

SHAKESPEARE'S CONCEPT OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE
AS PRESENTED IN TEN SELECTED PLAYS

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of English
Kansas State Teachers College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

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August 1970

Thesis
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PREFACE

Initially, twenty-one plays were investigated in this present study in order to detect a trend in Shakespeare's development of character and situation in terms of men-women relationships before and after marriage. From these twenty-one plays, ten were eventually selected as being representative of Shakespeare's early and late periods as a dramatist. Chronologically, these plays are analyzed to ascertain any evolving attitude concerning marriage relationships as the playwright's career progresses. Although scholars do not agree on the dates of composition for these various plays, Furness, Malone, Bullough, Craig, and Hazlitt were most helpful in determining the order of this discussion.

To understand better Shakespeare's representation of love and marriage, one investigates, first, the specific Elizabethan concepts concerning this theme that undoubtedly had an influence upon Shakespeare's writing. Moreover, in the first chapter, one considers the sources that Shakespeare used for these plays, especially those supporting the love and marriage situations. In some cases, these sources are Shakespeare's main ones; in others, they are minor ones chosen for the purpose of incorporating subplots of love and marriage into the original or main source.

In Chapter II, there is a discussion of four of Shakespeare's early plays, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet, The Taming of

the Shrew, and The Merchant of Venice, four plays that reveal some of the fundamental ideas, attitudes, and relationships that Shakespeare is later to develop. In Chapter III, one analyzes six plays taken from the dramatist's mature period. These six, Measure for Measure, Othello, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest, bring more clearly into focus Shakespeare's evolving skills in character portrayal and situation development and, therefore, shed light on the growing complexity of his depiction of the relationships of men and women in these plays.

In the final chapter, one draws parallels between these various relationships in love, courtship, and marriage. Here, also, the different elements of love, courtship, and marriage are similarly viewed in terms of Elizabethan beliefs. From the deductions made, a marriage "code" that Shakespeare follows is, then, discussed.

I am much indebted to Dr. Charles E. Walton, since this thesis is an outgrowth of a topic that he suggested to me. In addition, he should receive further credit for my undertaking of this thesis, since it was he who first guided me into the degree in English. At the same time, I extend my warm, sincere thanks to Dr. June Morgan who guided me in the initial development of this project. In addition to professors, I gratefully thank my loving wife for her inspiration in the writing of this paper.

Concordia, Kansas
August, 1970

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CHAPTER I

ELIZABETHAN CONCEPTS OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE AND SHAKESPEARE'S SOURCES

One of the frequent concepts that Shakespeare is concerned with in his plays is that of love and marriage. To appreciate what he represents on the stage, one must acquaint himself with Elizabethan points of view about love and marriage. To begin with, the Elizabethan marriage was considered to be an holy institution, its vows binding for life.¹ At the same time, public sanction by the Church was required for all marriages so that the Church could exercise control over matrimony.² Even in those unions of questionable background, official recognition was required by an ecclesiastical court to establish the validity of the union and the legitimacy of the offspring.³ Not only was a Church blessing of the marriage necessary, but it was also sought after to make the contract lawfully binding.⁴ Furthermore, the strict policies of the Puritans were so widespread and influential that their effects were felt

¹Carroll Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, pp. 80, 96; Elmer Edgar Stoll, Shakespeare's Young Lovers, p. 99.

²Davis P. Harding, "Elizabethan Betrothals and Measure for Measure," JEGP, XLIX (1950), 142.

³Ibid., p. 143.

⁴Lu Emily Pearson, Elizabethans at Home, p. 281.

in the entire realm of social life.⁵ Perhaps, the seeking of theological approval was an unconscious undertaking because of this social influence.⁶

Moreover, marriage was looked upon as little more than an institution for procreation. In fact, Camden considers this function as the Elizabethan's primary reason for marriage.⁷ Consequently, an Elizabethan wife believed that bearing children was not only a duty to her husband but also a holy obligation.⁸ Outside of the act of procreation, the most important other aspect of Elizabethan marriages was the attitude of a wife's submissiveness to the husband.⁹ Perhaps, the reason for this view stemmed from Anglo-Saxon times when the law recognized male dominance and the Church emphasized the point of view of woman's inferiority.¹⁰ However, in practice, a rigid adherence to this philosophy was not always followed, because the husband-wife personalities did

⁵Sir E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, I, 237. Although the Puritan influence undoubtedly affected the Elizabethan codes of behavior, this deep and involved influence is not of primary concern, here.

⁶Pearson, op. cit., p. 281.

⁷Camden, op. cit., p. 80.

⁸Pearson, op. cit., p. 395.

⁹Quoted in Doris Mary Stenton, The English Woman in History, pp. 143-144.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 143.

not always follow accepted standards.¹¹ In addition, among the lower classes, the woman did, from time to time, assert her will because of her more integrated involvement in the affairs of the family.¹² Thus, the Elizabethans stressed in marriage the twofold aspect of wife's begetting children and subordinating herself to the husband, a combination of attitudes which brought harmony to the union.

Being submissive was not a new concept to the Elizabethan young woman, since it was generally the parents' responsibility to select her mate, with the girl remaining silent during the handling of the arrangements.¹³ Characteristically, the upper-class citizens favored these marriages of convenience and often at an early age arranged them for their children,¹⁴ to assure a sound foundation for a home and family, thus guaranteeing a girl's security, a thought that was foremost in the minds of her parents.¹⁵ Therefore, the marriage of convenience was usually undertaken between families of comparable wealth and distinction.¹⁶ Moreover, even when the girl succeeded in imposing her will

¹¹Maurice Ashley, "Love and Marriage in 17th-Century England," History Today, VIII (1958), 668.

¹²Ibid., p. 667.

¹³Camden, op. cit., p. 85.

¹⁴Ashley, op. cit., p. 670.

¹⁵Pearson, op. cit., p. 279.

¹⁶Camden, op. cit., p. 63.

upon her parents and decided independently for herself whom she would marry, she still selected someone of similar rank and income.¹⁷ Consequently, love was a term infrequently mentioned with reference to marriage; in fact, it was not always the basis for such marriages, but it was expected to follow.¹⁸ However, love was not to dominate the more practical duties and obligations of a marriage.¹⁹

A wife's primary obligation was to run her household.²⁰ If she were of the lower classes, she was expected to be the quiet homemaker, the one to plan the meals, do the washing, cleaning, and mending.²¹ In the wealthier families, she was to direct and oversee women servants in all household matters.²² To fulfill these duties, the Elizabethan wife needed to be able to take responsibility and to be practical in the household affairs.²³ In addition to these practical attributes, she must be virtuous, obedient, loyal and devoted, must not interfere with

¹⁷Ashley, op. cit., p. 671.

