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IN "AS YOU LIKE IT" AND "TWELFTH NIGHT"

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"THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE"
SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF SEXUAL DISGUISE IN
AS YOU LIKE IT AND TWELFTH NIGHT

by

Heather Marie MacNeil

B.A. (Hons.), University of Guelph, 1980

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

English

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"THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE"

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IN "AS YOU LIKE IT" AND "TWELFTH NIGHT"

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ABSTRACT

Shakespeare's use of the female page convention in As You Like It and Twelfth Night represents a convergence of two essentially divergent traditions: the medieval tradition of female virtue preserved through male dress; and the Renaissance tradition of "eros Socraticus" with its praise of "lovely boys." The virtuous and loyal "female hero" of medieval romance, who follows her lover in the guise of a page in order to serve him, is one prototype for Shakespeare's cross-dressed comic heroines; the other prototype is the "fair youth" of his Sonnets, modelled after the bisexual boy ephebe, whose effeminate beauty was projected in the Elizabethan theater by the boy players of women's parts.

"Playing the woman's part," possessed a double meaning for Elizabethans: it referred to the stage practice of using boys to play female roles; and it also stood as a euphemism for the alleged homosexual practices of those boy players. The sexual ambiguity of the travestied boy player caused considerable moral discomfort within Elizabethan culture and was a focal point for Puritan attacks against the theater. The female page convention provided dramatists with a method of defusing the homosexual anxiety surrounding the use of the

boy player by masking his subversive sexuality behind the fiction of a boy page who is really a girl in disguise.

Whereas the boy page/boy player's eroticism was that of forbidden pleasure, the female hero's was that of chaste icon. The first was a projection of the esoteric ideals and erotic customs of the unofficial culture; the second was a projection of the womanly ideal which pervaded the official culture. Nonetheless, boy page, boy player and female hero were linked in the popular imagination by a set of erotic associations revolving around their sexual vulnerability and irresistible femininity.

In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, the fascinating eroticism latent in the female page convention surfaces in Rosalind and Viola who are both male and female, and whose erotic ambiguity Shakespeare uses as a metaphor for the ambiguity of passion itself.

Femina vir factus, sexus denigrat honorem,
Ars magicae Veneris hermaphroditat eum.
Praedicat et subjicit, fit duplex terminus idem,
Grammaticae leges ampliat ille nimis.

[When man is made woman, he blackens the honour of
his sex, the craft of magic Venus hermaphrodites
him. He is both predicate and subject, he
becomes likewise of two declensions, he pushes the
laws of grammar too far.]

Alanus de Insulus, De Planctu Naturae,
a medieval tract against homosexuality.

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INTRODUCTION

The quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels: Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' th' posture of a whore.¹

Antony and Cleopatra, V.ii.216-221

Art--always--requires visible unrealities.²
Jorge Luis Borges

As Cleopatra broods, in the final moments of Antony and Cleopatra, on the reception that likely awaits her when she is taken to Rome as Caesar's ransom, Shakespeare suddenly reminds the audience, deeply involved in the fate of the Egyptian queen, that "she" is not there at all; rather, there is only a boy on a stage, "squeaking" Cleopatra's lines. Shakespeare allows the actor playing the part of Cleopatra to break into his own theatrical illusion with a self-reference to what he himself is doing at that very moment; in that way, Shakespeare draws to the audience's attention the fact that what they are seeing on the stage is a lie, a mere reflection, masquerading as reality. The self-conscious allusion has an immediate reference within the play itself, but its larger reference is to the illusory world of stage plays, of acting, of imagination and, ultimately, of

life. For Shakespeare, the comparison of the world to a play becomes a way of viewing art and so reality.

In Antony and Cleopatra, the actor's self-conscious allusion to playing a role is not so much a tangible stage presence as it is a conspiratorial wink tossed in the audience's direction; the dramatic illusion shows its fissure and its suture for only a moment. But in other Shakespearean plays the crack in the illusion, which the boy actors of women's parts open up, remains agape throughout the entire play. On the whole, this usually happens in the comedies where role playing and deception are part of the genre. In Shakespearean comedy, the contradiction between artifice and reality, represented by the boy actor disguised as a girl, is commonly presented by way of the cross-dressed heroine, a girl disguised as a boy; the sexual identity of the cross-dressed heroine straddles the polarities of masculinity and femininity in a manner analagous to the way that dramatic performance straddles the polarities of art and life. The function of sexual disguise in Shakespearean comedy is to examine the poles of masculinity and femininity, appearance and essence and, at the same time, to demonstrate the oscillation and blurring of distinction that often takes place between them. The cross-dressed heroine builds on the stage convention of using boy actors to play female parts,

and it is within the framework of that central sexual lie that the cross-dressed comic heroine must be viewed.

Shakespeare's plays were written for a stage on which boys played the parts of women. The use of boy actors to play female roles in the absence of real women was a convention of the Elizabethan theatre, an agreed upon dramatic pretense like the use of placards to indicate scene locations in the absence of real scenery. Unlike other stage pretenses, though, the convention of cross-dressing often grazed the limits of permitted artifice; this was because, as we have already observed in Antony and Cleopatra, the boy who was dressed in woman's clothing did not always dissolve altogether into the illusion of the female character he was playing; occasionally, his real sexual identity broke into the theatrical illusion, and remained there as a kind of derisory nudge in the ribs, a knowing smirk. Both on and off the Elizabethan stage, "playing the woman's part" constituted a loaded expression; for, besides its literal allusion to the stage practice of dressing boys up as women, it stood as a bawdy euphemism for the alleged homosexual practices of boy players off-stage. At the time that Shakespeare was writing his plays, the custom of using boy actors in female roles was being attacked by the Puritans, who claimed that it incited perverse lust of various kinds and, also, that Scripture forbade it. There was probably some justification to

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their charges, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the effeminate boy player was becoming a source of considerable erotic interest within the unofficial circles of Elizabethan culture where Platonic traditions, including those in praise of "lovely boys," were enjoying a renaissance. In verse and prose, writers frequently alluded to the double meanings implicit in playing "the woman's part," through erotically charged descriptions of the "wanton female boy" and his irresistible beardless beauty. But it was, naturally enough, in Elizabethan drama that the latent eroticism of the boy players of women's parts was most widely exploited; that eroticism was invoked on stage whenever his sexual ambiguity was alluded to. Such allusions were, for the most part, covert, since Puritan censure had to be reckoned with and for this reason the eroticism of the cross-dressed boy player was often cloaked in the pretence of a cross-dressed "heroine."

The convention of the female page--the girl who follows her lover in the guise of a page in order to serve him--enlarged the role of the "heroine" and also discovered its latent possibilities. Dramatists found in the female page convention a method of defusing the homosexual anxiety surrounding the use of the boy player by keeping him in safer male attire for most of the play. But while the pretext succeeded in keeping the boy player's

transvestism under wraps, it also had the effect of making overt the homosexual innuendo that lay underneath his stage transvestism. Disguised twice over, the boy actor playing the part of a woman in love with a man was transformed into a boy page who was in love with another man.

The female page convention had another erotic sub-text which ran parallel to the homosexual one and which emerged in the play through the character of the cross-dressed heroine herself. The Renaissance use of the topos of the disguised heroine drew on medieval romance narratives of the "female hero" which, in turn, derived from early monastic legends of the female transvestite saint who put on male attire in order to preserve her chastity and serve Christ. Whereas the boy page/boy player's eroticism was that of forbidden pleasure, the female hero's was that of chaste icon. The first was a projection of the esoteric ideals and erotic customs of the unofficial culture; the second was a projection of the womanly ideal of chastity, obedience and loyalty, which pervaded the official culture. Despite their apparent differences, boy page, boy player and female hero were linked in the popular imagination by a set of erotic associations revolving around their vulnerability and sexual ambiguity; all three were perceived as being, simultaneously, the provocateurs and victims of men's and women's passion. Shakespeare's use of the female page convention represents

the most subtle convergence of these two ostensibly divergent traditions. The virtuous and loyal "female hero" of medieval romance is one prototype for Shakespeare's cross-dressed comic heroines; the other prototype is the "fair youth" of his Sonnets. Combining the two opposing ideals represented by these prototypes allows Shakespeare to articulate a subversive homo-erotic fantasy while paying lip service to heterosexual conventionality; it enables him to say the opposite without giving up the contrary.

Northrop Frye has described the action of comedy as "intensely Freudian in shape: the erotic pleasure principle explodes underneath the social anxieties sitting on top of it and blows them sky-high." In Shakespeare's two festive comedies, As You Like It and Twelfth Night, that principle explodes by way of the cross-dressed heroines: Rosalind, who turns into Ganymede, and Viola, who becomes Cesario. In both cases, the central protagonist is played by a boy disguised as a girl disguised as a boy. Sexually disguised, Rosalind and Viola are both male and female simultaneously. The themes of As You Like It and Twelfth Night are contained in the disguise convention. In both plays, dramatic form and content are absolutely intertwined.

CHAPTER ONE

"PLAYING THE WOMAN'S PART:" ELIZABETHAN EROTICISM AND THE BOY PLAYER

The custom of using boys in the Elizabethan theatre dates back to the medieval beginnings of the English drama where boys participated as acolytes at the mass and other liturgical services. It was natural that they would continue to be used in the drama which grew out of the liturgy, and equally natural, given the classical precedent that forbade the appearance of women on the stage, that they would play female parts. In the introduction to Bassingham's "Plough Play," a typical medieval folk-play, an actor announces:

I have some little Boys stands at the Door,
In ribons they are neatly dressed,
For to please you all they shall do their best. 1

Later in the play, the heroine, played by a boy, speaks to her suitor:

It tis my clothing you admire,
Not my beauty you desire.
So, gentle sir, I must away,
I have other suteers on me stay. 2

Though his use in the theatre was, initially, merely expedient, by Shakespeare's time the boy actor was regarded as a highly professional artist. Wilhelm Creizenach cites

Ben Jonson's praise of the boy actor's art:

Ben Jonson tells us in 1616 that Richard Robinson, who played female roles in Shakespeare's company, understood the art of dress better than many a fine lady, and that at a ladies' party to which he once went in disguise he succeeded in playing his part without detection in a masterly manner. 3

Despite such praise, or perhaps because of it, the use of boy actors on the Elizabethan stage aroused considerable moral unease and brought to the surface a number of cultural anxieties which were related to the erotic ambiguity of the boy player. It also provided the Elizabethan dramatist with abundant material for sexually ambiguous play on "the woman's part."

Moll How strange this shewes one man to kisse another.
 Seb. Me thinkes a womans lip tastes well in a dublet.
 Middleton and Dekker, The Roaring
 Girl 4

On stage and in print, the erotic interest in the boy player and the cultural anxiety attending that interest were widely exploited. Lisa Jardine's study of women and drama in the age of Shakespeare, Still Harping on Daughters, begins with a provocative chapter exploring the eroticism which surrounded the boy player both on and off the stage.

According to Jardine, the poem "In Lesbiam et Histrionem," written by the minor Elizabethan dramatist, Thomas Randolph, is a typical expression of the way the boy player was perceived within Elizabethan culture. Couched in the form of a riddle, the poem revolves around the question of why the elderly

Lesbia maintains the young and extravagant Histrio, a boy actor, in a style befitting a fine gentleman. The conclusion Randolph reaches is steeped in double entendre:

Than this I can no better reason tell
 'Tis 'cause he plays the woman's part so well.
 I see old madams are not only toil:
 No tilth so fruitful as a barren soil.
 Ah, poor day-labourers! how I pity you
 That swink and sweat to live with much ado
 When, had you wit to understand the right,
 'Twere better wages to have work'd by night. 5

Jardine explores the bawdy connotations of playing "the woman's part," which inform the punning resolution to the poem's riddle:

Histrio is Lesbia's kept lover, her paid sexual partner. She is prepared to support his wildest extravagancies because he is so good in bed: he "playes the womans part so well"--lewdly, he brings her adeptly to sexual climax. The boy player is by trade a "player of women's parts", he acts the female roles on stage. And this femaleness is invoked in his sexual relations with his aging mistress in her name - she is Lesbia, the ancient lesbian lover ... so that her young partner is androgynous, female in persona but male in his sexuality. The source of his good fortune with Lesbia is actually (so Randolph implies) that he so ably satisfies her sexual demands (lasciviousness and excess being implied by the fact that she is "barren soil"--procreation is not the intention). Histrio "playes the womans part so well" off-stage as well as on. 6

The bawdy innuendo associated with playing "the woman's part" can be exploited most provocatively on stage. The dramatist does not draw the audience's attention to the ambiguous overtones of cross-dressing every time a cross-dressed boy appears on the stage; still, as Jardine points out, "it is

nevertheless available to the dramatist as a reference point for dramatic irony, or more serious double entendre ...

[particularly] when 'playing the woman's part' is invoked on the stage."⁷

Shakespeare alludes specifically to "the woman's part" in Cymbeline, during a speech which Posthumus makes after learning (wrongly) that his wife Imogen has betrayed their marriage vows; Jardine argues that, as Posthumus inveighs against womankind in general, a punning mechanism, similar in kind to that operating in Randolph's poem, begins to emerge:

- for there's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
It is the woman's part: be it lying, note it
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longing, slanders, mutability,
All faults that name, nay, that hell knows,
Why, hers, in part or all; but rather, all.
(II.v.20-28)

As with Randolph's poem, a number of levels of meaning are layered onto "the woman's part." Besides the bawdy sense of the female pudenda, that which Imogen "should from encounter guard," there is the association of a specifically "female nature", to which, according to Posthumus, all forms of vice attach. The third level of meaning emerges within the dramatic context of the speech itself: that is, on a stage and directed toward a female character who is in fact being played by a boy. Experienced at one remove, the meaning of "the woman's part" translates into "play-acting the woman's

part". Symbolized in the exaggerated female posturing of the boy player, the faults which provoke Posthumus are the woman's "in part," that is, they are inherent in the role of the female character. Furthermore, continues Jardine,

... an added edge of unlawfulness [sic] wantonness is gained on stage by the association with the boys who take the women's parts. Posthumus is displaying a warped and distorted view of legitimate sexual relations--behind the "pudency so rosy" lurks rampant sexuality, perverted concupiscence, "lust and rank thought". 8

In this way, Posthumus' soliloquy fuses two popular-orthodox notions which were separately embedded in Elizabethan culture: the degradation of both the woman and the boy player to the status of whore. "In Shakespeare," observes Leslie Fiedler:

"boy" and "whore" have a special affinity ... for in his world, boy actors daily put on and doffed the allure of women, played women. And who can doubt that on occasion their blatant homosexuality travestied behind the scenes the pure and rational love of males... as mincing little queens caricatured [his] ... heroines! 9

The vitriolic and sexually obsessive language in which Posthumus' speech is couched, draws upon and echoes ironically the language of Puritan anti-stage polemic; by invoking "the woman's part," Posthumus alludes to what Jardine describes as "a familiar area of sub-erotic debate about the morally debilitating effects of cross-dressing on the stage."¹⁰ The use of boy actors to play female parts became the most effective argument used by the Puritans

in their attacks against the theater because stage cross-dressing defied biblical authority. The main authority to which Puritan polemicists of the day alluded was Deuteronomy 22,5:

The woman shall not weare that which pertaineth vnto a man, neither shall a man put on a womans garment: for all that doe so, are abomination vnto the Lord they God.

