everett perceives that the real survival-value of even [Shakespeare's] earliest comedies...has to do with his ability to bring laughter together with tenderness." (Goossen, 2018, p. 167)

But he can also be considered subjectivist, in the sense that he identifies himself in the imagination, along with the ideas and feelings dealt with. He is immersed in the phenomena once he thinks of them. While other satirists stand in a narrow circle to examine man in the light of reason, Shakespeare, by introducing an idiot, mirrors himself in the idiot, and by laughing at an idiot, he actually laughs at something that we need to feel it as part of our being as well. "The structure that influences Shakespeare's comedy and leaves its most distinctive effects, is not only aesthetic, but also social and psychological" (Ibid, p. 91). Shakespeare never wrote a comedy in the usual sense of the word, nor did he stage a ridiculous character to entertain and criticize viewers who are apparently always free from the inadequacies of human nature. To further, in Shakespeare's plays, the sense of comedy as performance is most evident in those passages of clowning, dancing, music and the like which at first seem little more than interludes or embellishments, inessential to the plot. But the influence of the same tradition is at work, at a further remove, in the artificial-seeming conventions of his plots as well. (Salingar, 2004, p. 8)

Next to Shakespeare, the callous satirist, stands Shakespeare, a poet to whom no human heart is alien. His hilarious characters are not funny enough to appear to us as ridiculous human beings unless we have the ability and readiness to figure out ourselves in terms of their temperament and perception. When Shakespeare chooses a trivial and ridiculous character for the subject of his work, he brings it to a degree of individuality that often tempts actors and critics to exaggerate the element of pathos in his work.

Shylock, for example, in *The Merchant of Venice*, depicted in the grotesque setting in the background of the work, almost becomes the influential representative of a persecuted minority. This comedic character suddenly turns to the audience and says, "*If you prick us, do we not bleed?*" (Act III: Scene I). This is a question that no other satirist has the right to ask; besides, this is one of the points that distinguishes Shakespeare from other humorists. As a matter of fact, failure to draw a clear line between a comedic character who can make a reasonable person laugh and a tragic character who evokes sympathy with a person with balanced emotions is not due to the deliberate determination of an artist who consciously pursues a method; rather, it is owing to the natural expression of his exemplary relationship

with human nature.

It can be alleged that the secret of Shakespeare's comedies lies in the quality of his exemplary reactions to life itself. We find ourselves watching a wide variety of creations and patterns; that constant encounter of thought and feeling, separation and empathy, ridicule and compassion, calm judgment and passionate self-knowledge that is at the root of his genius. "Shakespeare is a graduate of the school of life. He is the chronicler of a life he has witnessed with his infallible eyes" (Sengupta, 1996, p. 33). When Shakespeare helps his characters, he usually bears in mind that there will be someone on stage who will give a brief and illustrated description of his creativity and humor. The spectator, therefore, sees not only the victim, but also the callous witnesses who mock the victim. Shakespeare's comedy inspiration is empathy, not humor. In the fictional characters of the play, there is always a delicate balance between the stupidity that makes them lovable, the weaknesses and mistakes that pave the way for reprimanding them, and a common humanity with us that needs forgiveness; this also guarantees them an immediate understanding. This balance varies from scene to scene and from play to play.

As You Like It takes its theme, characters, and events directly from Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590). Although everything is adapted in it, nothing is as it was. Shakespeare leads us into the Arden Forest with a complete good faith. This is the place where civilized man seeks his freedom and emancipation in returning to nature. He does not make the slightest effort to force us to stay among the shepherds. As soon as he enters the forest, he surrenders his imagination to his magic.