¹⁸Camden, op. cit., p. 65.

¹⁹Pearson, op. cit., p. 426.

²⁰Camden, op. cit., p. 120.

²¹Ibid., pp. 137, 142.

²²Pearson, op. cit., p. 368.

²³Barlett Burleigh James, Woman in All Ages and in All Countries: Women of England, p. 225.

her husband's affairs, and should be seen but not heard.²⁴ Moreover, the ideal qualities that the husband hoped that a wife would have were those of wealth, a good temper, humility, courtesy, education, and beauty.²⁵ Of these qualities, chastity was the most highly prized, and, at an early age, Elizabethan girls were counselled in the importance of maintaining their virginity above all else.²⁶ To emphasize this teaching, the young lady was told of the blessing that her marriage would have if she remained chaste.²⁷ Hence, one concludes that the wife's role in marriage concerned her household responsibilities and the maintenance of the Elizabethan standards of wifely virtues. Moreover, her entire existence was centered around the wishes of her husband.²⁸

On the other hand, the husband's role in marriage stressed his independence. Primarily, his duty was to be the decision-maker in

²⁴Camden, op. cit., pp. 68, 70, 121; Carroll Camden, "Iago on Women," JEGP, XLVIII (1949), 7, 9, 12; Jacques DuBosc, The Compleat Woman, pp. 53-55; S. A. Jain, Shakespeare's Conception of Ideal Womanhood, p. 8; Pearson, op. cit., pp. 367, 386, 394, 420; Margaret Loftus Ranald, "The Indiscretions of Desdemona," SQ, XIV (1963), 131; Stenton, op. cit., pp. 142, 143, 146.

²⁵Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, pp. 63, 66-67; Camden, "Iago on Women," pp. 7, 8, 9; Dubosc, op. cit., pp. 55, 58-59; Jain, op. cit., p. 20; James, op. cit., p. 229; Pearson, op. cit., pp. 386, 400; Stenton, op. cit., p. 136.

²⁶Camden, "Iago on Women," p. 1.

²⁷Pearson, op. cit., p. 309.

²⁸Jain, op. cit., p. 22.

home life, business affairs, and politics.²⁹ At the same time, he was to maintain the respect of his children and servants, but, perhaps, his first task was to encourage his wife to conform to his ways.³⁰ Therefore, he was continually aware of his wife's imperfections and probably satisfied only when he had eliminated them.³¹ Thus, it is apparent that, because of his dominant role, he could make his wife's life pleasant or trying; nevertheless, for the sake of harmony in the home, he usually refrained from reprimanding her publicly and could sincerely praise her virtues.³² Furthermore, if harmony sought in marriage were to result, the couple would keep no secrets from one another.³³ One assumes, therefore, that the satisfying marriage was attained through cooperation.³⁴

In addition to the fundamental duties and responsibilities of husband and wife, there were certain moral tenets that also affected their marriage. For example, according to Elizabethan ethics, a husband was expected to use discretion in bringing male acquaintances into the home, because, if some ill should result, he would be to blame for

²⁹Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 112.

³⁰Pearson, op. cit., pp. 340, 368.

³¹Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 116.

³²Pearson, op. cit., pp. 340, 396.

³³Ibid., p. 307.

³⁴Charles Brooks, "Shakespeare's Romantic Shrews," SQ, XI (1960), 354.

having placed the temptation before his wife.³⁵ At the same time, a wife's moral obligation was to guard her reputation. Her innocence was not enough; she needed to be concerned with her appearance and her associations to prevent slanderous gossip.³⁶ Thus, to preserve her good name, she was to attend only holy meetings and charity events and should use discretion in visiting with neighbors.³⁷ However, rigid adherence to such restricted social activities was evidently not practiced, since the theatre audience included noble ladies, merchants' wives, and housemaids.³⁸ Moreover, the wife was not without her moral obligations to her husband; she was to dissuade him from becoming involved in evil activities and counsel him in spiritual matters.³⁹ Consequently, one concludes that, from these moral safe-guards, fidelity was sought in the Elizabethan marriage; however, should adultery occur, it was considered by some to be sufficient grounds for divorce.⁴⁰

³⁵Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 118.

³⁶DuBosc, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

³⁷Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 125.

³⁸Gerald Fades Bentley, Shakespeare and His Theatre, pp. 103-104. Chambers, op. cit., I, 255, discusses the Puritan view of the theatres as "snares of the devil set to catch souls." One is rather surprised by the frequency with which women attended the theatre in light of this adverse and influential attitude.

³⁹Roland Mushat Frye, "Macbeth's Usurping Wife," Renaissance News, VIII (1955), 103.

⁴⁰Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 77.

In forming a marriage, there were two definite steps required; namely, the contract or spousal, and the solemnization of the contract.⁴¹ However, in leading up to these important steps, in order to gain the attention and admiration of a young lady whom he wished to court, an Elizabethan young man would use such courtly methods as high praise, the giving of gifts, and the writing of love letters and verses, maintaining in all respects an attitude both courteous and pleasant.⁴² To indicate his intentions of marrying, he would often wear his lady's favor, usually a handkerchief, and drink toasts to her in public, while she, on the other hand, might give him her picture and other trinkets along with her favor.⁴³ An intention to marry took the form of a spousal, comparable to a modern engagement, which could either be public or private, although a public announcement was considered to be the most acceptable.⁴⁴ Furthermore, there were two types of contracts: de futuro vows that promised future marriage but in reality were dissoluble; and de praesenti vows that were as binding as a solemnized marriage.⁴⁵

⁴¹Ibid., p. 84.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 72-73.

⁴³Pearson, op. cit., pp. 333-334.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 313.

⁴⁵Ernest Schanzer, "The Marriage Contracts in Measure for Measure," Shakespeare Survey, XIII (1960), 84.