In a heated exchange of letters, six of which were printed in 1599 in a volume titled Th' Overthrow of Stage-Playes, three Oxford dons debated whether the passage applied to the transvestism of boy actors. Dr. John Rainolds argued the Puritan position vociferously, and he called upon the words of the Bishop of Paris to support his main contention:

For the apparell of wemen (saith he) is a great provocation of men to lust and leacherie: because a womans garment being put on a man doeth vehemently touch and moue him with the remembrance and imagination of a woman; and the imagination of a thing desirable doth stirr up the desire ... 11

The arousal of "unnatural" lust constituted a breach of the commandment against adultery which, in the Puritan imagination, encompassed several varieties of perversion. For Dr. Rainolds, the sexual ambiguity of the boy player encouraged perversion and all manner of depravity:

next, among the Kindes of adulterous lewdnesse how filthie and monstrous a sinne against nature mens naturall corruption and vitiousness is prone to: the Scripture witnesseth it in Cananites, Jewes, Corinthians, other in other nations, and one with speciall caution, Nimium est quod intelligitur: thirdlie, what sparkles of lust to that vice the putting of wemens attire on men may kindle in

vncleane affections, as Nero shewed in Sporus, Heliogabatus in him selfe: yea certaine, who grew not to such excesse of impudencie, yet arguing the same in causing their boyes to weare longe heare like wemen: if we consider these things... we shall perceiue that hee, who condemneth the female hoore and male, and detesting speciallie the male by terming him a dogge... might controll likewise the meanes and occasions whereby men are transformed into dogges, the sooner to cutt off all incitements to that beastlie filthiness, or rather more then beastlie. 12

In the marginal notes with which he supported his allegations, Rainolds referred his readers to explicit Biblical and classical examples of sodomy, homosexuality (alone or coupled with flagellation), cross-dressing, male marriage and sex between father and son. The theme behind many of these allusions was the abuse of dependent boys who, it was alleged, were often victimized sexually by adult members of the company, or by their aristocratic patrons. Philip Stubbes, another outspoken Puritan of the day, alluded to that aspect of the boy player's life in his Anatomy of Abuses: "...these goodly pageants being done eury mate sorts to his mate, eury one bringes another homeward of their way verye freendly, and in their secret conclaues (couertly) they play the Sodomits, or worse". The taking of women's parts in the drama became the means whereby boys were "transformed into dogges"--male prostitutes.

Further evidence of homosexual depravity was drawn from the actual performance of plays, in the travestied boy player's lascivious counterfeiting of female gestures:

Yet the third reason, wherein playes are charged, not for making young men come foorth in hoores attire, like the lewd woman in the Proverbs; but for teaching them to counterfeit her actions, her wanton kisse, her impudent face, her wicked speeches and entisements ... Thetis taught Achilles how to playe the woman in gate, in speech, in gesture ... Deidamia gaue him farder advertisements, howe he must hold his naked brest, his hands, & so foorth... When Critobulus kissed the sonne of Alcibiades, a beautiful boy, Socrates saide he had done amisse and very dangerously: because, as certaine spiders, if they doe but touch men onely with their mouth, they put them to wonderfull paine and make them madde: so beautifull boys by kissing doe sting and powre secretly in a kinde of poyson, the poyson of incontencie, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaking of vnholly and amatorie kisses saith: Amatorie embracing goeth in the same line with amatorie kissing, if not a line beyond it ... Herewithall if amatorie pangs be expressed in most effectual sort: can wise men be perswaded that there is not wantonnesse in players partes, when experience sheweth (as wise men haue observed) that men are made adulterers and enemies of all chastitie by comming to such playes? that senses are mooved, affections are delited, heartes though strong and constant are vanquished by such players? that an effeminate stage-player, while he faineth love, imprinteth wounds of love? 14

Lust, misdirected toward the boy masquerading in female dress is the dark evil at the heart of Rainolds's diatribes. On the surface, the male members of the audience respond erotically to the woman projected through the boy player's attire and behaviour; but, below the surface lurks a simultaneous apprehension that this woman is, in fact, a boy. Their erotic response is, inevitably, a homosexual one.

Rainold's anti-theatrical attacks may represent the wilder shores of Puritan sexual obsession; nonetheless, they delineate fairly accurately the place homosexuality occupied

in the cosmology of the Elizabethans. It was often associated with sorcery; its practitioners were often linked with werewolves and basilisks, and the product of a witch's union with an incubus was likely to be a sodomite. And yet, homosexuality did not really fall under the jurisdiction of Satan; it was, rather, an aberration so horrendous as to fall completely outside the created order. In his book, Homosexuality in Renaissance England, Alan Bray locates the topos of homosexuality in Judaeo-Christian mythology:

Homosexuality... was not part of the chain of being, or the harmony of the created world or its universal dance. It was not part of the Kingdom of Heaven or its counterpart in the Kingdom of Hell (although that could unwittingly release it). It was none of these things because it was not conceived of as part of the created order at all; it was part of its dissolution. And as such it was not a sexuality in its own right, but existed as potential for confusion and disorder in one undivided sexuality.¹⁵

On the surface, Elizabethan cultural attitudes toward homosexuality appear to be unambiguous. Sexual relations between man and man (or between man and beast for that matter) became a capital offence in England in 1533. Demoted briefly to the status of a minor crime during the reign of Mary, sodomy was re-instated as a felony under Elizabeth in 1563, allegedly in response to an increase in the practice. But while the official culture of Elizabethan England recoiled from homosexuality, the unofficial culture, represented, not surprisingly, by the poets, painters and

dramatists, was drawn increasingly toward it by way of the philosophic ideals and erotic customs of "Eros socraticus," inherited from the Italian quattrocento. According to Leslie Fiedler:

the image [of the sexually ambiguous boy] ... possessed the imagination of the Renaissance, in Italy first, in England afterward ... and it is this image which, projected in the theater by boy actors of women's parts, gave sensual substance to the cult of friendship and the literary tradition of the praise of lovely boys. 16

The hellenistic revival which flourished during the Italian quattrocento exercised a significant influence on Elizabethan England. That influence was clearly discernible in royal court circles and at the colleges of Cambridge and Oxford where the humanities thrived and where Neo-Platonist schools came into being toward the end of the sixteenth century. From the Florence of the Medici came a style of music, painting and literature that projected a new humanism and along with it, a new image of man, founded on Platonic ideals of harmony and beauty and the doctrine that "soule is form and doth the bodie make." ¹⁷ Within the context of Neo-Platonism, "Eros socraticus" was not a mere sexual practice; it was a philosophy of love, an aesthetic and metaphysical sanction for widely differing forms of friendship between an adult male and a youth. Its philosophical foundation was Plato's Symposium. Aristophanes' fable of the first humans which is contained in the Symposium offers a mythical account of the origins of Platonic love. In the beginning,

as Aristophanes tells it, human beings had four arms and legs, two faces and double sex organs, either male or female or one male and one female. Zeus cut them in two when they became overly proud:

Each of us then is the mere broken tally of a man, the result of a bisection which has reduced us to a condition like that of flat fish, and each of us is perpetually in search of his corresponding tally. Those men who are halves of a... hermaphrodite, are lovers of women... Women who are halves of a female whole direct their affections towards women... But those who are halves of a male whole pursue males, and being slices, so to speak, of the male, love men throughout their boyhood, and take pleasure in physical contact with men. 18

According to Perceval Frutiger, who has examined Platonic myths closely, Aristophanes' tale of the double men is not a genesis myth, but rather, "the projection into an imaginary development of the different kinds of eroticism considered as a given fact." ¹⁹ Aristophanes' own erotic bias becomes clear as he continues:

Such boys and lads are the best of their generation, because they are the most manly. Some people say that they are shameless, but... it is not shamelessness which inspires their behaviour, but high spirit and manliness and virility, which lead them to welcome the society of their own kind... When they grow to be men, they become lovers of boys, and it requires the compulsion of convention to overcome their natural disinclination to marriage and procreation;... such persons are devoted to lovers in boyhood and themselves lovers of boys in manhood, because they always cleave to what is akin to themselves. 20

Taking its precepts from the Symposium, the Florentine Humanist Academy declared pure love directed at youths to be

the highest form of the affinity of souls. Pico della Mirandola and Ficino wrote treatises on spiritual pederasty in which, as Jan Kott, in Shakespeare Our Contemporary, observes:

"it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the community of souls from the community of ²¹bodies." This too was perfectly consistent with antique models.

Socratic eroticism carried with it a particular kind of male beauty; it was modelled on Hermaphroditus, the child of Hermes and Aphrodite, whose mythic origins are related in "Book IV" of Ovid's Metamorphosis. In Ovid's tale, the water nymph Salmacis spies Hermaphroditus by the side of a lake and falls passionately in love with him. But Hermaphroditus prefers his own beardless beauty to that of woman and he rejects her sexual overtures. For his disdain the gods punish him and grant Salmacis her desire, by blending together the bodies of the reluctant boy and his ardent pursuer. In Arthur Golding's translation, the language is charged with the erotic ambiguity of the "beautiful boy" which is present even before his metamorphosis. Salmacis calls Hermaphroditus a "maiden"; his "white" and "tender" skin gives him a physical beauty which is clearly identical in kind to that normally ascribed to a female virgin:

and sure it was a joy
To see it how exceeding well his blushing him became.
For in his face the colour fresh appeared like the same
That is in Apples which doe hang upon the Sunnie side:
Or Ivorie shadowed with a red... 22

In the passage which describes Salmacis' seduction of Hermaphroditus, attention is focused explicitly on the potentially rapeable boy and the eroticism implicit in his sexual refusal:

When Salmacis behilde
 [Hermaphroditus's] naked beautie, such strong pangs
 so ardently hir hilde,
 That utterly she was astraught. And even as Phebus
 beames
 Against a myrrour pure and clere rebound with broken
 gleames
 Even so hir eyes did sparcle fire. Scarce could she
 tarience make:
 Scarce could she any time delay hir pleasure for to
 take.
 She wolde have run, and in hir armes embraced him
 streight way:
 She was so far beside hir selfe, that scarsly could
 she stay.
 He clapping with his hollow hands against his naked
 sides,
 Into the water lithe and baine with armes displayde
 glydes,
 And rowing with his hands and legges swimmes in the
 water cleare:
 Through which his bodie faire and white doth
 glistringly appeare,
 As if a man an Ivorie Image or a Lillie white
 Should overlay or close with glasse that were most
 pure and bright.
 The price is won (cride Salmacis aloud) he is mine
 owne.
 And therewithall in all post hast she having lightly
 throwne
 Hir garments off, flew to the Poole and cast hir
 thereinto
 And caught him fast between hir armes, for ought that
 he could doe:
 Yea maugre all his wrestling and his struggling to
 and fro,
 She held him still, and kissed him a hundred times
 and mo.
 And willde he nillde he with hir handes she toucht
 his naked brest:

And now on this side now on that (for all he did
 resist
 And strive to wrest him from hir gripes) she clung
 unto him fast...
 Strive, struggle, wrest and writhe (she said) thou
 froward boy thy fill
 Doe what thou canst thou shalt not scape. Ye Goddess
 of Heaven agree
 That this same wilful boy and I may never parted bee.
 (IV.426-461)

The same powerful eroticism that is evoked through the
 irresistible effeminate boy of Ovid's myth, is evident, too,
 in the marble and alabaster images of Hermaphrodite which
 began to appear in Greek sculpture around the turn of the
 fourth century. The hermaphroditic type represented the
 final development of a trend in Greek sculpture which,
 according to Marie Delcourt in her book, Hermaphrodite,
 reached towards

the realisation of a kind of synthesis in which the
 beauty of man and the beauty of woman blend into
 one. Under different names, they portray
 Hermaphrodites; and it is not surprising that the
 type of Hermaphrodite dates from this time... a
 pensive, sensual ephebe, similar to Dionysos and
 Eros.²³

Paul Richter, in his morphological analysis of the Berlin
 Hermaphrodite, a sculpture typical of the hellenistic
 tradition, describes the complex synthesis of
 virility and femininity achieved in the hermaphroditic model:

The width of shoulders and hips is intermediate
 between that of man and woman.
 On the broad pectoral of a young man are outlined
 the breasts of a girl.

The belly, especially the sub-umbilical region is essentially feminine...

The lumbar region is intermediate between man's and woman's.

Finally, the high prominent buttocks could as well be those of a girl whose sexual development is still incomplete as of a young boy. 24

What Louis Couve describes as, "the ideally graceful type of the ephebe",²⁵ emerged out of a culture which considered pederasty a grace of civilized living. "All the evidence is that paedophilia strongly influenced all Greek art," is the conclusion Marie Delcourt reaches: "a homosexual dream expresses itself without shadow of doubt in these ambiguous forms."²⁶

Certainly, Italian quattrocento artists drew on the Greek model of the ephebe. In Florentine sculpture and painting the most powerful evocation of this object of communal mystique emerges in all its disturbing ambivalence. Verrocchio was the first to adopt the model of "girl-youth" which he used in his depictions of angels who were considered androgynous beings. Jan Kott observes that in Signorelli's fresco showing the Resurrection of the dead:

it is not possible to distinguish boys from girls any more. They all have long hair let loose, slender figures, features not yet set, still promising, the slim legs of over-grown boys, the slightly rounded shoulders and small hands of women.²⁷

In the David and Bacchus sculptures of Michelangelo, the Socratic ideal of male beauty reaches its highest expression. Kott's description of the David and Bacchus throws light on the

ambiguous sexual messages projected by that ideal:

Michelangelo's David leans backwards, bows his head, slightly raises his right foot. His left arm is bent at the elbow, hand on the nape of his neck. He smooths down his hair. It is at once a coquettish and a defensive gesture. His eyes are half closed, his mouth slightly open...When one looks at him from behind, or even sideways, he appears like a young girl, with legs somewhat too heavy, a girl not yet transformed into a woman... Michelangelo's Florentine Bacchus is even more ambiguous: in the full bloom of youth, boasting of his androgynous beauty, sensuous and inviting to sensual pleasure, evading attention and yet offering himself.²⁸

The disturbing yet fascinating contradictions that twist together in this boy ephebe--he is at once, submissive and wilful, coquettish and disdainful--create an erotic fantasy figure, seductive to both men and women.