The Arden Forest as a place differs moment by moment and character by character. To further, although the forest looks green and golden from the outside, and although the movement into the forest brings about miraculous changes in Duke Frederick and Oliver, the genuine experience of this strange land varies depending on the characters who live in it. For Orlando, it's a place for poetry, for the Grand Duke it's a place to gain knowledge and wisdom from the book of nature, and for Jacques it's a place to soak up the sadness of songs. Like many other things in this play, the picture of Arden is what you love. (Berry, 1984, p. 141)

Shakespeare has characters as wide as wind that blow to anyone he prefers so that he can hate whatever he likes. Each character is caught up in his own foolishness and stupidity, while his absolute characteristics stem from his dealings and relationships with others. In most of Shakespeare's

comedies, a character stands in the middle of the stage. In order to get a clear view of the whole plot of the play, we must take a position as close as possible to this character. In his play, *As You Like It*, this person is Touchstone. It seems that Shakespeare, before leaving for Arden Forest, had decided to take a guide with him to guide him to the path of moderation. Touchstone puts everything and everyone, including themselves, to the test of humor in this play. When you enter the Arden with Touchstone, you can not deviate from your path or confuse the trees. We must also respect her as a faithful servant who is willing to travel with her lady to all parts of this vast world without any illusions throughout the story. *"You have said; but whether wisely or no, let the forest judge" he says.* (Act III: Scene II)

Her role in this comedy is to shed the light of reality and common sense on all its glittering forms and entertainments. She sees the phenomena as they are without malice. According to her: "Now I remember a proverb that says: *"The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool"* (Act V: Scene I). Even Rosalind, the incompatible woman, who attributes the height and descent of the delicacy of the nature and boiling of her love, beyond any need, to reforming the spirit of comedy, believes that it should only be tested if it shows that it has done it very successfully. Touchstone must express his opinion. His role in the play is as much ridiculed due to his actions as the author has strictly forbidden him from doing so. He is not allowed to interfere in the courtship of Rosalind and Orlando. Rosalind does not need to reform, except through her true feelings and common sense of humor. The best yardstick of Touchstone is his encounter with Jacques. In the words of Jacques:

"Stupid man, stupid! In the forest, I met a stupid human being, a colorful idiot! A world of misery! ... When I saw this colorful idiot with such moral principles, my larynx began to swell like a rooster that idiots could be such deep thinkers; ... O stupid nobleman! Valuable idiot!" (Act VII: Scene II)

Nevertheless, this dream is much more than one's attention to an incident that shapes their view of the whole comedy, and its purpose is to become more familiar with the human self. His expression of love to Audrey is a real bliss and reflection on nature, the three courtships that the play presents. As Touchstone remarks:

"I remember when I was in love, I struck my sword on a rock, broke it and invited him to come to Jane Smile one night. "We true lovers engage in strange mischiefs, but since everything in nature is mortal,

then the whole nature of the lover becomes perishable in foolishness." (Act IV: Scene II)

Expressing his love for Audrey is an irony in action. Shakespeare is a philosopher by nature. No one knows better than him what he is doing, because in this play he sees himself and others separated and without prejudice. He begins his courtship with a pun and mocks the whole pastoral outfit. *"I am here with you and your goats, as the most playful poet, Ovid, was among the Goths"* (Act III: Scene III).

Now that what happened to Touchstone is known, it can be realised what occurred immediately after his encounter with Jacques. Jacques thought he was entertaining himself with a fool: *"O precious fool! You who were a courtier and say: If women are not young and fair, they will have the talent to know ..."* (Act VII: Scene II). And while laughing at the idiot, Touchstone was amusing himself and examining the situation. Jacques is amazed that an idiot can be so intelligent and profoundly thoughtful. A distinctive feature of Shakespeare in his comedies is that he puts together the contradictory elements of human nature and allows these elements to critique and interpret each other by analogy and interaction. Across the Forest of Arden, Shakespeare takes us to a golden world, a world that has been a poet's dream since at least Virgil.