However, in no case was the contracted couple to enjoy sexual relations before receiving the blessings of the Church.⁴⁶ On the other hand, if cohabitation should occur before a solemnization of the union, either of these contracts became binding. However, before any offspring were considered legitimate, Church solemnization was required.⁴⁷ To avoid the act of fornication, therefore, marriages were encouraged even at an early age.⁴⁸ Moreover, the Church indicated its disapproval of illegitimacy by excommunicating, reprimanding, fining, or giving public penance to the offenders.⁴⁹ The community, similarly, had little to do with unmarried pregnant women, often expelling them so that they and their illegitimate children would not be burdens to the community.⁵⁰

From this discussion, important ideas emerge that may be helpful in a discussion of Shakespeare's treatment of love and marriage. For example, one notes that all marriages required the sanction of the Church. Moreover, there was, as an important established practice, the marriage of convenience in which parents selected mates for their children. Next, within the marriage state, there were the two concepts

⁴⁶Harding, op. cit., p. 143.

⁴⁷Pearson, op. cit., p. 315.

⁴⁸Camden, The Elizabethan Woman, p. 80.

⁴⁹Ashley, op. cit., p. 672.

⁵⁰Loc. cit.

of the wife's submissiveness to her husband and of the husband's comparative state of independence. Finally, there was the Elizabethan manner of courtship involving handfasting, the two forms of marriage contracts, and Church solemnization before any sexual intimacy was experienced.

In the light of these concepts governing Elizabethan thoughts and actions concerning love and marriage, one questions whether Shakespeare's handling of the Elizabethan marriage state in the plays was the result of these views or of the sources chosen as a basis for his works. Therefore, a chronological study of ten selected plays comparing the man-woman relationships found in Shakespeare's sources to the situations depicted in the plays with a knowledge of Elizabethan standards of courtship and marriage may help to reveal a dominant influence upon Shakespeare's manner of composition.

Shakespeare's main source for the Proteus and Julia story in the Two Gentlemen of Verona is "The Shepherdess Felismena" from Montemayor's Diana.⁵¹ In this tale, Felismena writes to Don Felix on receipt of his love letter and, then, describes the later development of their love:

. . . amorous letters and verses were re-continued on both sides; and thus passed I away almost a whole yeere, at the

⁵¹Geoffrey Bullough (ed.), Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, I, 205-206; W. C. Hazlitt (ed.), Shakespeare's Library, I, 272.

end whereof, I felt my selfe so far in his loue, that I had no power to retire, nor stay my selfe from disclosing my thoughts vnto him, the thing which he desired more then his owne life.⁵²

This love affair continues for almost a whole year before Don Felix's father sends him away to prevent marriage. Don Felix, thus, departs in grief, even without bidding farewell to his Felismena:

He went away so pensiuie, that his great greefe would not suffer him to acquaint me with his departure; which when I knew, how sorrowfull I remained, she may imagine that hath bene at any time tormented with like passion.⁵³

No promise of marriage or any ties whatsoever is indicated. Similarly, in Shakespeare's play, Proteus is ordered by his father to go to the emperor's court to "seek preferment." When he hears this paternal command, Proteus unsuccessfully pleads to delay because of his reluctance to be separated from Julia. Unlike Don Felix, however, Proteus not only informs Julia of his departure, but also pledges to her his constancy in love and exchanges rings with her, which act in the eyes of an Elizabethan comprises a de futuro marriage contract:

Pro. Have patience, gentle Julia.

Jul. I must, where is no remedy.

Pro. When possible I can, I will return.

Jul. If you turn not, you will return the sooner.

Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake.

[Giving a ring.]

Pro. Why, then, we'll make exchange; here, take you this.

⁵²Quoted in ibid., p. 283.

⁵³Quoted in ibid., p. 284.

Jul. And seal the bargain with a holy kiss.
Pro. Here is my hand for my true constancy;
 And when that hour o'erslips me in the day
 Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,
 The next ensuing hour some foul mischance
 Torment me for my love's forgetfulness!
 (II.iii.1-12)⁵⁴

Proteus, however, breaks his vow of constancy in attempting to give Julia's ring to Silvia. Although Shakespeare basically follows The Shepherdess Felismena in his Proteus-Julia relationship, it is clear that the handfasting and the breaking of the vows are important deviations from the source, indicative of Shakespeare's incorporation into the source these Elizabethan marriage concepts. Furthermore, his treatment of other courtship ideas, such as those that Valentine reveals in his conversation with the Duke concerning the wooing of a woman, has been attributed to the influence of John Lyly.⁵⁵

For Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare's main source is Arthur Brooke's poem, The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet.⁵⁶ In Brooke's tale, Juliet sees in her prospective marriage to Romeus a possible means of reconciling the two families: "So that he mynde to make of me his lawfull wedded wyfe. / For so perchance this new aliance may procure /

⁵⁴All quotations cited from Shakespeare's plays are taken from Hardin Craig (ed.), The Complete Works of Shakespeare.

⁵⁵Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 204.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 274; Quoted in Horace Howard Furness (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet, p. 397; Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., I, 58.

Unto our houses such a peace as ever shall endure" (II. 426-428).⁵⁷

On the other hand, Shakespeare's Juliet reveals no such thought but, realizing that she should have been more modest, simply indicates the motivation for her behavior as follows:

I should have been more strange, I must confess,
 But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
 My true love's passion; therefore pardon me,
 And not impute this yielding to light love,
 Which the dark night hath so discovered.
 (II.ii.102-106)

Another difference that is obvious between the source and the play lies in the description of the consummation of love which theme Brooke treats in sensual terms:

If Cupid, God of love, be God of pleasant sport,
 I thinck O Romeus Mars himselfe envies thy happy sort.
 Ne Venus justly might (as I suppose) repent,
 If in thy stead (O Juliet) this pleasant time she spent.
 Thus passe they foorth the night in sport, in joly game:
 The hastines of Phoebus steeds in great despyte they blame.
 And now the virgins fort hath warlike Romeus got,
 In which as yet no breache was made by force of canon shot,
 And now in ease he doth possesse the hoped place.
 How glad was he, speake you that may your lovers parts embrace.
 The mariage thus made up, and both the parties pleasd
 (II. 915-925)⁵⁸

Shakespeare, on the other hand, does not directly discuss the act of consummation, although Juliet's anticipation of the consummation is elevated:

⁵⁷Bullough (ed.), *op. cit.*, I, 297.

⁵⁸Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 309-310.

Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
 For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
 Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
 Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,
 Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine
 That all the world will be in love with night
 Any pay no worship to the garish sun.
 O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
 But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,
 Not yet enjoy'd : so tedious is this day
 As is the night before some festival
 To an impatient child that hath new robes
 And may not wear them.