The image of the boy ephebe haunted the Renaissance imagination of Italy and, later, England. Whereas in quattrocento culture it found artistic form in painting and sculpture; in the culture of Elizabethan England, the image took hold in poetry and drama. The richest poetic evocation of the Socratic ideal is found in the "fair youth," to whose ambiguous beauty the Shakespeare of the Sonnets is drawn:

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
 Hast thou, the master mistress of my passion;
 A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted
 With shifting change as is false women's fashion;
 An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
 Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
 A man in hue all hues in his controlling,
 Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
 "Sonnet 20"

Shakespeare locates his relationship with the fair youth squarely within the Neo-Platonic tradition; the final lines of "Sonnet 20" offer a pointed disclaimer to any homo-erotic interest: the master mistress of the poet's passion is specifically "prick'd ...out for women's pleasure." Nevertheless, uncertainty over the sexual purity of the love which the author of Sonnets 1-126 feels for the youth remains, as does the nature of Antonio's obsession for Bassanio in The Merchant of Venice and that of Antonio's, in Twelfth Night, for the young Sebastian.

In Elizabethan drama, the epicene ideal is projected through the sexually ambiguous boy player. Christopher Marlowe, who claimed that St. John the Evangelist and Christ were sodomites, and who is further credited with saying, "that all they that love not tobacco and boys were fools,"²⁹ plays most provocatively with the association between the Socratic ideal and the boy player. In Edward II, the royal favourite Gaveston describes plans for entertainments that will "draw the pliant king which way I please:"

Therefore I'll have Italian masques by night,
 Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows;
 And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
 Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad...
 Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
 With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
 Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
 And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
 To hide those parts which men delight to see,
 Shall bathe him in a spring; and there, hard by,
 One like Actaeon, peeping through the grove,

Shall by the angry goddess be transform'd.

The ambiguity of those hidden parts is arresting. The "lovely boy" in the water is playing the goddess Diana, surprised when virtually naked by the unfortunate Actaeon. The genitals so coyly concealed are purportedly female. But the player is male. The sexual equipment behind the olive branch--and the fictional pretence--is not that of Diana, and the men who would "delight to see" it, including, as Gaveston is well aware, the king, are not lovers of women.

In Renaissance drama, the eroticism of the boy player is invoked whenever his sexual ambiguity is openly alluded to. On the whole, this occurs most frequently in comedy where role-playing and disguise are part of the genre. When, as often happens in comedy, sexual disguise is introduced as a plot device--the boy disguised as a girl is re-disguised as a boy--that eroticism becomes more psychologically complex.

The convention of the female page, the girl who disguises herself as a boy in order to pursue her lover, reached the height of its popularity during the Renaissance for a number of reasons. It had a cultural justification in prevailing customs which forbade women to travel alone; it had a theatrical justification by providing at the outset a readymade farcical situation; and it had an ethical justification in keeping the heroine, who was actually a boy, in more neutral, non-provocative male attire for most of the

play. Whatever the intention behind it, the effect of the female page convention was to layer onto one sexually ambiguous object of desire an equally powerful one which also lurked in the Elizabethan imagination. The boy player's eroticism is that of forbidden pleasure; the female page's is that of chaste icon. The boy player is both a projection of, and justification for, the esoteric ideals of the unofficial culture; whereas the female page is both a projection of and a response to the popular-orthodox fear of woman as temptress which pervaded the official culture. In Renaissance drama generally, and Shakespearean comedy particularly, the divergent ideals represented by the boy ephebe and the virtuous female page collide.

The Renaissance use of the topos of the female page drew on medieval romance narratives, which in turn derived from early legends of female transvestite saints that had been popularized in the Middle Ages by Voragine's The Golden Legend. In early versions, the legend of the virgin who shaves her head and assumes the garments of a man, either to become a hermit or enter a monastery, was associated with the pursuit of an androgynous ideal which Galatians 3.27-28 situated in the figure of Christ:

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is

neither male nor female--for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

The adoption of male clothing represented a metaphorical fulfillment of the mystical putting on of Christ achieved through baptism. According to John Anson, who has examined the motif of the female transvestite saint in early monasticism, it "signalized and effected a transformation of self, the birth of a new identity not only in the name of Christ but in the body as well."³¹

But as the motif developed, the female saint began to take on a somewhat different significance. As the product of a monastic culture dedicated to celibacy as its highest virtue, the fantasy of a holy woman disguised among the members of that community, represented a psychological opportunity to neutralize the threat of female temptation. Through gradual accretions to the original legends, the female monk stories began to assume the contours of a ritual sacrifice; the heroine of such tales became the incarnation of the most hidden desires and guilt of her community.³² One such accretion is the "Potiphar's wife motif." Summarized briefly, this motif describes the following pattern of female transvestite legends: the female monk, disguised as a man, is approached sexually by a woman who, when repulsed, accuses him/her of the sexual advances which she herself had made, and names the innocent monk as the father of her illegitimate child. Although many of these saints reveal their female

identity immediately, a significant number of them bear the charges in silence until death and some even take on the responsibility of caring for the offspring.

An example of this motif is found in the story of Saint Margaret who fled matrimony for the monastery; under her male guise of "Pelagius," she demonstrated such exemplary holiness within the monastic community that she was elected prior of the neighbouring convent. When the portress became pregnant, Margaret was named as the child's father; her fellow monks expelled her summarily from the monastery and sentenced her to live in a pit, provided only with a meager diet of bread and water, for the remainder of her life. This trial she endured without a murmur until, at the hour of her death, she wrote to the monastery, revealing her true identity and innocence.

Other female transvestite saints, among them, Marina and Theodora, undergo trials similar to that of Margaret, the only difference being that after their expulsion from the monastery, these women rear the infant as their own. John Anson explains the ritual sacrifice which is being enacted in such stories:

In all these legends where an innocent woman is believed possessed by lusts of which she as a woman would normally be the cause, her disguise rescues the community by warding off demonic femininity, by rendering finally harmless the threatening vision of woman. Through a series of reversals in which the seductress is cast as the seduced and then at the last revealed as the innocent victim of slander,

the fleshly enemy against whom the monastic community fortified suddenly is discovered within the very walls as a blessed companion...

Thus, quite simply, the secret longing for a woman in a monastery is brilliantly concealed by disguising the woman as a man and making her appear guilty of the very temptation to which the monks are most subject; finally, after she has been punished for their desires, their guilt is compensated by turning her into a saint with universal remorse and sanctimonious worship.³³

With its veneration of heroism in passivity and its symbolic containment of the threat of female sexuality, the motif of the female transvestite saint established an exemplary model for the "female hero" of medieval romance and Renaissance drama.

The extremities to which the female transvestite saint was willing to subject herself in the name of Christian love, was perfectly consistent with the medieval conviction that "a virtue exaggerated was a virtue magnified;"³⁴ and, as a result, the transmission of these legends was guaranteed, though they underwent a few changes. Dissemination into popular culture transformed the original religious legends, exemplifying worldly renunciation for the love of God, into domestic fables of chastity and wifely devotion. The Motif-Index of Folk Literature lists dozens of tales that use the motif of female sexual disguise and which had wide currency in the Middle Ages. In such tales, women adopt male clothing to follow husbands and lovers, or to escape violation; to ransom captive spouses, or to serve them, unrecognized, often for several years. Disguised as men, they prove their fidelity

to lovers whom they wish to marry; or prove their chastity to doubting husbands.

Medieval romance narratives secularised and elaborated on the original themes but the heroine's symbolic value as the Christian feminine ideal--loyal, obedient and, above all, chaste--remained intact. In the secular versions, the object of her uxorial service was simply transferred from God to husband, lover, or father; and her virtue rewarded a bit sooner. The "female hero" was celebrated in most of the popular narratives of the Middle Ages, in works such as Boccaccio's Concerning Famous Women, Christine de Pisan's The Book of the City of Ladies and Chaucer's The Legend of Good Women. Under different names, Rosalynde, Cratyna, Mizilca, Fidelia, this "good woman" demonstrated the feminine equivalent of "nobility in adversity."

One such story is one of the sources for Twelfth Night, "Of Apolonius and Silla," which was originally taken from a French novelle by Belleforest and re-told by Barnabe Riche in his Farewell to Militarie Profession. It contains many of the narrative elements typical of the genre: a beautiful and noble virgin falls in love with a man and determines to follow him; in the course of her pursuit, she narrowly escapes an assault on her virginity which provides the pretext for a masculine disguise; she presents herself (as a page to this man and serves him, unrecognized, during which

time she proves herself a loyal and obedient servant.

Inevitably, she is mistakenly wooed by another woman, accused of fathering that woman's child and sentenced to death, which provides the pretext for her undisguising:

...And here with all loosing his garmentes doune to his stomacke, and shewed Iulina his breastes and pretie teates, surmountyng farre the whitenesse of Snowe it self, saiyng: Loe Madame, behold here the partie whom you haue challenged to bee the father of your childe, see I am a woman ... who, onely for the loue of him, whom you so lightly have shaken of, haue forsaken my father, abandoned my Countreie, and in maner as you see am become a seruing man, satisfying my self, but with the onely sight of my Apolonius, and now Madame, if my passion were not vehement, & my tormentes without comparison, I would wish that my fained greefes might be laughed to scorne... But my loue beyng pure, my trauaile continuall, & my greefes endlesse, I trust Madame you will not onely excuse me of crime, but also pitie my destresse, the which I protest I would still haue kept secret, if my fortune would so haue permitted. 35

Ultimately, virtue is rewarded in the form of a marriage.

Silla's steadfast loyalty and devotion earn her Apolonius's love and material security.

Through the course of her trials, the female hero of romantic folklore is permitted to engage in fantasy adventures normally denied her as a woman. Her reputation remains unsullied partly because the substitution of male dependency for female dependency, implicit in the transformation of a wife or unmarried woman into a boy page, is not, at least superficially, threatening to the male order; and partly because the chastity of the heroine is proven in the

equation of faithful page with loyal, serving lover or spouse.³⁶ The female hero of medieval romance and, later, Renaissance drama, changes her sex to defend rather than subvert the established order and its associated values. Nevertheless, in male disguise, the female hero projects an ambiguous beauty similar to that projected by the boy player of the Elizabethan theatre and has the potential to arouse similarly illicit emotions in the hearts of men and, occasionally, women. That potential can take two directions, depending on whether or not the disguise is accepted at face value.

When the female hero puts on the role of dependent boy page she also puts on his eroticism which is similar in kind to that projected by the boy player. Both roles shared conditions of dependency within hierarchical and patriarchal institutions, and the sexual abuse of boy players which allegedly took place in consequence of that cultural arrangement, had a counterpart in the documented abuse of boy pages by their masters. Like the boy player, the boy page was viewed in the popular imagination as both provocateur and victim of men's erotic desire; the expression "boy page" was often used as a euphemism for homosexual, along with other pejorative terms, such as "ingle" and "catamite." The association of boy page with homosexuality provided the subject for numerous satires on the debauched sodomite and

"the familiar butterfly his page" who serves him as "his
 37
 smooth-chinned, plump-thighed catamite." In Thomas

Middleton's The Black Book (1604), a sodomite is said to
 keep, "an English page which fills up the place of an
 38
 ingle," and the same theme appears in a poem by John
 Wilmot:

Then give me health, wealth, mirth, and wine,
 And, if busy love entrenches,
 There's a sweet, soft page of mine
 Does the trick worth forty wenches. 39

The irresistible and wanton effeminacy of the "boy" which
 comprises one facet of the heroine's disguise is but one
 direction her eroticism can take; the second direction is the
 eroticism which feeds on the vulnerable female chastity
 trembling beneath the male attire. That direction is
 exemplified in the story of Cratyna, which Robert Greene
 includes in Penelope's Web (1587), a collection of morally
 edifying narratives in which Greene tells us, "a Christall
 Myrror of faeminine perfection represents to the viewe of
 eury one those vertues and graces, which more curiously
 beautifies the mynd of women, then eyther sumptuous Apparell,
 40
 or Iewels of inestimable valew." Cratyna is a supremely
 "good" woman of the female hero tradition who disguises
 herself as a boy in order both to escape the advances of the
 landlord and to follow her husband who has been driven by
 poverty to work in the mines. When Cratyna's husband first
 sets eyes on the "handsome stripling," who is actually his

wife, he pities "the poore estate of such a young youth [and]... noting narrowly the lyniaments of her face, fell into sighes, and from sighes to teares, for the remembrance

41

of his sweete Cratyna." Lisa Jardine argues that:

the possibility of associating fond emotion with the boy page derives from the same set of associations which ...stimulate illicit sexual feeling at the sight of the boy player: the combination of effeminacy, dependence and desirability stirs the affections.⁴²

Boy player, boy page and female hero are linked by a set of erotic associations which revolves around their passivity and ambiguous sexuality. All three are, like their hermaphroditic counterpart in Ovid's Metamorphoses, irresistibly effeminate and potentially rapeable.

In Aretino's Dialogues, Kott tells us, courtesans frequently advised novices in the profession "to disguise themselves as boys as the most effective means of arousing passion."⁴³ Male attire was to protect a girl on a journey but, as Kott makes clear, the disguise made her even more desirable in a number of ways:

for men who are fond of women and who were able to discern female shape under the disguise; for men who are fond of youths and who saw in the disguised girl the girlish youth they desired; and for women, deceived by the garments and roused to violent affection by the smooth and charming youth.⁴⁴

In fact, sexual disguise unleashed the sexuality it was intended to contain. The combination of effeminacy and dependency gave the composite boy/woman figure of romance

narrative an eroticism attested to by Renaissance poets and dramatists as well as courtesans. John Donne invokes the erotic edge of romantic narrative in "Elegy 16, On His Mistress," when he cautions his mistress against travelling alone, disguised in male attire:

Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
 Thy body's habit, nor mind's; be not strange
 To thy self only; all will spy in thy face
 A blushing womanly discovering grace...
 Men of France, changeable chamelions,
 Spitals of diseases, shops of fashions,
 Love's fuellers, and the rightest company
 Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
 Will quickly know thee, and know thee; and alas
 Th' indifferent Italian, as we pass
 His warm land, well content to think thee page,
 Will hunt thee with such lust, and hideous rage,
 As Lot's fair guests were vexed. 45

In Donne's poem, the separate discourses of the medieval "female hero" and the Elizabethan boy epebe converge. The cautionary elegy is also an erotic fantasy which feeds on two desirable objects: the androgynously virtuous heroine turned female hero, whose "blushing womanly discovering grace," shines through her male attire, enflaming the passions of Frenchmen; and the dissembling "feigned page," for whom she will be mistaken by "th' indifferent Italian." That John Donne conjures up the spectre of male homosexuality and implicates his virtuous heroine with it, suggests a correspondence, paradoxical and fascinating, between chaste icon and forbidden pleasure; these opposites merge in the ambiguous sexual figure of the female page.