Poets, tired of social debates who by choosing what is considered the natural state of man, wish for simplicity and unpretentiousness. Of course, Shakespeare uses a literary tradition here, but the long-term prevalence of pastoral literature shows its connection with the universal instinct of the human mind, which in this play, Shakespeare gives it a lasting expression. The play has often been praised for its soothing nature, as if it were a spring morning. "Searching for the geographical location of the Arden Forest is futile. However, it is conceivable that it is a desirable land for flirting, where men and women live carefree lives and time passes like the golden world." (Sengupta, 1996, p. 37)

Contradiction with the ideal is implied by the literary tradition itself because the searching poet, in order to escape toward a simple life, must recount the evils of the society from which he is fleeing. This is especially true in the court of Privees, where life is as artificial as possible. With this speech of the exiled duke at the beginning of the second act, this contradiction is presented before readers' eyes since once this sermon introduces us to the Forest of Arden, it focuses on the first scene of the play, which leads to the cruel mind and heart of the usurer: *"Are not these trees*

more dangerous than jealous courtiers?" (Act II: Scene I)

Life in the Forest of Arden revolves around the work and the constant movement of people around the city, and the cruel greediness of the outside world is concentrated on details that may have the power of eternal truth. Shakespeare's Forest of Arden furnishes the setting against which most of the action unfolds, but it serves as much more than a mere backdrop. The greenwood assumes symbolic stature. First of all, it is an idyllic forest. The words used by Charles to describe Duke Senior's life in the forest suggest an idyllic existence, and in the famous pastoral romances of Shakespeare's day, a world is created in which shepherds and shepherdesses sing, pipe tunes, and make love while their flocks graze carelessly in green valleys bright with the sunshine of eternal summer.

This golden world, needless to say, has little relation to the actualities of country living in any age, yet it is the artist's fulfillment of the universal longing to flee burdensome realities and find quietude and peace (Cliffs Notes, 1981, p. 30). As the play continues, Shakespeare quietly informs us of other issues in the forest, such as abandoned village houses behind a pile of willow trees surrounded by olive trees. It has not been easy for Shakespeare to notify us about the court events that have been rejected by both actors and singers. This play reflects on life from inside and outside. Exit from the court is connected to the entrance to the forest. The most vital role of the play is related to Rosalind, the protagonist who, when exiled to the Forest of Arden, transforms herself into a boy and bears a new name, Ganymede.

In such scenes, the style that confirms the gender of the people on the stage will certainly have a comedic theme. Humor is expected to emerge from the ridiculous magnification of male and female traits and behaviors. In Shakespeare's comedies, the initiative is mostly in the hands of women, and the male character is rather inferior to the female protagonist. In the same fashion, in Shakespeare's comedies, female protagonists are balanced characters. Their imagination, feeling, intelligence and courage are compatible. They are infinitely superior to their lovers and are incredibly attractive. They express love and inspire love. They are always ready for the most sublime sacrifices in the way of love and boldness, and it is through them that the flow of the story proceeds. (Sengupta, 1996, p. 34)

The main characters of Shakespeare's comedies are admirable and exciting, while they do not despise or insult, but inspire us to be happy with their cheerfulness, this is the fundamental difference between classic and

Shakespearean comedies. Classic comedy is conservative because it is inside a world that has reached sufficient stability within itself. Its main focus is on exposing those who violate customs, traditions and unquestioning moral rules in institutionalized relationships. Hence, its style is humorous, and its vision is common sense. The male and female protagonists in Shakespeare's comedies are sailors in search of happiness that has not yet been achieved. In classic comedies, the main characters are older people, not young ones. The purpose of this type of comedy is basically satire.

Their personalities must have been lawbreakers who violate a moral rule in society. In view of the above, the idea comes to mind that Shakespearean comedies certainly did not include elements of classical comedy. "Shakespeare could no doubt have gone beyond the naïve economic morality of Elizabethan popular culture, had he had an artistic need" (Barber, 1959, p. 161). By the time Shakespeare began writing, the Elizabethan era had taken on a romantic mood. Shakespeare looks at love from a completely different angle than what classic comedy required then. In relation to love, Shakespeare goes back to medieval love, which in fact had their own traditions in the choice of theme, the pattern of heroism, the scenes and the narrative atmosphere. *As You Like It* is based on the story of *Rosalynde* by Thomas Lodge, which itself is based on a series of ballads from the 13th or 14th centuries.