(III.ii.17-31)

While not omitting any essential details, Shakespeare alters the source only enough to ennoble Romeo and Juliet's relationship by changing the sensuality of Brooke's lovers to that of honest passion. Moreover, it is an elevation that is partially accomplished by his reducing the length of time accorded to the lovers' clandestine marriage.⁵⁹ Thus, it appears that Shakespeare reinterprets his source and revitalizes it in terms of contemporary standards.⁶⁰

In The Taming of the Shrew, Shakespeare may have used as his source an anonymous play entitled The Taming of a Shrew.⁶¹ In addition to the Bianca-Lucentio story suggested in The Taming of a Shrew, he

⁵⁹Georges A. Bonnard, "Romeo and Juliet: a Possible Significance?" RES, II (1951), 320.

⁶⁰Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 278.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 57. For contrasting view, Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 154.

also makes use of Gascoigne's Supposes.⁶² In The Taming of a Shrew, Kate's desire no longer to be a maid may, perhaps, be cited as one reason for Ferando's success in winning her for his wife rather than his conquest's being the result of his own cunning as is the case with Petruchio, his counterpart. Although Kate protests Ferando's proposal, in an aside she gives her reasons for her acceptance:

Why father, what do you meane to do with me,
To give me thus unto this brainsick man,
That in his mood cares not to murder me?

She turnes aside and speakes

But yet I will consent and marrie him,
For I methinkes have livde too long a maid,
And match him too, or else his manhoods good.
(II. 37-42)⁶³

Kate, then, makes no other objections to Ferando's suit; whereas, in Shakespeare's play, she protests more vehemently Petruchio's proposal. In fact, she makes her objection clear:

Call you me daughter? now, I promise you
You have show'd a tender fatherly regard,
To wish me wed to one half lunatic;
A mad-cap ruffian and a swearing Jack,
That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.
(II.i.287-291)

When Petruchio announces ". . . upon Sunday is the wedding-day," Kate replies, "I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first." By making Kate

⁶²Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 60; Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., VI, 402.

⁶³Quoted in Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 77.

less willing to be wed to Petruchio, Shakespeare strongly emphasizes the change in Kate's behavior at the conclusion of the play and, thereby, makes more meaningful and important her closing speech in which she reveals her changed behavior. Moreover, in a similar speech in the anonymous play, Kate gives few details about wifely obedience but is more concerned with woman's origin. On the other hand, Shakespeare's Kate emphasizes a wife's obedience and complete subjection to her husband, more closely following the Elizabethan concept of the wife's role in marriage.

In addition, Shakespeare alters the relationship of Polynesta and Erostrato in Gascoigne's Supposes from its immoral and sensual nature to that of uncontested purity in the episodes involving Bianca and Lucentio. The relationship of Polynesta and Erostrato is described by the nurse as one of "many pleasant nightes together" and is more sensually explained by Erostrato: "I have free libertie at al times to behold my desired, to talke with hir, to embrace hir, yea (be it spoken in secrete) to lie with hir. I reape the fruites of my desire" ⁶⁴ Shakespeare, however, conventionalizes the Polynesta-Erostrato affair, thus making his subplot a greater contrast to the Kate-Petruchio relationship and, at the same time, emphasizing the irony of Bianca's behavior at the end. Furthermore, the refining of the secondary man-woman

⁶⁴Quoted in ibid., pp. 112, 119.

relationship results in a more appealing play, perhaps also more acceptable to an Elizabethan audience.

Shakespeare apparently manipulates several sources in his development of the plot of The Merchant of Venice. According to several critics, his possible sources include the Gesta Romanorum, containing the story of the caskets,⁶⁵ and Masuccio's Il Novellino, including the Jessica-Lorenzo story.⁶⁶ The Jew, cited by Gosson in his School of Abuse,⁶⁷ the ballad, Gerutus, the Jew of Venice;⁶⁸ and Marlowe's The Jew of Malta⁶⁹ all present the character of Shylock. However, the basic story is contained in Giovanni Fiorentino's Il Pecorone.⁷⁰ In using Il Pecorone as the foundation source, Shakespeare alters the character of the lady of Belmonte, Portia's model. For example, in the source, she is first depicted as mercenary, deceitful, and sensual:

. . . when one morning, before it was fully light
Giannetto saw a sea-gulf with a fine port, and asked
the captain what the port was called. He answered,
'Sir, that place belongs to a widow lady, who has

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 447; Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 504.

⁶⁶Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 454.

⁶⁷Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., I, 314; Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 502.

⁶⁸Hazlitt, op. cit., I, 314.

⁶⁹Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 454; Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 502.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 503; Horace Howard Furness (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice, p. 331.

ruined many gentlemen.' 'How is that?' asked Giannetto. The other replied, 'Sir, she is a beautiful and capricious woman, and makes this law, that anyone who arrives must sleep with her, and if he possesses her he can take her for his wife and become lord of the port and all that country. But if he fails, he loses everything that he has.'⁷¹

However, these somewhat immoral testing conditions may have been difficult to present on stage and, at the same time, they are not characteristic of the type of heroine that Shakespeare desired to represent.⁷²

His Portia is virtuous, high-minded, and typically Elizabethan in the elevation of her husband.

In Il Pecorone, the giving of the ring is not mentioned until the end and is used merely to indicate the constancy of Giannetto's love.⁷³ On the other hand, Shakespeare makes Portia's giving of the ring to Bassanio a central part of their relationship, thus stressing the significance the Elizabethans placed upon such a commitment, as revealed by Portia in the following manner:

This house, these servants and this same myself
 Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
 Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
 Let it presage the ruin of your love
 And be my vantage to exclaim on you.
 (III.ii.172-176)

Again, in the Jessica-Lorenzo story, Shakespeare deviates from his

⁷¹Quoted in Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 465.

⁷²Quoted in Furness (ed.), The Merchant of Venice, p. 304.

⁷³Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 505.

source, Il Novellino, to portray the idealism of their love without emphasizing their deceit. In the source, the relationship of Carmosina and Giuffredi Saccano is less honorable because of the deceit of Messer Guiffredi, who ingratiates himself to Carmosina's father to facilitate their flight.⁷⁴ Moreover, their cohabitation and her resultant pregnancy increases their degradation.