The medieval tradition of female virtue preserved through male dress used in conjunction with the Renaissance tradition of "eros Socraticus" enabled John Donne to articulate an erotic fantasy latent in Elizabethan culture. The use of these same two traditions provided Elizabethan dramatists with a method of defusing the homosexual anxiety around the use of boy players while simultaneously exploiting both the heterosexual and homosexual eroticism of cross-dressing.

The female page motif was an opportune pretext for keeping the "heroine" in male clothing for most of the play; though, as Northrop Frye has suggested, "it is difficult to say whether disguising a heroine represented by a boy actor as a boy neutralized [the Puritans'] ...attack or was a peculiarly subtle defiance of it." ⁴⁶ In John Lyly's Gallathea (1585), the nature of that ambiguity becomes clear. In an early scene between Tyterus and his daughter Gallathea, Tyterus deliberately draws the audience's attention to the Puritan attacks on cross-dressing; the scene takes place immediately before he sends her out into the world disguised as a boy to prevent her being sacrificed to Neptune:

Tyterus I would thou hadst been less fair or
 more fortunate, then thou shouldst not repine
 that I have disguised thee in this attire;
 for thy beauty will make thee to be
 thought worthy of this god. To avoid,
 therefore, destiny, for wisdom ruleth the stars, I
 think it better to use an unlawful means, your
 honor hazarded, and to prevent, if it be possible,
 thy constellation by my craft...

- Gallathea The destiny to me cannot be so hard as
 the disguising hateful.
- Tyterus To gain love thy gods have taken shapes
 of beasts, and to save life art thou coy to take
 the attire of men?
- Gallathea They were beastly gods, that lust could
 make them seem as beasts.⁴⁷

Since Gallathea is absorbed entirely with the homosexual possibilities of disguising boys as girls and girls as boys, when all the actors are, in fact, boy children, Tyterus's apologetic justification for the "unlawful means" he uses to protect his daughter's virtue, is intentionally ambivalent. ⁴⁸

Amorous disguise, with its comic potential for confused identity and mistaken wooings, clearly appealed to Renaissance dramatists and it quickly became a stock comic convention as well as the most popular disguise motive in English drama. Victor O. Freeburg, in his book Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama, mentions over forty English plays written between 1569 and 1616 which contain the plot element of female page disguise. But while it crops up frequently in Elizabethan drama generally, it is really in Shakespearean comedy that the convention reaches its fullest expression. Shakespeare's most extensive use of the female page is found in As You Like It and Twelfth Night, where the main plots revolve around the disguised heroines; but the motif surfaces as a subordinate element in three other plays: in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Julia disguises herself as a boy page to follow her lover; in The Merchant of Venice, disguise

is used as an element in both the main plot and the sub-plot; Portia dons the garb of a doctor of laws to defend the life of her husband's best friend, while Shylock's daughter Jessica elopes with Lorenzo under cover of a page's attire; and, in Cymbeline, the princess Imogen is re-born as the boy page Fidele after her symbolic death at the hands of her husband Posthumus.

The earliest of Shakespeare's cross-dressed heroines is Julia in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, who follows her lover Proteus, only to find him engaged in the pursuit of another woman. Julia descends directly from the medieval tradition of female hero; for her, love is a religion and its proper act, worship. She compares the journey which she undertakes in love's name to a pilgrimage to a sacred shrine: "a true-devoted pilgrim is not weary/To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps" (II.vii.9-10). Julia's great virtues are patience and loyalty; she demonstrates "nobility in adversity" by remaining faithful to Proteus despite his infidelity and by becoming his messenger to her rival, Silvia. By the end of the play, Proteus has shown himself to be treacherous both in love and friendship; nevertheless, Julia accepts him back and only mildly rebukes him for his betrayal.

On the surface, The Two Gentlemen of Verona appears to be a typical, if somewhat unsatisfactory, tale of patience and

virtue eventually rewarded. Below the surface however, the disguised heroine plays a more ambivalent role than the one her character superficially plays. In a scene that is almost hallucinatory in its sexual inversions, "Sebastian," who is really Julia disguised, describes his "mistress," Julia, that is, herself (or, himself), to her rival, Sylvia:

Julia I thank you, madam, that you tender her.
 Poor gentlewoman, my master wrongs her much.

Sylvia Dost thou know her?

Julia Almost as well as I do know myself...

Sylvia Is she not passing fair?

Julia She hath been fairer, madam, than she is
 When she did think my master lov'd her well...

Sylvia How tall was she?

Julia About my stature; for at Pentecost,
 When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
 Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
 And I was trimm'd in Madam Julia's gown;
 Which served me as fit, by all men's judgements,
 As if the garment had been made for me;
 Therefore I know she is about my height.
 And at that time I made her weep agood,
 For I did play a lamentable part.
 Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
 For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
 Which I so lively acted with my tears
 That my poor mistress, moved therewithal,
 Wept bitterly. (IV.iv.140-171)

In their introduction to a collection of feminist essays on Shakespeare entitled The Woman's Part, the editors draw attention to this scene in which "Julia, disguised as a page, invents for her rival ...a story that describes her apparent male self playing 'the woman's part' in the clothes of her real female self." ⁴⁹ Julia's real self is not female at all, but male because "she" is really a boy underneath all

her costumes. With each inversion, the sexual identity of the ambiguous figure who is playing "the woman's part," retreats a little further; Shakespeare pushes that erotic ambiguity to the very edge that separates masculinity and femininity, appearance and essence, in this boy disguised as a girl (Julia), disguised as a boy (Sebastian), disguised as a girl (Ariadne).

The virtuous and loyal Julia is one prototype for Shakespeare's cross-dressed comic heroines; the other prototype is the Socratic boy ephebe which Shakespeare embodies in the fair youth of the Sonnets. Together they create a composite boy/woman figure that is compatible with the traditional stereotype of the female hero and, at the same time, evocative of the bisexual image of the boy ephebe/boy page/boy player. The combination of these two prototypes allows Shakespeare, in his two "festive" comedies to articulate a subversive fantasy while paying lip service to conventionality. In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, an ambiguous figure--a girl disguised as a boy--surfaces. Rosalind turns into Ganymede; Viola becomes Cesario. Rosalind and Viola are both male and female; they are almost perfect androgynes and their erotic ambiguity becomes a metaphor for the ambiguity of passion itself.

CHAPTER TWO

"THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE:" ROSALIND AND VIOLA

i

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still.
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colored ill.
To win me soon to Hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turned fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,
But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's Hell.

Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

"Sonnet 144"

Shakespeare's "Sonnet 144" sums up his entire Sonnet cycle; it also constitutes a kind of dark prologue to Twelfth Night and As You Like It. In the sonnets, a man, a youth, and a woman, pursue one another through desire, jealousy and betrayal. Torn between the competing demands of his "two loves," the poet meditates throughout the Sonnet cycle on the nature of love itself.

If love is based on beauty and beauty depends on youth, what then is the object of love in the face of devouring

time? This is the question that the poet struggles with in the early sonnets. The answer, he finds, is in the act of procreation.¹ Since beauty exists in the flesh, it must seek its perpetuity in the flesh by begetting:

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die.

"Sonnet 1"

The attempt to preserve love and beauty against the ravages of time is the first theme of the Sonnets. The poet addresses the "fair youth" in "Sonnet 12:"

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime...
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves...
Then of thy beauty do I question make
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake,
And die as fast as they see others grow,
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defense
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

The heterosexual imperative to "breed," is a theme that recurs in the early Sonnets addressed to the fair youth; that imperative unites the bodies of man and woman and ends with the begetting of children.

But as the Sonnets progress, another form of procreation, one that goes beyond the purely physical act and is, in many ways, superior to it, begins to emerge as a counter theme. Spiritual procreation is that which unites the souls of man and man and ends with the begetting of virtue, wisdom and art. The poet immortalizes the beauty of the fair youth through his art:

Not marble nor the gilded [monuments]
 Of princes shall outlive this pow'rful rhyme,
 But you shall shine more bright in these contents
 Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time ...
 'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.
 So till the judgement that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

"Sonnet 55"

The homosexual apologetics of the Symposium permeate the Sonnets. Shakespeare turns the courtly love tradition, or at least the central symbol of that tradition, on its head, by reducing the woman to no more than a dark projection of fleshly desire. In the Sonnets addressed to the "dark lady," Shakespeare undercuts the courtly ideal of woman as angel and saviour:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
 Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
 If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
 If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

"Sonnet 130"

The traditional imagery of courtly love is still maintained in the Sonnets, though, as is its mystique; Shakespeare merely transfers the attributes normally ascribed to the woman over to the fair youth:

Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
 Is poorly imitated after you;
 On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
 And you in Grecian tires are painted new...
 In all external grace you have some part,
 But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

"Sonnet 53"

Shakespeare's theory of the two loves, one angelic, one

satanic, re-states, using a new frame of reference, the old antagonism between flesh and spirit which the courtly tradition tried to reconcile, unsuccessfully, through the veneration of a coldly transcendent mistress,² and which the monastic tradition had earlier projected onto the female transvestite saint. In Shakespeare's scheme, the woman is placed entirely outside redemption. Love as grace is now attached to the fair youth, love as sin, to the dark lady:

the better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman color'd ill.

"Sonnet 144"

As the Sonnet cycle progresses, however, the split between pure and contaminated love which Shakespeare embodies in the fair youth and the dark lady respectively becomes more ambiguous. The poet's relationship with the fair youth gradually deteriorates as the youth and the woman slowly, irrevocably, become enmeshed with each other, until it finally dissolves altogether in lust and betrayal. As his "angel" turns to "fiend," the poet begins to learn, to his bitterness, what the fool in King Lear has known all along, that, "he's mad that trusts... a boy's love or a whore's oath" (III.vi.18-19). Leslie Fiedler summarizes the Sonnets' thematic progression:

Beginning as an account of one who would divide his love in two, directing all that is noble in it toward one object, all that is vile toward another, it ends with his discovery of the two in each other's arms - the noble contaminated by the vile.³

In the courtly tradition, beauty and goodness are permanent values; in Shakespeare's Sonnets, those noble absolutes are finally denied.

The essence of the Sonnets is contained in the impossibility of choosing between the youth and the woman. Fascinated by all beauty, desire is an instinct that embraces good and evil, the "noble" and the "vile" indifferently. Perhaps more insidious is the poet's emerging realization that he is, in the profoundest sense, the link between his fair youth and his dark lady. Both are projections of his imagination; they exist not only outside of him but within him as well. The co-existence of these two contradictory drives, one toward the spirit, the other toward the flesh, suggests a disturbing ambiguity, latent in human nature, that cannot be reconciled, but which nonetheless persists.

And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend,
 Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,
 But being both from me, both to each friend,
 I guess one angel in another's hell.
 Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

"Sonnet 144"

In the final sonnets, masculinity and femininity, spirit and flesh, passion and shame, intermingle. These contradictions are symbolized in the androgynous fair youth, the "master mistress" of both men's and women's passion:

a man in hue all hues in his controlling,
 Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.

"Sonnet 20"

The sexually divergent qualities which are embodied by the fair youth in the Sonnets, are, in Twelfth Night, embodied by the cross-dressed heroine, Viola, a girl disguised as a boy.

ii

After narrowly escaping death by drowning, Viola and a few other survivors of a ship-wreck at sea, find themselves on the shores of Illyria. Anxious to withhold her true estate until such time as she can make "[her] ...own occasion mellow," Viola entreats the sea-captain to:

Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as haply shall become
The form of my intent. (I.ii.53-55)

We should remember, however, that before that happens, a boy actor had to disguise himself as a girl. In Twelfth Night, the eroticism of the sexually ambiguous youth which we first saw in the Sonnets, re-emerges as a theme. So too does the harsh imperative of heterosexuality, as an early encounter between Viola and Olivia reveals:

Viola Lady, you are the cruell'st she alive
If you will lead these graces to the grave
And leave the world no copy. (I.v.242-46)

The similarity of language and intent in this passage and that found in Sonnet 11, is clear:

She carv'd thee for her seal, and meant thereby,
Thou should'st print more not let that copy die.

Yet, as Jan Kott points out in Shakespeare Our Contemporary,
4
there is a subtle difference. In "Sonnet 11," the plea is

directed to the fair youth; in Twelfth Night, to Olivia. But the character of Olivia is played by a boy actor disguised as a girl, who is appealed to by Viola, a boy disguised as a girl, re-disguised as a boy. In Twelfth Night, the convention of cross-dressing is pushed to its furthest limits and its latent eroticism laid bare when Orsino, Viola and Olivia act out their triangle of love.

Disguise operates on at least four levels. On the apparent level of disguise, a man, a youth, and a woman, pursue, and are pursued by one another. Orsino is in love with Olivia; Olivia loves Cesario; Cesario is in love with Orsino. The youth Cesario, however, is really a woman, Viola. The scenario shifts, making the pursuers two women and one man. Olivia is in love with another woman, Viola; Viola loves Orsino. But the ambiguity penetrates further: in the third metamorphosis of sex, Olivia and Orsino are simultaneously in love with Viola-Cesario, who is both male and female. S/he describes him/herself to Orsino:

I am all the daughters of my father's house
And all the brothers too. (II.iv.121-22)

To the girlish youth, Orsino has "unclasp'd/the book even of [his] ...secret soul" (I.v.13-14). Orsino's courtly avowals are directed toward a woman, Olivia, but they are couched in the homosexual rhetoric of "Eros socraticus:"

There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart

So big, to hold so much: they lack retention ...
 Make no compare
 Between that love a woman can bear me
 And that I owe Olivia. (II.iv.94-103)

Both Orsino and Olivia are drawn to the ambiguous beauty of Viola-Cesario, whose physical resemblance is to the fair youth of the Sonnets:

Duke For they shall yet belie thy happy years,
 That say thou art a man; Diana's lip
 Is not more smooth and rubious: thy small pipe
 Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound,
 And all is semblative a woman's part.
 (I.iv.30-34)

Olivia Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
 With an invisible and subtle stealth
 To creep in at mine eyes. (I.v.300-302)

On the fourth level of disguise, that of the cross-dressed boy actors, the love triangle being enacted is a purely homosexual one since the parts of both Viola and Olivia would have been played by boys on the Elizabethan stage. It is this fundamental stage deception underlying the play itself that informs the deceptions within it, with a particularly erotic and ironic edge.

The state of erotic confusion in Illyria is exacerbated by the appearance of Viola's twin brother, Sebastian, who has been presumed drowned. According to Jan Kott, "Sebastian is Viola's twin and double. If Viola is boyish, Sebastian must be girlish." ⁵ The subplot of the "girlish" youth, Sebastian, and Antonio, the sea-captain who rescues him, burlesques the main erotic action of Twelfth Night. Sebastian is the master

mistress of Antonio's passion; when Sebastian parts company with Antonio in order to pursue his separate fortune in Illyria, the sea-captain cannot bear the separation and so he follows the youth:

I could not stay behind you: my desire
More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth.