The story from which *As You Like It* is taken belongs to the world of fairies and folklore. In fairy tales, evil is always absolute and clearly recognizable, but it is eventually overthrown. Romantic comedy is mostly mixed with humorous love. In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare takes this disguise pattern one step further, by showing a boy actor playing a female character, Rosalind, who then disguises herself as a young man, Ganymede, who then plays a woman by impersonating Rosalind for Orlando. This dizzying melding of gender has prompted the many critical claims of the last two or three decades to the effect that no other play of Shakespeare's so completely destabilizes the cultural fixedness of gender, foregrounding in the process the potentially subversive presence of homoerotic affection in patriarchal societies. (Hunt, 2008, p. 142)

The world depicted in *As You Like It* is the world of rural life in England combined with the world of fairies, the ideal world of poets and lovers. This world is romantic, imaginary and real, but not illusory. Arden atmosphere is very real and has its own limitations. "*As You Like It* carries a theory of theatrical production within it—as it insistently enacts disruption and the numerous ways in which any character, scene, or abstract idea might

be represented.” (Bloom, 2004, p. 181)

Urban people abandon envy and greed and focus only on the refined features of courtship. Here is a world in which the Duke finds preaching in the stream of river that can teach man more than a lifetime. This is the world of romantic comedy, where we find people in search of happiness. In Arden Forest, people are looking for spiritual standards. In the age of Elizabeth, love encompasses much of the comedy of romance and the evils that arise from ignoring the laws of love. Duke Frederick does not love the Duke Senior, Oliver does not like Orlando, Jacques has no idea of love and is therefore sad and useless to society. In reality, Jacques seems to have achieved a philosophical vision regarding life when he says:

*“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then, the whining school-boy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then, a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth.” (Act II: Scene VII)*

This speech likens the world to theatrical performance and life to a play. Furthermore, it categorises the seven stages of a man's life as the seven ages of man. For Shakespeare, people are like actors in this world, which itself is like a theatre. Holding this attitude towards life, Jacques appears to have accurately figured out what the philosophy of life is. He knows life is transient and human is here today but gone tomorrow. His maturity becomes

more evident once he refers to the circle of life the beginning of which is birth or infancy; then, being raised, going to school, falling in love and ultimately dying.

The humorous expression of the play, which is mainly focused on contemporary civilization, is left to Jacques. In accordance with this, Bryant (1986) states that “the most important thing to note about Jacques, however, is that he is appreciably older than the other gentlemen lolling about on the grass, at least old enough to be considered an old gentleman by marriage-minded Audrey” (p. 161). He is sometimes a religious figure who is always ready to complain about humanity. Shakespeare's romantic world is a fusion of pastoral and real world. Shakespeare's dream land does not completely expel evil and sorrow but preserves the real elements that exist in the imaginary world, and this is where Shakespeare's originality lies.

However, the most prominent feature of this play, apart from its poetic and emotional beauty, is its beauty of characterization. Rosalind and Orlando are attractive companions both of whom represent genuine love, friendship and moral beauty. Albeit, after going through multiple ups and downs, Rosalind comes up with a different perception of love: “*Love is merely a madness*” (Act III: Scene V) and elsewhere she expresses “*most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly*” (Act III: Scene II).

The exiled duke is a noble, zealous, experienced and wise man who enjoys the woods and is even pleased with Jacques, who turned all his misfortunes into fortunes in a heroic manner. The extension and variety of portraiture is reflected in a multifaceted world that includes both the court, the forest, the shepherds, the courtiers, the philosophers, the fools, the treacherous brothers, and the faithful servants. The presence of the greater forces of nature, which provide a suitable ground for pastoral love, causes the expansion of this world as much as possible. The image that Shakespeare presents in this comedy is really complex, so that we can take it any way we want. Undoubtedly, this play is the culmination of Shakespeare's great comedies.