For Measure for Measure, Shakespeare uses as his main source Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra.⁷⁵ For example, when Promos reveals his desire to possess Cassandra, she protests, although Promos promises, "my wife I may thee make."⁷⁶ However, when her brother, Andrugio, pleads with her to save his life by fulfilling Promos's wishes, Cassandra comforts Andrugio:

My Andrugio, take comfort in distresse,
Cassandra is wonne, thy raunsome great to paye:
 Such care she hath thy thraldome to releace,
 As she consentes her honor for to slay.
 Farewell, I must my virgins weedes forsake:
 And lyke a page to Promos lewde repayre.⁷⁷

Even though Cassandra is a virtuous woman, she is not a novice like Isabella and, therefore, can consent to Promos, whereas Isabella in

⁷⁵Quoted in Bullough (ed.), op. cit., II, 406; Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 833; Quoted in Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., III, 155; Edmond Malone (ed.), The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, IX, B2.

⁷⁶Quoted in Bullough, op. cit., II, 460.

⁷⁷Quoted in ibid., p. 463.

Shakespeare's play cannot submit to Angelo.⁷⁸ Thus, Shakespeare's heroine maintains her chastity, a quality the Elizabethans highly praised in a maiden. Furthermore, Angelo's baseness is emphasized by Isabella's position.⁷⁹ In addition, Angelo, unlike Promos, is already contracted to another woman when he propositions Isabella. Moreover, this contract between Angelo and Mariana is as binding as marriage,⁸⁰ so that the breaking of it would have emphasized the corruption of Angelo in the eyes of an Elizabethan audience.

Shakespeare's source for Othello is Cinthio's Novella VII.⁸¹ Here, Cinthio briefly mentions the marriage of the Moor and Disdemona and the circumstances surrounding it:

It happened that a virtuous lady of marvellous beauty, named Disdemona, fell in love with the Moor, moved thereto by his valour; and he, vanquished by the beauty and the noble character of Disdemona, returned her love; and their affection was so mutual that, although the parents of the lady strove all they could to induce her to take another husband, she consented to marry the Moor; and they lived in such harmony and peace in Venice that no word ever passed between them that was not affectionate and kind.⁸²

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 408.

⁷⁹Loc. cit.

⁸⁰Schanzer, op. cit., p. 85.

⁸¹Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 943; Quoted in Howard Howard Furness (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Othello, pp. 372-376; Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., II, 282.

⁸²Quoted in Furness (ed.), Othello, p. 377.

breath; but with the little voice she had left, she called upon the Moor for aid. But the Moor, leaping from bed, exclaimed, 'Thou wickedest of women, thus has thy falseness found its just reward, the recompense to wives who, counterfeiting love, place horns upon their husbands' brows.'

The wretched lady, hearing these words, and feeling that she was near her end, (for the Ensign had given her another blow,) appealed to the justice of Heaven, since justice here had failed her, in proof of her fidelity and truth; and as she was thus calling Heaven to witness, the wicked Ensign inflicted a third blow, under which she sank lifeless to the floor.⁸⁵

Shakespeare omits this brutality and uses Othello's noble passion as a motivating force in Desdemona's murder. The contrast is even more apparent, since Cinthio's Moor lacks nobility, because he deceitfully makes the death of his wife look like an accident.⁸⁶ This contrast can be carried even further, since the Moor's death in the novella is void of honor, for, upon being questioned and tortured, he refuses to admit his guilt, is banished, and is eventually killed by relatives of Desdemona. On the other hand, Shakespeare's Othello, unable to live with his guilt and grief, acts passionately and nobly when he discovers his wife's innocence and immediately takes his own life. Thus, in Othello, Shakespeare civilizes the ending and the character of the Moor, thereby, ennobling the marriage state.

Although Holinshed's History of Makbeth is the main source of

⁸⁵Quoted in Furness (ed.), Othello, pp. 386-387.

⁸⁶Charlton, op. cit., p. 136.

Macbeth, Shakespeare also draws upon Holinshed's Chronicle of King Duffe for some of the details.⁸⁷ One of his significant alterations of the source is his development of the character of Lady Macbeth, an individual to whom Holinshed assigned only one sentence:

'The words of the three weird sisters also (of whom before ye haue heard) greatlie encouraged him herevnto, but speciallie his wife lay sore vpon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in vnquenchable desire to beare the name of queene.⁸⁸

To develop the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare uses the characteristics outlined by Holinshed for Donwald's wife in the story of King Duffe. For instance, in the death of King Duffe, Donwald's wife "counselled" him:

. . . and shewed him the meanes wherby he might soonest accomplish it.

Donwald thus being the more kindled in wrath by the words of his wife, determined to follow hir advise in the execution of so heinous an act.⁸⁹

Much like the wife of Donwald, Lady Macbeth prompts Macbeth to action, because she realizes that Macbeth might not be strong enough to accomplish what he desires: ". . . yet do I fear thy nature: / It is too full o' the milk of human kindness / To catch the nearest way"

⁸⁷Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1044; Quoted in Horace Howard Furness, Jr. (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Macbeth, p. 379; Quoted in Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., II, 148.

⁸⁸Quoted in Furness, Jr. (ed.), Macbeth, p. 387.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 381.

(I.iv.17-19). In thinking thus, she decides to lead Macbeth in the murder:

. . . you shall put

This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Macb. We will speak further.

Lady M. Only look up clear!

To alter favour ever is to fear:

Leave all the rest to me.

(I.iv.68-75)

However, Macbeth is not yet resolved to her idea and, even after his decision to follow her suggestions, wavers; so she belittles him,

". . . screw your courage to the sticking-place" She asks him:

. . . Wouldst thou have that

Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

(I.vii.41-45)

Consequently, Macbeth eventually is determined to carry out the deed:

"I am settled, and bend up / Each corporal agent to this terrible feat"

(I.vii.79-80). Contrary to the Elizabethan belief that the husband

should make such decisions, he forces Lady Macbeth to involve herself in a man's affairs.⁹⁰

Shakespeare's source for Antony and Cleopatra is Plutarch's The Life of Marcus Antonius, translated by Sir Thomas North.⁹¹ An obvious

⁹⁰Frye, op. cit.; p. 104.