(III.iii.4-5)

Asking only that Sebastian not murder him for his love, Antonio endangers his own life to protect Sebastian in his travels around Illyria:

But come what may, I do adore thee so,
That danger shall seem sport, and I will go.

(II.iii.4-5)

Antonio, Olivia, Orsino and, to a limited extent, Viola, are reduced to anonymous sexual partners; they are defined solely through the gestures they make in the name of love. Sudden and consuming, love is an epidemic that stops the world and infects everyone:

Olivia

How now?

Even so quickly may one catch the plague?

(I.v.298-99)

Yet, through all the conversions of sex that take place, the love object sought remains unattainable. Viola articulates woefully the dilemma in which her disguised self has, unwittingly, placed Olivia, Orsino, and herself:

Viola Poor lady, she were better love a dream...
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him,
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me:
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love:

As I am woman (now alas the day!)
 What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?
 (II.ii.25-38)

The Illyrian lovers pursue one another through desire, jealousy and betrayal, unable to meet, until the final act, when the consequences of Viola's disguise are ushered in with a vengeance.

Orsino finally meets Olivia in the last act, only to discover that her affections are engaged elsewhere. Confronted by what he believes to be the double treachery of Cesario and Olivia, the duke seeks revenge. He addresses Olivia:

Live you the marble-breasted tyrant still.
 But this your minion, whom I know you love,
 And whom, by heaven, I swear I tender dearly,
 Him will I tear out of that cruel eye
 Where he sits crowned in his master's spite.
 Come, boy, with me, my thoughts are ripe in mischief:
 I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,
 To spite a raven's heart within a dove. (V.i.122-129)

Olivia, too, who has secretly married Sebastian, believing him to be Cesario, is betrayed by the mistaken object of her desire:

Olivia Where goes Cesario?
 Viola After him I love
 More than I love these eyes, more than my life,
 More, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife...
 Olivia Ay me detested! how am I beguil'd!
 (V.i.132-137)

The timely appearance of Sebastian provides a superficial solution to the bitter comedy of errors that has been enacted. Sebastian possesses the "little thing" Viola lacks,

which is required for a return to normality and for the crystallization of a new society demanded by the conventions of comedy.

Sebastian So comes it lady, you have been mistook.
 But nature to her bias drew in that.
 (V.i.258-59)

Sebastian's words, "nature to her bias drew in that," sum up the ostensible themes of Twelfth Night. In the new Arden edition of the play, the editors gloss the expression as a metaphor, taken from the game of bowls,⁶ which describes Nature's inborn tendency to mate female with male and so undo the effects of Viola's misleading disguise. Certainly by the end of the play, an appropriate sexual partner⁷ has been found for each of the Illyrian lovers except Antonio. But has the erotic ambiguity been dispelled? Olivia fell in love with Cesario. Cesario, it turns out, was really a disguised girl, Viola. When Sebastian is substituted for Viola, the homosexual threat posed by Olivia's sexual attraction to another woman appears to disappear; except that when Olivia takes off her disguise, "she" is not really a woman, but a boy actor.

Sebastian Nor are you therein, by my life deceived:
 You are betrothed both to a maid and man.
 (V.i.258-59)

The words Sebastian utters to Olivia are ironic, not only because Olivia herself is both "maid and man," but also because Sebastian has played, albeit unknowingly, the maid of

Antonio's passion throughout the play. Orsino's love object was originally Olivia. Now his affection is transferred, effortlessly, to Viola. At the subliminal level, the duke has been in love with the youth, Cesario; the youth was a disguised girl. At the end of the play, when the duke offers Viola his hand in marriage, he transforms her yet again, this time into a "master's mistress" (V.i.322-23). The expected dissolution of sexual ambiguity is deliberately withheld at the end of the comedy. Viola never re-assumes her female garments and her sex remains equivocal in the very words which end the play:

Duke

Cesario, come;

For so you shall be while you are a man;
But when in other habits you are seen,
Orsino's mistress and his fancy's queen.

(V.i.384-87)

When the final metamorphosis of sex takes place and the actors remove the last of their costumes, the heterosexual illusion evaporates completely: a man and three youths remain on the empty stage.

Twelfth Night relies for its resolution on the complete interchangeability of the sexual partners. The mechanical reversal of the objects of desire underlines Shakespeare's ironic analysis of the nature of love. Revolving around the disguised Viola, desire shifts its object easily from male to female and back to male again: Cesario becomes Viola; Viola becomes Sebastian. Even the undisguised Viola is still a disguised boy.

Disguise is a dangerous game. One of the dangers of Viola's disguise emerges when Olivia mistakes Viola's appearance for her essence and sends the youth Cesario, a gift in the form of a ring. Viola, realizing the significance of such a gift, prays, "Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!" (II.ii.17); but her prayers come too late to assist the hopelessly smitten Olivia. Viola's disguise, and her consequently mistaken identity, function to break down the assumed distinctions between appearance and essence. That "nature with a beauteous wall/Doth oft close in pollution" (I.ii.49-50), is a truth Viola intuits early in Twelfth Night. But the erotic fascination of beauty has its own compelling truth, one that ignores such distinctions. After she sees how her disguised self has beguiled Olivia, Viola concludes:

Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy is it for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!

(II.ii.26-29)

The potential evil of sexual disguise which Viola argues in this speech, is the same argument Rainolds uses in his attacks on stage cross-dressing. According to Rainolds, the semblance of a woman which the boy player's disguise creates leads men to desire the boy who is beneath that disguise; and that desire leads men, in turn, toward sexually perverse behaviour. In Viola's speech, the progression of

associations that link disguise with perversion are similar to Rainolds's steps toward "abomination:" its affiliation with the devil ("the pregnant enemy"); its bodily manifestation as a "proper false," which the New Arden edition of the play glosses as a "handsome and deceitful [man];" and, finally, the form which that "proper false" sets in women's hearts and to which they respond passionately, even though the form may not correspond to the reality. Viola is only concerned with the form that has been set in Olivia's "waxen" heart; but that same "proper false" sets its forms in men's waxen hearts as well, as Antonio learns in bitterness:

Antonio Virtue is beauty, but the beauteous evil
 Are empty trunks, o'er-flourish'd by the devil.
 (III.iv.378-79)

The dilemma between flesh and spirit which we have seen emerge in the Sonnets, surfaces again in Twelfth Night. Again, the erotic partner is real and fictitious at the same time: bodily present and yet created out of imagination and desire.

In all its manifestations, Illyrian love is generated through projection. W.H. Auden, in "Notes on the Comic," describes the lovers' projections as the inevitable product of the two contradictory, yet co-existing impulses in human nature: the blind, biological drive of lust; and the selective, individual specific desire introduced by personal history and culture. "This contradiction," says Auden, "is fertile ground for self-deception:"

It allows us to persuade ourselves that we value the person of another, when, in fact, we only value her (or him) as a sexual object, and it allows us to endow her (or him) with an imaginary personality which has little or no relation to the real one. From the personal point of view, on the other hand, sexual desire, because of its impersonal and unchanging character, is a comic contradiction. The relation between every pair of lovers is unique, but in bed they can only do what all mammals do. 9

Both Olivia's and Orsino's relationship with Cesario is "erotic-

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fantastic" because Cesario is not what he appears to be.

But Orsino's relationship with Olivia is also "erotic-fantastic."

Steeped in the conventions of courtly love which focus around

the sexual fascination of cruelty, Orsino projects onto

Olivia the qualities of Petrarch's "cold mistress," calling

her, "yond same sovereign cruelty" (II.iv.82). The fact that

Olivia does not return his love only reinforces that

projection. Orsino's passion is fed not by Olivia herself

but by the idea of Olivia which his imagination conjures: "so

full of shapes is fancy/That it alone is high fantastical"

(I.i.14-15).

In Twelfth Night, the lover and the beloved are no longer separate entities. Uncertainty has surrounded the erotic situations in Illyria from the start. Ostensibly, Orsino is pursuing Olivia:

Curio	Will you go hunt, my lord?	
Duke		What, Curio?
Curio	The hart.	
Duke	Why so I do, the noblest that I have. O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, Methought she purg'd the air of pestilence; That instant was I turn'd into a hart, And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,	

E'er since pursue me. (I.i.15-22)

But Orsino is himself Actaeon and hart, predator and prey of his passion. Olivia's early renunciation of sexuality in the name of a dead brother's love cloaks, as does Orsino's unrequited passion, a masochistic self-indulgence. Feste shrewdly points this out:

Clown Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?
 Olivia Good fool, for my brother's death.
 Clown I think his soul is in hell, madonna.
 Olivia I know his soul is in heaven, fool.
 Clown The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your
 brother's soul, being in heaven. (I.v.64-65)

Orsino and Olivia are, like Malvolio, "sick of self-love", and Cesario's allure is at least partly rooted in the audience role he plays for them. Both the duke and Olivia are actors, practising their roles for the benefit of their own shadows. Each employs props--Orsino calls for "sweet beds of flowers" and melancholy love songs; Olivia has her mourning veil and her seal of Lucrece--to display and feed a particular self-image. Each pursues the object that will gratify that self-image. And, in each case, the imagined lover is merely the objectification of an ardour that is essentially narcissistic. The ghost of Narcissus, who died of his unrequited passion for his own reflection, lurks behind much of the action of Twelfth Night.

In his opening speech, Orsino calls for music to appease the hunger of passion whose appetite is insatiable and, yet, too quickly sated:

If music be the food of love, play on,
 Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
 That appetite may sicken and so die.
 That strain again, it had a dying fall:
 O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
 That breathes upon a bank of violets,
 Stealing and giving odor. Enough, no more;
 'Tis not so sweet now as it was before. (I.i.1-8)

Love is rapacious but it chokes on its own appetite:

O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou,
 That notwithstanding thy capacity
 Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
 Of what validity and pitch so'er,
 But falls into abatement and low price,
 Even in a minute! (I.i.9-14)

The images on which the duke draws to articulate the nature of love--the appetite that craves surfeit, the music that cloy, and the all-devouring sea into which anything of value "falls into abatement and low price"--all play explicitly on the motif *inopem me copia fecit*, the complaint of Ovid's Narcissus, translated by Golding as "my plentie makes me poore." In his essay, "Twelfth Night and the myth of Echo and Narcissus," D.J. Palmer explains *inopem me copia fecit* as an expression of "the paradoxical realisation of Narcissus that he himself is the unattainable object of his insatiable desire." In "Sonnet 1," Shakespeare draws specifically on the motif when he compares the fair youth's beauty and disdain with that of Narcissus:

But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
 Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
 Making a famine where abundance lies,
 Thy self thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.

The "too proud" Olivia demonstrates a similarly narcissistic

disdain by the manner in which she scorns her suitors. And when Viola describes how she would woo Olivia, her words recall Ovid's "babbling nymph," Echo:

Viola If I did love you in my master's flame;
 With such a suff'ring, such a deadly life,
 In your denial I would find no sense,
 I would not understand it.

Olivia Why, what would you?

Viola Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
 And call upon my soul within the house...
 Halloo your name to the reverberate hills,
 And make the babbling gossip of the air
 Cry out 'Olivia!' O, you should not rest
 Between the elements of air and earth,
 But you should pity me.

Olivia You might do much.

(I.v.268-81)

Echo, when spurned by Narcissus, pined and faded till only the sound of her voice, crying out her unreciprocated feelings, remained. Viola chooses her words well. Through a subliminal reverberation in the direction of Olivia's own self-interest, her hitherto dormant sexual interest is awakened.

In Twelfth Night, Narcissus himself is embodied in the "sexually self-contained" figure of Viola-Cesario whose function in the play is tied into the redeeming function of comedy itself. Northrop Frye describes the comic drive in Shakespeare as a drive toward self-knowledge or identity.¹² The most common form of identity is the form that is achieved through marriage, in which, according to Frye, "two souls become one, and... 'atone together.'" ¹³ Given that context, Frye continues:

sexual identity is a more deep-seated theme in comedy than it looks. The center of the comic drive toward identity is an erotic drive, and the spirit of comedy is often represented by an Eros figure who brings about the comic conclusion but is in himself sexually self-contained, being in a sense both male and female, and needing no expression of love beyond himself.¹⁴

In Twelfth Night, Orsino and Olivia are drowning in their own self-love until the sexually ambiguous figure of Viola, who "can sing both high and low" (II.iii.42), emerges from the sea. Viola's function is to lead Olivia and Orsino, in a natural progression of steps familiar to psychoanalytic theory, from self-love to homosexual love and, eventually, to heterosexual love; through a series of sexual transformations, at the end of which she becomes male to Olivia and female to Orsino, Viola cures the self-love sickness of Olivia and Orsino and so redeems, at least symbolically, the comic society of Illyria.

In her disguise, Viola-Cesario also projects an eroticism identical to that of the beautiful boy Narcissus. Malvolio's description of Cesario, "'Tis with him in standing water, between boy and man" (I.v.160-61), echoes Golding's description of the adolescent Narcissus in "Book 111" of the Metamorphoses:

For when yeares three times five and one he fully
lyved had,
So that he seemde to stande betweene the state
of man and Lad,
The hearts of divers trim yong men his beautie
gan to move,
And many a Ladie fresh and fair was taken in his
love. (III.437-40)

Projecting a similarly androgynous beauty, Viola-Cesario and the mythical Narcissus both enflame the passions of men and women alike.

iii

The myth of the beautiful boy, Narcissus, is one of several homo-erotic myths that had wide circulation during the Renaissance.¹⁵ The myth of Actaeon, of which we have already seen two manifestations, belongs to this tradition; as does the Ovidian myth of Hermaphroditus, as well as that of Orpheus who, in "Book X" of the Metamorphoses, disowned women and turned to boys for love after the loss of Eurydice:

He also taught the Thracian folke a stewes of Males too make
And of the flowring pryme of boayes the pleasure for too take.
(X.91-92)

Here too belong the myths of "boys loved by the gods,"

Hyacinthus, Cyparissus, and Ganymede, cupbearer of the gods:

Wise Zeus abducted fair-haired Ganymedes
for his beauty, to be among the immortals
and pour wine for the gods in the house of Zeus,
a marvel to look upon, honored by all the gods,
as from the golden bowl he draws red nectar.

During the Renaissance, the myth of Ganymede had a double meaning. According to Jan Kott, "it symbolized a mystical love which brought with it a communion with the deity and its direct contemplation;"¹⁷ but it also represented, as it had in antiquity, pederasty, for which it stood both as euphemism and symbol. Marlowe's version of the myth of Ganymede, in

the opening scene of Dido, Queen of Carthage, makes that association explicit; the play opens with Jupiter dandling his "female wanton boy" on his knee:

Jupiter Come gentle Ganymede, and play with me;
 I love thee well, say Juno what she will...
 Hold here, my little love; these linked gems
 My Juno wore upon her marriage-day,
 Put thou about thy neck, my own sweet heart,
 And trick thy arms and shoulders with my theft.