3. CONCLUSION

This article has tried to examine some features of *As You Like It*, arguing that Shakespeare's comedy is poetic not traditional; although it is creative, it's not solely mixed with humor. His style is more imaginative than pure reasoning; that is, he has an artistic, not necessarily a critical, vision. As Shakespeare builds his romantic world, he seeks to present his reality or perspective on life through the imagination of a playwright.

Shakespeare meets the aesthetic needs of the Elizabethan era that wanted a play that could satisfy both the romantic and the humorous instincts of the audience. Perhaps it can be said that in this play, Arden Forest issues its final verdict, because if the play reveals the ultimate truth, its final effect will be negative. In the desire to escape to our magical world, we are always confronted with reality. Reason is not deceived by our illusions. In the play, however, the ideals, although always on the verge of extinction, are constantly recreating themselves. These do not mislead the eye of reason, but in spite of all the interventions of reason, faith in them does not fade away.

4. SUMMARY

The current study is about Shakespeare's artistic creativity in writing comedy and its manifestation in *As You Like It*. In this play, Shakespeare treats the concept of marriage in a comic manner via penetrating the characters' mind. Ironically, this sarcastic representation of marriage accounts for the unpleasant realities of his society back then, against which no one dared write or talk. Having utilised his profound imagination, Shakespeare reveals some mysterious challenging parts of human life which could by no means be justified or portrayed rationally. Indeed, he uses humorous language through characters to poke fun at the wrongly established social norms and the ruling system. In other words, his comedy does not necessarily abide by the mediocre comedy traditions of his era.

In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare's realistic life philosophy has been depicted since, unlike his other comedies, his characters are not obsessed with the frenzied struggles of life. Shakespeare makes use of the metaphor of the Arden Forest to let his imagination be free and soar like a bird. Shakespearean comedy is not to simply create laughter but to picture life realities and universal issues. In this comedy, one can tangibly feel both aesthetic and social, as well as psychological dimensions of human character. In fact, it is empathy rather than humour that is the inspiration for Shakespearean comedy.

Here, the female characters are presented superior to their male counterparts. Shakespeare's comedy language is realistic and colourful. It demonstrates both the evil and the good rather than simply focus on satire and cliché comedy notions such as courtship, talks between the lover and beloved, same old settings, etc. generally speaking, Shakespeare is not interested in the plot of this play. He's much more interested in the character juxtapositions and dynamics. There's a wide array of characters who are all talking about similar ideas, particularly about romantic love in contrast to the

idea of being anti-social. In the background, there are also a few characters who serve as social commentary.

Additionally, there is melancholy Jacques as well as the sardonic and witty Touchstone. Of course, by the end of the play, Touchstone becomes one of the lovers as well, whereas Jacques decides to wander off into the woods and leave everybody else alone. On top of this thematic character exploration, there's the overall tone of the pastoral. Pastorals are immensely popular romantic forms in which there's love between a shepherd and shepherdess out in the field or in the woods. It's also necessary to point out that the majority of this play happens out in the woods, the Forest of Arden. Shakespeare explores the pursuit of unrequited love. All of this is also in contrast to the initial setting of the piece, the Duke's court. In *As You Like It*, Duke Fredrick's court is a place of strict authoritarianism. There's a kind of violence pervading every scene both through the entertainment of the violent wrestling match with lots of broken ribs, as well as the characters that threaten each other's lives over and over again. Nevertheless, there are also shepherds who are cheerfully chatting about love and singing songs. In fact, this is the most musical of all Shakespeare's plays. In some ways, it almost seems like it turns into a variety show by the end.

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Çatışma beyanı: Bu çalışma ile ilgili taraf olabilecek herhangi bir kişi ya da finansal ilişkilerimin bulunmadığını dolayısıyla herhangi bir çıkar çatışmamın olmadığını beyan ederim.

Destek ve teşekkür: Çalışmada herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.