⁹¹Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 218; Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1071; Quoted in Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., III, 315.

contrast between the source and the play is the early depiction of Cleopatra's character. For example, Plutarch indicates her exceptional attributes:

Now her beawtie (as it is reported) was not so passing, as unmatchable of other women, nor yet suche, as upon present views did enamor men with her: but so sweete was her companie and conversacion, that a man could not possiblief but be taken. And besides her beawtie, the good grace she had to talke and discourse, her curteous nature that tempered her words and dedes, was a spurre that pricked to the quick. Furthermore, besides all these, her voyce and words were marvelous pleasant: for her tongue was an instrument of musicke to divers sports and pastimes, the which she easely turned to any language that pleased her. She spake unto few barbarous people by interpreter, but made them aunswere her selfe, or at the least the most parte of them: as the Aethiopians, the Arabians, the Troglodytes, the Hebrues, the Syrians, the Medes, and the Parthians, and to many others also, whose languages she had learned.⁹²

However, at the beginning of the play, Shakespeare emphasizes only Cleopatra's coarseness, lewdness, and sensuality.⁹³ For instance, her coarseness is described as "gipsy's lust" and is shown as she lewdly answers an eunuch's question:

Mar. What's your highness' pleasure?
Cleo. Not now to hear thee sing; I take no pleasure
 In aught an eunuch has: 'tis well for thee,
 That, being unseminar'd, thy freer thoughts
 May not fly forth of Egypt. Has thou affections?
 (I.v.8-12)

In addition, she boastfully refers to her affair with Julius Caesar:

⁹²Quoted in Bullough, *op. cit.*, V, 275.

⁹³*Ibid.*, p. 250.

"Broad-fronted Caesar, / When thou was here above the ground, I was / A morsel for a monarch . . ." (I.iv.29-31). Moreover, the play differs from its source in the depiction of Cleopatra's resolve to follow Antony in death. In Plutarch, Cleopatra's wavering resolution to die is shown by her three attempts at suicide.⁹⁴ Furthermore, she rather ignobly maims her body as she grieves over Antony, and, indeed, one questions her sanity at this point, for

. . . when she sawe Caesar come in to her chamber, she sodainly rose up, naked in her smocke, and fell downe at his feet marvelously disfigured: both for that she had plucked her heare from her head, as also for that she had martired all her face with her nailes, and besides, her voyce was small and trembling, her eyes sonke into her heade with continuall blubbering: and moreover, they might see the most part of her stomake torne in sunder. To be short, her bodie was not much better then her minde⁹⁵

On the other hand, Shakespeare's Cleopatra, in contrast to her earlier, all-encompassing preoccupation with sensuality, now begins to recognize Antony's passion as containing the aspects of genuine love. Once she fully realizes the significance of Antony's sacrificing his life for her, she, too, nobly resolves to take her life and does so immediately.⁹⁶ By thus depicting Cleopatra, Shakespeare not only gives her an heroic

⁹⁴Levin L. Schücking, Character Problems in Shakespeare's Plays, pp. 141-142.

⁹⁵Quoted in Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 313.

⁹⁶Richard C. Harrier, "Cleopatra's End," SQ, XIII (1962), 65.

stature but also reveals the range of her immorality to keep her character within the general conception that the Elizabethans would have had of her.⁹⁷

Robert Greene's The Historie of Dorastus and Fawnia from The History of Pandosto is Shakespeare's source for The Winter's Tale.⁹⁸

An important difference between the source and the play is the development of the king's jealousy.⁹⁹ In the source, Pandosto, perhaps, has legitimate reasons for doubting the fidelity of his wife. In fact, her relationship with Egistus is described as follows:

Bellaria (who in her time was the flower of curtesie), willing to show how unfaynedly shee looved her husband by his friends intertainment, used him likewise so familiarly that her countenance bewraied how her minde was affected towards him: oftentimes comming her selfe into his bed chamber, to see that nothing should be amis to mislike him. This honest familiarity increased dayly more and more betwixt them; for Bellaria, noting in Egistus a princely and bountifull minde, adorned with sundrie and excellent qualities, and Egistus, finding in her a vertuous and curteous disposition, there grew such a secret uniting of their affections, that the one could not well be without the company of the other: in so much that when Pandosto was busied with such urgent affaires, that hee could not bee present with his friend Egistus, Bellaria would walke with him into the Garden, where they two in privat and

⁹⁷Schücking, op. cit., p. 137.

⁹⁸Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1216; Quoted in Horace Howard Furness (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Winter's Tale, pp. 321-324; Hazlitt (ed.), op. cit., IV, 10.

⁹⁹Robert Grams Hunter, Shakespeare and the Comedy of Forgiveness, pp. 188-189.

pleasant devises would passe away the time to both their contents.¹⁰⁰

Therefore, Pandosto, perhaps, logically arrives at his doubt by observing their behavior, recognizing the physical attractions of the two, and contemplating the significance of the situation before accusing Bellaria of infidelity. On the other hand, Shakespeare's Leontes, without provocation, rashly and vehemently denounces Hermione as an adulteress. Thus, through his representation of the relationship of Hermione and Leontes, Shakespeare presents the belief that unwarranted jealousy between man and wife can have disastrous effects, and, at the same time, he endows Hermione with the traits most admired in an Elizabethan wife, specifically those of virtue, patience, and loyalty to husband.

Furthermore, Shakespeare incorporates the Elizabethan practice of handfasting in the Perdita-Florizel story.¹⁰¹ Indeed, a bargain is made to unite the couple, but, before the handfasting can be accomplished, Florizel's father interrupts the proceedings. In the source, however, the two lovers, Dorastus and Fawnia, secretly avow their love and plan their elopement to Italy, but no formal contract is mentioned. Therefore, Shakespeare slightly alters this portion of his source in order to include the handfasting incident, a convention with which an Elizabethan audience would have been familiar.

¹⁰⁰Quoted in Hazlitt (ed.), *op. cit.*, IV, 25.

¹⁰¹Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-337.

No single work has ever been identified as a source for The Tempest, although several possibilities have been suggested as material for the play. For example, Craig makes three suggestions for the main story: Antonio de Eslava's Winter Nights, Jacob Ayrer's The Fair Sides, and William Thomas's The Historie of Italy.¹⁰² He also agrees with Gregoire that, perhaps, Shakespeare, Eslava, and Ayrer had a common source that has since been lost. Furness and Hazlitt, similarly, believe that no main source has yet been uncovered.¹⁰³ In this play, the emphasis upon a young girl's chastity, the handfasting sequence, and Prospero's statement on the solemnization of marriages are distinctively Elizabethan. Ferdinand early stresses the value he places upon a young woman's virtue when he says, "O, if a virgin, / And your affection not gone forth, I'll make you / The queen of Naples" (I.ii.446-447). Prospero, too, warns Ferdinand of the discord that will result "If thou dost break her virgin-knot before / All sanctimonious ceremonies may / With full and holy rite be minister'd, . . ." (IV.i.15-17). At this time, the two lovers, in the presence of Miranda's father, formally contract their marriage.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1247.