Ganymede I would have a jewel for mine ear,
 And a fine brooch to put in my hat,
 And then I'll hug with you an hundred times.

Jupiter And shall have, Ganymede, if thou wilt be my love.
 [Enter Venus]

Venus Ay, this is it: you can sit toying there,
 And playing with that female wanton boy ... 18

One of Michelangelo's love gifts to Tomaso dei Cavalieri, the beautiful young man to whom Michelangelo addresses many of his sonnets, was a chalk drawing of the Rape of Ganymede.
 19
 In As You Like It, Rosalind takes the name of Ganymede when she escapes to the forest of Arden.

Celia What shall I call thee when thou art a man?
 Ros. I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page,
 And therefore look you call me Ganymede.
 (I.iii.119-121)

Rosalind, disguised as a boy, meets Orlando in Arden. Orlando is in love with Rosalind and she with him. But Orlando does not recognize Rosalind in the guise of Ganymede. Rosalind plays Ganymede, who in turn plays Rosalind:

Orl. I would not be cured, youth.
 Ros. I would cure you, if you would but call me
 Rosalind and come every day to my cote and woo me ...
 Orl. With all my heart, good youth.

Ros. Nay, you must call me Rosalind. (III.ii.413-21)

We are back in Illyria, it would seem.

On the apparent level of disguise, similar to that of Twelfth Night, two youths, Orlando and Ganymede, play a love game. But one of the youths is really a disguised girl. When Rosalind's disguise is removed, a youth and a girl who are in love with each other remain. But the "real" girl is still a disguised boy actor.

In the love scenes in Arden forest, as with those in Illyria, theatrical form and content are absolutely interwoven, one with the other, assuming, that is, that the female parts are played as they would have been on the Elizabethan stage, by boy actors. An actor disguised as a girl plays a girl disguised as a boy. Embedded in disguise, everything is real and unreal simultaneously. Rosalind as Ganymede addresses Orlando:

Ros. And I am your Rosalind.

Celia It pleases him to call you so; but he hath a Rosalind of a better leer than you.

Ros. Come, woo me, woo me; for now I am in a holiday humour and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now, and I were your very very Rosalind?

(IV.i.60-67)

At the vanishing point of appearance and reality in both plays stands a "pretty youth:" the boy actor and the girl disguised as a boy. When the boy actor plays the disguised girl, he plays himself.

In her disguise, Rosalind-Ganymede recalls the "female

wanton boy" of classical antiquity and Puritan stage attacks; particularly when, in the guise of Ganymede, she describes to Orlando how "he" cured another love-sick man by playing "the woman's part:"

He was to imagine
me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day
to woo me. At which time would I, being but a
moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable,
longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish,
shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles, for
every passion something and for no passion truly
anything, as boys and women are for the most part
cattle of this colour. (III.ii.395-403)

Ganymede is the "peevish boy" with whom the scornful shepherdess Phebe falls helplessly in love. When she overhears Phebe ridicule the tender protestations of love proffered her by Silvius, Ganymede scolds the shepherdess mercilessly for her disdain toward this earnest shepherd who clearly adores her:

Ros. [advancing] ...Who might be your
mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty--
As by my faith I see no more in you
Than without candle may go dark to bed--
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
(III.v.35-40)

Rather than being offended by Ganymede's rude speech, Phebe is utterly beguiled by the irresistibly effeminate beauty of this fair youth:

The best thing in him
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.
He is not very tall, yet for his years he's tall.
His leg is but so; and yet 'tis well.

There was a pretty redness in his lip,
 A little riper and more lusty red
 Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference
 Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.

(III.v.115-125)

Phebe may lack the physical charms of Olivia from Twelfth Night (Ganymede's advice to her is "Sell when you can, you are not for all markets" III.iv.60); nevertheless she fulfills a function, similar to Olivia's, as the "cold mistress" who spurns the love of an adoring swain only to find herself in thrall to an indifferent lover; and in both cases, that indifferent lover happens to be another woman. When Ganymede takes his leave of her, Phebe cries out in words taken from Marlowe's Hero and Leander: Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?

By the end of As You Like It, the state of erotic confusion in the forest of Arden rivals that of Illyria. Silvius is in love with Phebe; Phebe loves Ganymede; Ganymede is in love with Orlando; Orlando loves Rosalind. Ganymede is really Rosalind, but Rosalind is really a boy. These lovers pursue and are pursued by one another, and yet they are unable to meet. Orlando's name is taken from the protagonist of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, who runs mad in another forest for love of his lady Angelica. In Arden, love is madness. The lovers who run mad in this forest are completely absorbed by love; they define themselves through it. But, at the same time, this love which so entirely fills them can neither be

gratified nor reciprocated. This too is an Illyrian theme. When Silvius describes the nature of love, he describes a force which is all consuming and absolutely arbitrary in terms of its object:

Phebe Good shepherd, tell this youth what 'tis to love.
 Sil. It is to be all made of sighs and tears,
 And so am I for Phebe.
 Phebe And I for Ganymede.
 Orl. And I for Rosalind.
 Ros. And I for no woman.
 Sil. It is to be all made of fantasy,
 All made of passion and all made of wishes,
 All adoration, duty and observance,
 All humbleness, all patience and impatience,
 All purity, all trial, all observance;
 And so am I for Phebe.
 Phebe And so am I for Ganymede.
 Orl. And so am I for Rosalind.
 Ros. And so am I for no woman. (V.ii.82-101)

The erotic confusion in which Rosalind's misleading disguise has entangled Orlando, Phebe and Silvius can only be untangled by Rosalind herself. In the guise of Ganymede, she makes a promise to each of the lovers:

Ros. Tomorrow meet me all together. [To Phebe]
 I will marry you, if ever I marry woman, and I'll
 be married tomorrow. [To Orl.] I will satisfy you,
 if ever I satisfied man, and you shall be married
 tomorrow. [To Sil.] I will content you, if what
 pleases you contents you, and you shall be married
 tomorrow. (V.iii.113-119)

In the final scene of As You Like It, Rosalind fulfills her riddling promise with some assistance from a "magician uncle," who, she claims, has tutored her in the rudiments of sorcery. Rosalind makes her entrance in the last scene, undisguised and escorted by Hymen, the god of marriage, who

re-unites Rosalind with her father and formally initiates the wedding ceremonies. Rosalind's "magic" undisguising and the masque of Hymen fulfill the plot of As You Like It:

Ros. [to the Duke] To you I give myself, for I am yours.
 [to Or1.] To you I give myself, for I am yours.
 Duke If there be truth in sight, you are my Rosalind.
 Or1. If there be truth in sight, you are my Rosalind.
 Phebe If sight and shape be true,
 Why then my love adieu.
 Ros. I'll have no father, if you be not he.
 I'll have no husband, if you be not he.
 Nor ne'er wed woman, if you be not she.

(V.iv.115-123)

In the epilogue to the play, Rosalind is given the last word. It is not, however, the "girl" Rosalind who stands alone on the now empty stage, but the disguised boy who has been playing the part of Rosalind. As a boy, he addresses the audience:

...I charge you, O women, for the
 love you bear to men, to like as much of this play
 as please you. And I charge you, O men, for the
 love you bear to women - as I perceive by your
 simpering none of you hates them - that between
 you and the women the play may please. If I were
 a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had
 beards that pleased me, complexions that liked
 me, and breaths that I defied not. And I am sure,
 as many as have good beards, or good faces, or
 sweet breaths, will for my kind offer, when I make
 curtsy, bid me farewell.

(W.iv.209-220)

In his address, the boy actor plays bawdily on the double meaning of "beards;" the sex behind those kissable beards is deliberately ambiguous; as is the ultimate sexual identity of Rosalind, who it turns out, is a boy after all. By adding this epilogue to the play, Shakespeare thrusts the boy

player who has been playing Rosalind into the dramatic illusion and, in so doing, he plants a doubt in the audience's mind as to the truth of Rosalind's final transformation back to female at the end of the play proper. When the actor leaves the stage, the ambiguity and the doubt linger.

In As You Like It, rigid distinctions between appearance and reality break down and finally disappear. Rosalind plays Ganymede who plays Rosalind. As Ganymede, she plays Rosalind being married to Orlando:

Ros. ...Come sister, you shall be the priest and marry us. Give me your hand Orlando. What do you say, sister?

Orl. Pray thee marry us.

Celia I cannot say the words.

Ros. You must begin, 'Will you Orlando—'

Celia Go to. Will you Orlando have to wife this Rosalind?

Orl. I will ...

Ros. Then you must say 'I take thee Rosalind for wife.'

Orl. I take thee Rosalind for wife.

Ros. I might ask you for your commission; but I do take thee Orlando for my husband. (IV.i.117-31)

Disguised as Ganymede, Rosalind plays the role of "counterfeit" lover (IV.iii.167-69), who impersonates love and so unmasks its affectations.

Disguise is impersonation; the impersonator is himself or herself and, at the same time, someone else. In Twelfth Night and As You Like It, disguise holds up a mirror to the posturings of love. The actor/lover watches himself or herself watching himself or herself. To be oneself means only to play one's reflection in the eyes of strangers:

Olivia ...we will draw the curtain and show
 you the picture. [Unveiling] Look you, sir, such
 a one I was this present. Is't not well done?
 (I.v.236-38)

Sexual disguise represents the furthest reach of self-
 projection: the self is split into male and female.
 Narcissism, too, is an act of self-projection: the self is
 split into lover and beloved. Hidden in sexual disguise is
 the impossible realization of Narcissus' ultimate desire, as
 Kott describes:

[Sexual disguise]...is the realization of man's eternal
 dream about overcoming the boundaries of his own
 body and of his sex. It is a dream of an erotic
 experience in which one is one's own partner, in
 which one sees and experiences sensual pleasure, as
 it were, from the other side.²¹

In both As You Like It and Twelfth Night, sexual disguise
 functions, metaphorically, to obscure the borderline separating
 an object from its reflection.

22

As You Like It and Twelfth Night are "sur-Genet,"
 according to Jan Kott. Genet's play, The Maids, opens with a
 mistress scolding her maid. As the mistress's abuse
 intensifies, the maid begins to quarrel with her and the
 scene quickly evolves into an ugly confrontation between the
 two women, at the height of which, the maid turns menacingly
 on her mistress. Suddenly, an alarm clock goes off and we
 are brought up short by the realization that we have been
 tricked, that the entire scene has been a game. The two

women are not mistress and maid, but sisters, who take turns playing the mistress and the maid while their real mistress is out of the house. There are three female parts in The Maids, but in a commentary to the play, Genet asks that the female parts be played by men:

If I were to have a play put on in which women had roles, I would demand that these roles be performed by adolescent boys, and I would bring this to the attention of the spectators by means of a placard which would remain nailed to the right or left of the sets during the entire performance.²³

In his introduction to The Maids, Sartre explains that the reason for this preference is that "Genet wishes from the very start to strike at the root of the apparent;"²⁴ in order to do that, the creation of "an absolute state of artifice" is required:

In short, the illusion is prevented from 'taking' by a sustained contradiction between the effort of the actor, who measures his talent by his ability to deceive, and the warning of the placard... Appearance, which is constantly on the point of passing itself off as reality, must constantly reveal its profound unreality.²⁵

Sartre characterizes Genet's dramatic method as a re-formulation of Epimenide's paradox (Epimenides says that Cretans are liars. But he is a Cretan. Therefore he lies. Therefore Cretans are not liars. Therefore, he speaks the truth. Therefore, Cretans are liars. Therefore, he lies, etc.).²⁶ This spirit of Epimenidean paradox which informs the bleak modern vision of Genet informs, too, the jaded Renaissance vision of Shakespeare.

Feste puts his finger on the fundamental paradox at the heart of both As You Like It and Twelfth Night when he remarks that "nothing that is so is so" (IV.i.9). Unmasked by disguise, everything becomes real, yet unreal, "a natural perspective, that is, and is not." Cesario is Viola; Viola is Sebastian. Ganymede may really be Rosalind; but Rosalind is not really a girl. Ultimately in this hall of mirrors, everything becomes mere reflection. The reflector and the reflected reflect each other infinitely.

Viola I am not what I am. (III.i.138)

This is Illyria.

iv

In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, truth leads to the lie and vice-versa. Rosalind and Viola oscillate between two opposing identities: male and female. They oscillate, as well, between two opposing ideals: a homosexual ideal, embodied in the fair youth of Shakespeare's Sonnets; and a heterosexual ideal, embodied in the virtuous female hero of the romance/saints tradition. The affinities that "Cesario" and "Ganymede" share with the fair youth have already been considered. What remains to be examined is the way in which "Rosalind" and "Viola" satisfy the conventions of the heterosexual plot and defuse the homosexual anxieties of a nervous heterosexual culture.

Critics generally distinguish between Rosalind and Viola in terms of the power each exercises over her own fate while in disguise. On the surface it would appear that disguise is a liberation for Rosalind, a trap for Viola. Both heroines adopt male attire to protect their virtue while travelling unaccompanied in a foreign land. Rosalind dons her disguise with a certain exuberance:

A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
 A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,
 Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
 We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
 As many other mannish cowards have
 That do outface it with their semblances.

(I.v.113-118)

Viola, on the other hand, broods on her disguise, "Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness" (II.ii.26). In the guise of Ganymede, Rosalind plays proxy for herself and so is wooed by her own lover; Viola goes as proxy for the man she loves to woo another woman. Rosalind acts as the controlling agent for the comic resolution of *As You Like It*; the comic resolution of *Twelfth Night* is achieved in spite of Viola and not because of her. In these respects the two heroines are clearly different. And yet in terms of their ultimate symbolic value, the differences between the two are of degree rather than essence. Both are stereotypes of female heroism; both embody the attendant virtues of that stereotype: loyalty, obedience and chastity. Shakespeare masks any threat that the heroine's masculine self might potentially

represent by establishing the purity of her female chastity even while she is clothed in male attire.

Rosalind's virtue is established before she is sent into banishment. We are told early in the play that the duke's displeasure toward his niece is:

Grounded upon no other argument,
But that the people praise her for her virtues,
And pity her for her good father's sake. (I.ii.269-71)

Her "silence" and "patience" in the face of her father's unjust banishment have endeared her to the populace; so much so that the duke fears that Rosalind's virtues will overshadow those of his daughter Celia. These early testaments to Rosalind's virtuous nature assure the audience that when Rosalind changes into Ganymede her masculinity will be superficial:

Ros. Good my complexion! Dost thou think though I
am caparisoned like a man I have a doublet and
hose in my disposition? (III.ii. 191-93)

Part of Rosalind's role, while in doublet and hose, involves the mocking of romance and its illusions; and she plays that role to the hilt in her courtship games with Orlando. During one of those games, she coerces Orlando into a marriage proposal only to reject him:

Ros. Well, in her person, I say I will not have you.
Orl. Then in mine own person, I die.
Ros. No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost
six thousand years old, and in all this time there
was not any man died in his own person, videlicet,
in a love-cause... men have died from

time to time and worms have eaten them, but not
for love. (IV.i.86-104)

Nevertheless, most critics maintain that Rosalind's cynicism is only skin deep. In his book, Shakespeare's Festive Comedy, C.L.Barber argues that, "for the audience, her disguise is transparent, and through it they see the very ardor which she mocks." ²⁷ Moreover, when Rosalind's acerbic observations on the skittish nature of love and lovers threaten to become too hard-edged, she always reverts to her softer feminine self:

Orl. I would not have my right Rosalind of this mind,
for I protest her frown might kill me.

Ros. By this hand, it will not kill a fly. (IV.i.104-108)

Rosalind remains in her male disguise to test Orlando's feelings and fidelity. But the disguise functions also to prove the depth and fidelity of Rosalind's own feelings. The display of true womanly love is as necessary to mitigate the potential subversiveness of male attire as the display of feminine squeamishness: the episode of the bloody napkin demonstrates both Rosalind's loving concern for Orlando and her "womanish" shrinking from the sight of blood. It is essential to the preservation of Rosalind's virtuous self that her "counterfeited" swooning not fool anyone:

Oli. This was not counterfeit, there is too great
testimony in your complexion that it was a passion
of earnest. (IV.iii.169-71)

In Twelfth Night, Viola personifies, through her suffering, the same quality of female virtue that Rosalind

verifies through her slips in As You Like It. Unlike Rosalind, who has a confidant in Celia, Viola is alone with the secret of her true identity. She can only speak her love obliquely:

Viola My father had a daughter lov'd a man,
As it might be perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.

Duke And what's her history?

Viola A blank, my lord: she never told her love,
But let concealment like a worm i' th' bud
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?

(II.iv.108-116)

Viola's description of her "sister's" languishing for love alludes to Chaucer's patient Grisilde, the medieval symbol for ideal femininity; Grisilde's exemplary qualities, extolled in "The Clerk's Tale," include "vertuous beautie",
28
"virginitie" and "sad corage". Her tale is one of noble (meaning silent) submission to a husband's wilfully inflicted adversities, the moral of which is found in the rewards which that submission eventually reaps her.

Like Grisilde, Viola endures silently whatever fortune brings. Her love for Orsino is defined by utter devotion and utter passivity. She surrenders any control she might have over her situation; and leaves it to the processes of time to alleviate the confusion her disguise has caused:

O time, thou must untangle this, not I,
It is too hard a knot for me t'untie (II.ii.39-40).

Viola's submission to fate while in disguise leads her to

the brink of disaster twice: when Aguecheek challenges her to a duel, and when Orsino and Olivia confront her with her apparent duplicity. In the first instance, the danger posed is more comic than potentially calamitous:

Viola [Aside] Pray God defend me! A little thing
would make me tell them how much I lack of a
man. (III.iv.307-309)

But, in the second instance, her passive resignation becomes more disturbing. In the final scene, Viola appears to both Olivia and Orsino as a false friend and a cowardly liar. Yet she refuses to say or do anything to vindicate herself and seems willing to carry her secret to her death. When Orsino orders "Cesario" to follow him out with the words, "Come, boy, with me; my thoughts are ripe in mischief" (V.i.127), Viola meekly obeys:

Olivia Where goes Cesario?

Viola After him I love
More than I love these eyes, more than my life...
If I do feign, you witnesses above
Punish my life, for tainting of my love.
(V.i.128-136)

When the revelation of Viola's true identity comes, it comes through the combined agencies of time and chance, a combination which, luckily for her, happen to be beneficent.

Shakespeare makes Viola's willingness to die a measure of her love for Orsino. The imagery of sacrificial lamb that surrounds Viola in the last act, places her firmly in the tradition of the female transvestite saints who passively accept the role of ritual sacrifice for a wrong committed,

not by them, but against them. Her character also incorporates the pattern of uxorial service typical of the romance tradition of female hero. Viola's obedient and loyal service to Orsino as his page, is a proof of her womanly obedience and loyalty.

The romance/saints tradition of female virtue with its veneration of passive heroism is woven into several of Shakespeare's earlier heroines. It manifests itself in Hero, who bears a false accusation of unchastity in noble silence, and who dies symbolically to redeem the society of Messina. It is present in the early cross-dressed heroines, Julia and Portia, as well as Rosalind; all three adopt male attire in the name of love, though each differs in the degree of her passivity. Viola is a culmination of the earlier heroines and at the same time, an anticipation of later heroines such as Imogen and Hermione, who are translated into pure sacrificial symbols. The passive suffering and absolute fidelity of these heroines serve a redeeming function and unify the plays as a whole. In all these instances, female virtue is rewarded eventually in the form of a marriage or a reconciliation. The crystallization of the comic society through marriage symbolizes the triumph of love and the heterosexual imperative so concretely described by

Touchstone:

As the ox hath his bow sir, the horse his curb, and the falcon her bells, so man hath his desires, and as

pigeons bill, so wedlock would be nibbling.

(III.iii.71-73)

In the final moments of As You Like It and Twelfth Night, love appears to have conquered all. The marriages which take place represent a triumph of order over chaos, reason over madness, love over lust. The drive toward a festive conclusion in Shakespearean comedy represents what Northrop Frye describes as "the creation of a new reality out of something impossible but desirable." ²⁹ The comic conclusions of As You Like It and Twelfth Night tame the erotic delirium that has run amuck in Arden and Illyria, but only superficially. The hurried and rather perfunctory couplings carried out at the last minute give the "happy ending" of each play an ironic and somewhat jaded edge.

In the forest of Arden and in Illyria, love is, at the same time, both platonically sublimated and earthly. The erotic fantasy that Shakespeare projects through disguise, feeds on the sexual ambiguity of a girlish youth: a girl disguised as a boy who is really a boy disguised as a girl. Poles of appearance and reality merge as desire shifts its object from male to female and back to male again. The ambivalent nature of desire, which we have seen Donne embody through his disguised mistress and Shakespeare darkly articulate through the love triangle of the Sonnets, is asserted in the two comedies by way of the disguised heroines who are really really disguised boys. The playgoer is given a choice

similar to that offered by Aretino's disguised prostitutes who invited their customers to choose the object of their desire as they liked it. The alternate title of Twelfth Night is What You Will. What will you have: a boy or a girl?³⁰

In her introduction to the Riverside edition of Twelfth Night, Anne Barton points out that for Elizabethans, the word "will" possessed a double meaning: it had the modern sense of "wish" or "inclination;" and it was also used as a noun to describe "irrational desire, passion (often physical) uncontrolled by judgement."³¹ "The "will" that runs riot in Arden and Illyria is unleashed by the sexually disguised heroines, Rosalind and Viola. Through sexual disguise, eroticism looks at itself and what finally emerges from that scrutiny is some rather uncomfortable truths." Shakespeare merges the apparently irreconcilable polarities of masculinity and femininity, truth and deception, appearance and reality to point out the arbitrary and largely illusory nature of love and, ultimately, reality. In As You Like It and Twelfth Night the erotic ambiguity of the cross-dressed heroines holds up a magnifying mirror to the disturbing ambiguity of passion and of life itself. Both plays reflect an obscure object of desire: a boy disguised as a girl disguised as a boy. Co-existing in one body, the irreconcilable worlds of the flesh and the spirit are suddenly one. There is no separation.

CHAPTER THREE

ARDEN AND ILLYRIA: THE ESCAPE TO THE GREEN WORLD

Go not yet away, bright soul of the sad year.¹

Thomas Nashe, Summer's Last Will
and Testament

During the Renaissance, sexual disguise formed an intrinsic part of the Saturnalian holiday customs. During the Saturnalia celebration, the longing to return to the liberated world of the natural instincts was ritualized through the temporary suspension of laws and rules. Taking pleasure in the unruly part of human nature, boys dressed up as girls; girls dressed up as boys. For one day, nature was allowed to have its way—but only for one day. In Shakespeare's Festive Comedy, C.L. Barber explains the essential qualification written into the Saturnalia rituals:

Holiday, for the Elizabethan sensibility, implied a contrast with 'everyday,' when 'brightness falls from the air.' Occasions like May day and the Winter Revels, with their cult of natural vitality, were maintained within a civilization whose daily view of life focused on the mortality implicit in vitality... But the release of that one day was understood to be a temporary license, a 'misrule' which implied rule, so that the acceptance of nature was qualified.²

The affirmation of nature celebrated through the Saturnalia

was limited, ultimately, by the understanding that, as Barber puts it, "the natural in man is only one part of him, the part that will fade."³ In its original form, the Saturnalia was a rite recalling the golden age of Saturn; in Renaissance celebrations of Saturnalia, the escape into disguise was an attempt to return, albeit momentarily, to the "golden" time before the painful separation of man and nature.

In Shakespeare's comedies, the escape from the normal world into what Northrop Frye has labelled a "green world," invokes a golden age and lost innocence. "The green world," says Frye, "charges the comedies with a symbolism in which the comic resolution contains a suggestion of the old ritual pattern of the victory of summer over winter."⁴ The rustic paradise of Arcadia is one manifestation of this "green" or "golden world." The characters in As You Like It flee the corrupt court of Duke Frederick in search of the mythical Arcadia:

They say he is already in the Forest of Ardén, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world. (I.i.114-119)

However, in Shakespeare, the transformation and regeneration implicit in the flight to a green or golden world becomes an empty and purely ironic symbol of human delusion.

Shakespeare's Arcadia is not the Edenic garden of pastoral

romance, but a brutishly penitential natural world where food is scarce and men must hunt to live and where the banished Duke and his followers feel "the season's difference, as the icy fang/And churlish chiding of the winter's wind" (II.i.6-7). Here the wind bites and the underbrush entangles; venomous snakes wreath themselves around the unwary, and lionesses crouch in the bush ready to pounce.

In the mythical Arcadia, everyone is equal; the power of money and the advantage of superior birth are unknown. In the forest of Arden, says Jan Kott, "Arcadia has been turned into an estate, into landed property [and it is]... ruled by the capitalist laws of hire." Shepherds here do not tend their own flocks; rather, they tend the flocks of the land-owners:

Corin But I am shepherd to another man,
And do not shear the fleeces that I graze.
My master is of churlish disposition.

(II.iv.76-78)

The rustics who inhabit Arden are churlish like Corin's master or cloddish like William; and its shepherdesses possess neither the poetry nor the beauty of their counterparts from that other lost Arcadia. They are either ill-favoured and cruel like Phebe, or ill-favoured and stupid like Audrey. Shakespeare's Arcadia mocks the natural ideal of Arcadia, with an irony trembling on the edge of disgust.

While As You Like It invokes the golden age, ironically, through the myth of Arcadia, Twelfth Night invokes it

through the carnival society of Illyria. The title of Twelfth Night refers to the Feast of the Epiphany, the twelfth and culminating day of the Christmas season, which the Elizabethans celebrated with a "Feast of Fools." Presided over by a "Lord of Misrule," it was characterized by role inversions and what C.L. Barber describes as, "ritual abuse of hostile spirits." ⁷ Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" festivities include "cakes and ale" and the cruel gulling of Malvolio. Sir Toby Belch, who turns day into night and night into day, presides over the ale-house revelry of Olivia's household. With typical topsy-turvy logic, Sir Toby rationalizes staying up late into the night on the grounds that one then gets to bed early (in the morning):

Andrew Nay, by my troth, I know not: but I know, to be up late, is to be up late.

Toby A false conclusion: I hate it as an unfilled can. To be up after midnight, and to go to bed then, is early: so that to go to bed after midnight, is to go to bed betimes. (II.iii.4-9)

The carnival imperatives rule Illyria, and Malvolio's refusal to obey those imperatives makes him an unwilling prey of the holiday spirit. In the dark-house scene, Feste, disguised as "Sir Topas," turns reality upside down on the "madly used" Malvolio:

Mal. Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged. Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad. They have laid me here in hideous darkness.

Clown Fie, thou dishonest Satan ... Say'st thou that house is dark?

Mal. As hell, Sir Topas.

Clown Why, it hath bay-windows transparent as

barricadoes, and the clerestories toward the south-north are as lustrous as ebony: and yet complainest thou of obstruction? (IV.ii.32-40)

But if the chaotic world-upside-down of Sir Toby and his fellow revellers approximates the inverted logic of a dream with its inversions of time, location and identity, it also approximates the awakening from that dream. By the end of Act IV, even Sir Toby begins to wish they "were well rid of this knavery" (IV.ii.69-70). In the final act of Twelfth Night, the world of revelry fights a losing battle against the sober light of day. Sir Toby and Aguecheek enter with broken and bleeding heads. The party is clearly over and Aguecheek complains that he wishes he were elsewhere, "I had rather than forty pound I were at home" (V.i.175). As for the chief reveller himself, when Sir Toby learns that the needed surgeon is asleep in a drunken stupor, he snarls, "I hate a drunken rogue" (V.i.199). The next minute, when Aguecheek offers his assistance, Sir Toby turns on him viciously: "Will you help? An ass-head, and a coxcomb, and a knave, a thin-faced knave, a gull?" (V.i.204-5). And so "the whirligig of time" that has brought its revenges down upon Malvolio, brings them down on the revellers as well. By the end of the play, they seem not so much comic revellers as aging, seedy drunks. Broken and bitter, their revels now ended, Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are led off the stage. At the end of the comedy, the only figure left on the stage is Feste the clown,

his former antics now replaced by the plaintive song he sings about the wind and the rain; the same song will be sung again, the next time by Lear's fool, in the midst of a maddening storm.

In his essay, "The Meanings of Comedy," Wylie Sypher defines comedy in terms of the Saturnalia:

...the authentic comic action is ...a Saturnalia, an orgy, an assertion of the unruliness of the flesh and its vitality. Comedy is essentially a Carrying Away of Death, a triumph over mortality by some absurd faith in rebirth, restoration, and salvation.⁸

In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, the assertion of the "unruliness of the flesh" celebrated in Saturnalia is mirrored in the sexual inversions and erotic madness that take place in the forest of Arden and in Illyria; but finally, the celebration of the natural, instinctual world is a bitter one. The banished members of Duke Frederick's court escape to Arcadia, only to find that Arcadia doesn't exist, while Illyria's inhabitants find themselves trapped in a carnival world gone sour, from which there is no escape. Of Twelfth Night, W.H. Auden has said:

I get the impression that Shakespeare wrote the play at a time when he was in no mood for comedy, but in a mood of puritanical aversion to all those pleasing illusions which men cherish and by which they lead their lives.⁹

Perhaps the most fundamental of those "pleasing illusions" by which we conduct our lives is the belief that it is possible to return to a "green" or "golden" prelapsarian world, or to

a Saturnalian world of freedom from restraint. This is the world that Shakespeare creates for us in both Twelfth Night and As You Like It; and it is the illusory nature of this world that he is forced, ultimately, to un-mask.