¹⁰³Although several of the possible sources for The Tempest were investigated, the purpose of this chapter is not to establish Shakespeare's sources but rather to examine those sources already established as having been used by him in the composition of his plays.

¹⁰⁴Pearson, op. cit., p. 335.

Previously, they had privately avowed their love for one another:

I am your wife, if you will marry me;
 If not, I'll die your maid: to be your fellow
 You may deny me; but I'll be your servant,
 Whether you will or no.

Fer. My mistress, dearest;
 And I thus humble ever.

Mir. My husband, then?

Fer. Ay, with a heart as willing
 As bondage e'er of freedom: here's my hand.

Mir. And mine, with my heart in it:
 (III.i.83-90)

Finally, Shakespeare alludes to the Elizabethan practice of public solemnization of the union, when Prospero speaks of his intention to go to Naples, "Where I have hope to see the nuptial / Of these our dear-beloved solemnized . . ." (V.i.308-309). By presenting the Elizabethan procedure of engagement and marriage along with the various aspects involved in each, Shakespeare reveals the influence of Elizabethan thought upon the nature of The Tempest.

From this foregoing investigation, one more readily recognizes that the times rather than Shakespeare's sources was the dominant influence upon the dramatist's representation of the marriage state. Although Shakespeare basically follows his sources, in the man-woman relationships, he invariably alters his source and, in doing so, incorporates Elizabethan practices of courtship and marriage and stresses his ideal of womanhood. For instance, he presents the contracting of marriages, their solemnization and the related aspects of courtship, the exchange of rings, and the importance placed upon chastity.

Moreover, within many of these relationships, he portrays the heroine who possesses such virtues as chastity, intelligence, submissiveness, loyalty, and nobility; thereby, he creates the type of woman that Elizabethans would most highly praise.

CHAPTER II

SHAKESPEARE'S DEVELOPMENT OF MAN-WOMAN

RELATIONSHIPS IN HIS EARLY PLAYS

An analysis of several plays from Shakespeare's early period in chronological order helps to explain the dramatist's developing skill in treating character and situation involving the man-woman relationships. In The Two Gentlemen of Verona (1591), Romeo and Juliet (1594-1595), The Taming of the Shrew (1596), and The Merchant of Venice (1596), he strongly emphasizes the theme of love and marriage.¹⁰⁵

The Two Gentlemen of Verona reveals many of the ideas, types of character, and dramatic devices that occur again in a number of the later plays.¹⁰⁶ For example, one discovers the betrayed love, the rejected woman, the sex-disguise, and a villain versus a trustworthy friend.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, several scenes in this play, including those

¹⁰⁵Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 203, and quoted in Malone (ed.), op. cit., IV, 4-7, were used in establishing the date of composition for The Two Gentlemen of Verona. Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 269; and quoted in Furness (ed.), Romeo and Juliet, pp. 408-415, were used in establishing the date of Romeo and Juliet. Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 68; and quoted in Malone (ed.), op. cit., V, 354, were used in establishing the date of composition of The Taming of the Shrew. Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 445; Craig (ed.), op. cit., pp. 502-503; and quoted in Furness (ed.), The Merchant of Venice, pp. 277-286, were used in determining the date of composition of The Merchant of Venice; Malone (ed.), op. cit., V, 5, believes the date to be 1594.

¹⁰⁶Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 210.

¹⁰⁷Loc. cit.

concerned with the men's discussions of love, the villain's relating of his moral conflict, the parting of the lovers, and the episode of repentance and forgiveness, are also present in the later plays.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, these various elements are used, here, in the portrayal of male-female relationships and later in more complex relationships.

Nevertheless, Shakespeare reveals his professional immaturity in The Two Gentlemen of Verona through weak character presentation.¹⁰⁹ Here, his characters lack development and subtlety and do not reveal the usual traits of human nature.¹¹⁰ Moreover, most of them want complexity, because they represent social types rather than individuals.¹¹¹ In many cases, they typify merely simple models possessed of only one trait, such as Thurio.¹¹² Because of this lack of character development, Shakespeare's involvement of his couples is shallow and superficial.

Of major concern in this discussion are Proteus, Valentine, Julia, and Silvia, and a consideration of their inter-relationships. First, one

¹⁰⁸Loc. cit.

¹⁰⁹ Charles Harold Herford, The Normality of Shakespeare Illustrated in His Treatment of Love and Marriage, p. 9. For contrasting views, see Martin Holmes, "The Shadow of the Swan," Essays and Studies, XII (1959), 59-61; and Jain, op. cit., p. 108.

¹¹⁰ Hardin Craig, "Shakespeare's Development as a Dramatist in Light of His Experience," SP, XXXIX (1942), 232.

¹¹¹ John W. Draper, "Characterization in Shakespeare's Plays," West Virginia University Philological Papers, XI (1958), 7.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 5.

recognizes that Proteus is easily governed by his feelings and is prone to self-pity. Moreover, he is fickle by nature, and even his name reveals this quality.¹¹³ Even though his vows to Julia may be sincere, he is unable to remain constant. When he meets Silvia, he has no control over his passion.¹¹⁴ Completely determined to win her, he says, "If I can check my erring love, I will; / If not, to compass her I'll use my skill" (II.iv.213-214). Thus, he knowingly becomes inconstant, but being faithful is just too much trouble.¹¹⁵ With reference to this behavior, Jain describes Proteus as a "near-villain," whose unethical love for Silvia creates villainy.¹¹⁶ However, when Valentine with all sincerity points out Proteus's wrong-doing, Proteus becomes genuinely remorseful and makes an about-face to become, once again, the loyal friend and faithful lover.¹¹⁷ This behavior is not altogether plausible, because he lacks the necessary convincing complexity, especially in his relationships with others. For instance, Shakespeare gives Proteus's passion for Julia and the sincerity of his vows of constancy only a most

¹¹³Frederick Samuel Boas, Shakespeare and His Predecessors, p. 191.

¹¹⁴Jain, op. cit., p. 93.

¹¹⁵Boas, op. cit., p. 192.

¹¹⁶Jain, op. cit., p. 93.