Shakespeare, according to Jan Kott, "has no illusions; not even the illusion that one can live without illusions." ¹⁰ They are necessary because they defuse the anxiety implicit in the knowledge of our own decay. The escape into disguise, and into the myth of the golden world is, finally, an attempt to escape time. Spread through both comedies is the consciousness that "from hour to hour, we ripe, and ripe, / And then from hour to hour, we rot, and rot" (AYLI., II.vii.26-27). In As You Like It, reminders of transience and decay slip into songs that tell how human life is "but a flower" (V.iii.26); and the love debates are permeated with the cruel understanding that "as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love mortal in folly" (II.iv.52-53). In Twelfth Night, devouring time is evoked in the clock which upbraids Olivia with the waste of time, in the priest who measures time by the distance it carries him to his grave, and in Feste's dark prediction that "pleasure will be paid" (II.iv.69). At the end of both comedies, the couples freeze in the conventional graceful tableau of the "happy ending." Onto that "pleasing illusion" Shakespeare casts the shadow of Jaques, who declares himself "other than for dancing

measures;" and the shadow of Malvolio who exits angrily, vowing that he will be "reveng'd on the whole pack." The romantic lovers of As You Like It and Twelfth Night escape from the real world of wind and rain, but, as Feste reminds us, they never leave it far behind:

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. (V.i.388-91)

The universe of Illyria and Arden is a universe created out of imagination and desire. But its illusions are no different than those that penetrate the real world. They are the projections of human wishes that prevent us from seeing how inextricably love and lust, vitality and mortality are woven together. Illusions are seductive; they are also essential because, stripped of illusion, reality becomes only what our experience has taught us, that "youth's a stuff will not endure." Reflected in the absolute and arbitrary nature of love, which Shakespeare examines in his two "festive comedies," is Nature itself--the energy that creates and destroys indifferently. To live bereft of illusion means facing, like Lear in the maelstrom, our essential nothingness, with its attendant awareness that the ends which we propose for ourselves are ends that must be achieved, if they are achieved at all, in Nature's despite. The obscure objects of human desire--love, happiness, continuity-- are objects that reflect not Nature's support of our

expectations, but our fear of Nature's essential antagonism toward our continued sense of well-being. We try to deflect that fear, by cloaking it in the disguises that lend support to the lie, which we have persuaded ourselves is truth; of a world shaped to our desire for reason, order and beauty.

In Shakespeare, the truth that disguise ultimately unmasks offers no such consolation because it implicates human nature with the larger, indifferent processes of Nature. The truth is that what moves the world moves us since the paradoxes of Nature are not just outside us, but within us as well. Our instincts are as brutal and anarchic as everything else in the natural world. And, contained within that part of our "nature," the part that seeks only to live and to multiply its own forms, lies the root of the heterosexual imperative.

Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action.

"Sonnet 129"

Trapped within the contradictions of our own nature-- driven by the rebellious compulsion of our instincts and the equally compelling desire to contain those instincts and so justify an existence that is somehow unique--we are compromised and betrayed at the very source of what we call self. The truth about our blind, biological drives, against which Shakespeare rails angrily in "Sonnet 129," is re-

articulated, comically, in As You Like It and Twelfth Night. Throughout both plays, the lofty ideals of love are punctured by frequent reminders of the breeding imperative that lurks behind those ideals; Touchstone undercuts the illusions of love most succinctly when he parodies Orlando's courtly love poems in praise of Rosalind. In his love rhymes, Touchstone maintains the galloping metre of Orlando's verses, but he strips away their sentimental extravagance:

Touch. If a hart do lack a hind,
 Let him seek out Rosalind.
 If the cat will after kind,
 So be sure will Rosalind...
 He that sweetest rose will find
 Must find love's prick, and Rosalind.

(III.ii.99-110)

In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, the comic form, through which Shakespeare expresses the contradiction between spiritual and fleshly desires, helps to alleviate the pain that the knowledge of that contradiction carries with it. The mood of pain and betrayal present in the Sonnet cycle is not credited too seriously in the two plays; and, whereas the Sonnets end on a note of resignation and cynicism, the comedies end, at least superficially, on a note of optimism. Nevertheless, a remnant of the sourness that permeates the Sonnets remains in the two comedies, in the ironic tone that is constantly in danger of spilling over into disgust.

The reality of the world is actually expressed in the

escape from it, into disguise. Projected through the disguised Rosalind and Viola is the infinite regress that identity ultimately undergoes as it oscillates between the competing demands of flesh and spirit: the real and the apparent. Betrayed equally by both, we stand, as it were, between two mirrors, reflecting our image of self infinitely; knowing that if we step outside our reflection, we will disappear altogether. The journey into Arden forest and Illyria is a journey into the real world, wholly supported by its illusions. Equally cruel and fascinating in its contradictions, it is a world that cannot be accepted but must be lived, for which there is no justification except that it is the only one that exists.

Viola What country, friends, is this?
Captain This is Illyria, lady. (I.ii.1-2)

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 Unless otherwise noted, all references to the works of Shakespeare are taken from The Riverside Shakespeare, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

2 Jorge Luis Borges, "Avatars of the Tortoise," in Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings, ed. Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions, 1964), p. 207.

3 Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), p. 75.

CHAPTER ONE

1 E.K. Chambers, The English Folk-Play (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), p.92.

2 Chambers, English Folk-Play, p.93.

3 Wilhelm Creizenach, The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), p.396.

4 Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, The Roaring Girl, ed. John S. Farmer (1611; facsimile rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1970), sig. H2.

5 W.C. Hazlitt, ed., Poetical and Dramatic Works of Thomas Randolph, Vol. 2 (1875 rpt. London: Benjamin Blom, 1968), p. 540.

6 Lisa Jardine, "Female Roles and Elizabethan Eroticism," Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1983), p. 12.

- 7 Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters, p. 12.
- 8 Jardine, pp. 13-14.
- 9 Leslie Fiedler, The Stranger in Shakespeare (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), p. 37.
- 10 Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters, p. 14.
- 11 Quoted in J.W. Binns, "Women or Transvestites on the Elizabethan Stage? An Oxford Controversy," Sixteenth Century Journal, 2 (October 1974), p. 103.
- 12 Binns, p. 101-102.
- 13 Quoted in Robertson Davies, Shakespeare's Boy Actors, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 10.
- 14 Quoted in Lisa Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters, p. 17.
- 15 Alan Bray, Homosexuality in Renaissance England (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982), p. 25.
- 16 Leslie Fiedler, The Stranger in Shakespeare, p. 25.
- 17 Edmund Spenser, quoted by Kenneth Clark in "The Young Michaelangelo," The Pelican Book of the Renaissance, ed. J.H. Plumb (Great Britain: Penguin, 1982), p. 104.
- 18 Plato, The Symposium, trans. Walter Hamilton (Great Britain: Penguin, 1979), p. 62.
- 19 Quoted in Marie Delcourt, Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity, trans. Jennifer Nicholson (London: Studio Books, 1961), p. 74.
- 20 Plato, Symposium, p. 62-63.*
- 21 Jan Kott, "Shakespeare's Bitter Arcadia," Shakespeare Our Contemporary (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), p. 248.
- 22 Arthur Golding, The XV Bookes of P. Ovidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphoses, translated out of Latin into English meeter (1567), in Shakespeare's Ovid, ed. W.H.D. Rouse (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961), IV. 403-406. All future references to the Metamorphoses will be taken from this edition; book and line numbers will appear in the text.

- 23 Marie Delcourt, Hermaphrodite, p. 58.
- 24 Quoted in Delcourt, p. 59.
- 25 Quoted in Delcourt, p. 65.
- 26 Delcourt, p. 65.
- 27 Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, pp. 251-252.
- 28 Kott, pp. 252-253.
- 29 Quoted in Alan Bray, Homosexuality in Renaissance England, p. 20.
- 30 Christopher Marlowe, "Edward II," in Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays, ed. J.B. Steane (Great Britain: Penguin, 1977), I.i.55-68.
- 31 John Anson, "The Female Transvestite Saint in Early Monasticism: The Origin and Development of a Motif," Viator 5 (1974), p. 11. My discussion of female transvestite legends is indebted throughout to Anson's excellent analysis of several representative saints within that tradition, including Margaret, Marina, Theodora, Eugenia, Anastasia, Euphrosyne, and many others.
- 32 Anson, p. 17.
- 33 Anson, pp. 17, 33.
- 34 William Witherle Lawrence, Shakespeare's Problem Comedies (Great Britain: Penguin, 1969), p. 165.
- 35 Barnabe Riche, "Of Apolonius and Simala," in The Arden Shakespeare: Twelfth Night, ed. J.M. Lothian and T.W. Craik (London: Methuen, 1978), p. 177.
- 36 For a more complete discussion of the female hero in this context see Lisa Jardine, "The Saving Stereotypes of Female Heroism," in Still Harping on Daughters, pp. 178-195.
- 37 Michael Drayton, "The Moone-Calfe," in The Works of Michael Drayton, ed. J.W. Hebel, Vol. 3 (1932 rpt; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961), pp. 173-174, quoted in Alan Bray, Homosexuality in Renaissance England, pp. 33-34.
- 38 Thomas Middleton, "The Black Book," in The Works of Thomas Middleton, ed. A.H. Bullen, Vol. 8 (London: John C. Nimmo, 1886), p. 21, quoted in Alan Bray, p. 49.

39 Rochester, John Wilmot, The Complete Poems of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester, ed. D.M. Vieth (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 51, quoted in Bray, p. 50.

40 Robert Greene, "Penelope's Web," in The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, MA, ed. A.B. Grosart Vol. 5 (1587 rpt; New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), p. 139.

41 Robert Greene, p. 214.

42 Lisa Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters, p.25.

43 Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 264.

44 Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 264.

45 John Donne, The Complete Poems, ed. A.J. Smith (Great Britain: Penguin, 1981), p. 119.

46 Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), p. 76.

47 John Lyly, "Gallathea," in Regents Renaissance Drama Series: Gallathea and Midas, ed. Anne Begor Lancashire (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), I.i.59-92.

48 In her male attire, Gallathea meets Phillida, another feigned page, and, each believing the other to be a boy, they fall in love. The dilemma is only resolved when Venus promises to change one of them into a boy since the "girls" refuse to give up their love even after their disguises are removed.

49 C.R.S. Lenz, G. Greene and C.T. Neely, eds., The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1980), p. 13. In their discussion of "the woman's part" in Shakespeare, the editors focus on the various manifestations of female identity within the plays; the heroines' "femaleness" is taken for granted.

CHAPTER TWO

1 For the philosophical framework of Shakespeare's argument, see Diotima's dialogue with Socrates on the subject of procreation as the function of love in Plato, The Symposium, ed. Walter Hamilton (Great Britain: Penguin, 1979), p. 87-90.

2 See Leslie Fiedler's discussion of "amor puris" and "amor mixtus," which connects the themes of Shakespeare's Sonnets with those of the courtly love tradition, in The Stranger in Shakespeare (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), pp. 35-37.

3 Fiedler, The Stranger in Shakespeare, p. 19.

4 Jan Kott, "Shakespeare's Bitter Arcadia," Shakespeare Our Contemporary (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), p. 259. I am indebted to Kott's analysis of the erotic nature of sexual disguise in As You Like It and Twelfth Night and follow his arguments throughout this chapter.

5 Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 262.

6 Twelfth Night, V.i.259, ed. note. According to the editors, "the bias is (1) the lead weight inserted into a bowl to make it take an indirect course, (2) the consequent tendency of the bowl to describe a curve, and (3) the curve so described."

7 Antonio's isolation at the end of the play parallels the isolation of the other Antonio, who stands outside the golden gates of Belmont at the end of The Merchant of Venice. Both Antonios are clearly homosexual and their exclusion from the comic resolution in both plays is an expression of the consequences of overt homo-erotic love in a heterosexual society.

8 I owe the connection between Viola's speech and Rainolds' anti-stage attacks to Nancy K. Hayles's essay, "Sexual Disguise in 'As You Like It' and 'Twelfth Night,'" in Shakespeare Survey 32 (1979), pp. 70-71.

9 W.H. Auden, "Notes on the Comic," in The Dyer's Hand (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 375.

10 W.H. Auden, The Dyer's Hand, p. 375.

11 D.J. Palmer, "'Twelfth Night' and the Myth of Echo and Narcissus," Shakespeare Survey 32 (1979) p. 73. I follow Palmer's account of the sources for Shakespeare's use of the Narcissus myth in my discussion.

12 Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), p. 81.

13 Frye, A Natural Perspective, p. 82.

14 Frye, p. 82.

15 See Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, pp. 266-268.

16 Taken from "The Hymn to Aphrodite," in The Homeric Hymns, trans. Apostolos N. Athanassakis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 53.

17 Kott, p. 268.

18 Christopher Marlowe, "Dido, Queen of Carthage," in Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays, ed. J.B. Steane (Great Britain: Penguin, 1977), I.i.1-51.

19 Described in John Addington Symonds, The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti, Vol. 2 (London: John C. Nimmo, 1899), p. 142, note.

20 For a discussion of the therapeutic function of impersonation, see Arthur Koestler, The Act of Creation (London: Picador, 1975), pp. 187-188.

21 Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 273.

22 Kott, p. 271.

23 Quoted by Jean-Paul Sartre in his introduction to "The Maids" and "Deathwatch:" Two Plays by Jean Genet (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 8.

24 Sartre, The Maids, p. 8.

25 Sartre, p. 9.

26 Sartre, p. 7.

27 C.L. Barber, Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study In Dramatic Form and its Relation to Social Custom (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 233.

28 Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Canterbury Tales," in Chaucer's Major Poetry, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), IV. 211-220.

29 Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective, p. 75.

30 Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 263.

31 Anne Barton, introduction to "Twelfth Night," in The Riverside Shakespeare (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), p. 403.

CONCLUSION

1 Quoted in C.L. Barber, Shakespeare's Festive Comedy, p. 60.

2 C.L. Barber, p. 10.

3 C.L. Barber, p. 10.

4 Northrop Frye, "The Argument of Comedy," in Theories of Comedy, ed. Paul Lauter (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1964), p. 457.

5 Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 278.

6 Kott, p. 279.

7 C.L. Barber, Shakespeare's Festive Comedy, p. 7.

8 Wylie Sypher, "The Meanings of Comedy," in Comedy, ed. Wylie Sypher (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1956), p. 220.

9 W.H. Auden, "Music in Shakespeare," The Dyer's Hand (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 520.

10 Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, p. 281.

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