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 92-93. For contrasting views, see Malone (ed.), op. cit., IV, 131; and David Lloyd Stevenson, The Love-Game Comedy, p. 189.

superficial treatment. Consequently, Proteus is not developed as a convincingly inconsistent individual but remains a simple creation, merely a typical Elizabethan young man.¹¹⁸

Similarly, Julia is merely a conventional young woman in love.¹¹⁹ However, in contrast to Proteus's self-interest, she is characterized by "self-sacrifice."¹²⁰ Moreover, she is the type of woman who is subordinate.¹²¹ Shakespeare suggests, therefore, that this clinging, conventional type cannot keep lovers nor find success.¹²² On the other hand, one outstanding incident tends to individualize her, the jealousy she displays while comparing her beauty to that of Silvia.¹²³ More importantly, this jealousy develops as a result of her love for Proteus. Although, in donning a man's disguise, she reminds one of the Portia and Rosalind to come, she is not well delineated and is too dependent to be placed in a category along with Shakespeare's more complex characters in the later plays.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸Draper, op. cit., p. 7.

¹¹⁹George Gordon, Shakespearian Comedy and Other Studies, p. 55.

¹²⁰Boas, op. cit., p. 195.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 194.

¹²²Gordon, op. cit., p. 56.

¹²³Boas, op. cit., p. 195.

¹²⁴Loc. cit. Herford, op. cit., p. 10, maintains that this disguise is a mark of extravagant magnanimity which mars the play.

In contrast to Julia, Silvia is clearly independent, intelligent, and resourceful.¹²⁵ She is the counterpart, although only slightly developed, of the type of woman that Shakespeare uses, time and again, throughout his career.¹²⁶ She, too, is constant in her love and pays no heed to Proteus's endeavors to woo her, but is less conventional in her behavior than Julia.¹²⁷ For example, without jeopardizing her dignity, Silvia takes steps to initiate Valentine's suit through the rather imaginative ruse of letter writing.¹²⁸ She must aid Valentine in this manner, because he is too slow in courting.¹²⁹ Therefore, her involvement with him prompts his decision to change from rejecting love to seeking love.¹³⁰ Consequently, Holmes believes that Valentine is not a romantic lover, that he is never really overwhelmed by love, and that he does not feel it is worth the distress that it has caused him.¹³¹ In fact, Valentine resigns his claim to Silvia to his friend, Proteus, in an act of extravagant

¹²⁵Gordon, op. cit., p. 56.

¹²⁶Boas, op. cit., p. 194.

¹²⁷Jain, op. cit., p. 26.

¹²⁸Boas, op. cit., p. 194.

¹²⁹Holmes, op. cit., p. 59.

¹³⁰Herman Harrell Horne, Shakespeare's Philosophy of Love, p. 36.

¹³¹Holmes, op. cit., p. 60.

magnanimity.¹³² Similar to Proteus's unbelievable behavior, Valentine's act once again points out not only Shakespeare's immature character development but, similarly, his superficial treatment of the lovers' relationship. In The Two Gentlemen of Verona, then, one recognizes two noticeable aspects of lovers' relationships with one another. First, these relationships are superficial, mainly because the characters involved lack the necessary complexity. Second, the personages, as well as their relationships, are, for the most part, typical and conventional. However, an occasional indication of individuality is basically the outgrowth of the romantic attachments, as is evident in Julia and Silvia.

Unlike the character types in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, those of Romeo and Juliet reveal development throughout the play. In fact, in the three days covered by the action, these two characters actually attain what Stoll terms as a "tragic stature."¹³³ Although less actively dramatic than Romeo's, Juliet's evolvment is of a more personal type.¹³⁴ Indications of her development are internal and the result of present situations, whereas Romeo's development is external and the

¹³²Herford, op. cit., p. 9.

¹³³Stoll, op. cit., p. 13.

¹³⁴Lawrence Edward Bowling, "The Thematic Framework of Romeo and Juliet," PMLA, LXIV (1949), 213.

result of his past experiences.¹³⁵ Moreover, the inter-relationship that these two lovers experience brings about each other's maturation. For example, as a result of her love for Romeo, Juliet's character grows in complexity, depth, and variety to become intense, purposeful, and complete.¹³⁶ In fact, the focal point in her development is the conflict she experiences upon discovering Romeo's identity, since she must, then, redefine her old attitude toward hate because of her earlier acceptance of the Capulet and Montague feud.¹³⁷ When she learns to reconcile this conflict, she assumes the qualities of a woman.¹³⁸ Thus, love transforms her from a girl into a woman.¹³⁹ However, she is not blinded by passion, for she, at first, feels that their love might be "too rash, too unadvis'd"¹⁴⁰ More importantly, this controlled passion results in strength and energy for Juliet.¹⁴¹ Her greater strength is revealed by her acceptance of responsibility when Romeo is

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 214.

¹³⁶Anna Brownell (Murphy) Jameson, Shakespeare's Heroines, p. 84.

¹³⁷Bowling, op. cit., p. 214.

¹³⁸Jameson, op. cit., p. 93.

¹³⁹Bonnard, op. cit., p. 326.

¹⁴⁰Franklin M. Dickey, Not Wisely But Too Well, p. 105.

¹⁴¹Jameson, op. cit., p. 78.

too involved in being in love to do so.¹⁴² However, this womanly strength is balanced with her weaknesses as a woman.¹⁴³ For instance, at times, she is explosive in temper, but she can, when the occasion warrants it, be equally self-contained.¹⁴⁴ Thus, one deduces that Juliet's development is not only the result of her innate character, but, more importantly, a result of her love and involvement with Romeo.

Similarly, Romeo's maturation develops because of his genuine and deep love for Juliet. His character development is best shown by the increased depth of maturity of a second experience in loving, of the second act of killing, and the second expression of life's contradictions.¹⁴⁵ First, his behavior and especially his speech reveal that his love for Rosaline is self-created rather than inspired by her and indicate his being love-sick rather than being in love.¹⁴⁶ Thus, Romeo's infatuation for Rosaline is merely a preparation for his deeper, more mature love for Juliet.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, according to Coleridge, Shakespeare

¹⁴²George Brandes, William Shakespeare: A Critical Study, I, 101; Felix Emmanuel Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642, I, 571-572.

¹⁴³Stoll, op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁴⁴George William Gerwig, Shakespeare's Ideals of Womanhood, p. 38.

¹⁴⁵Bowling, op. cit., p. 211.

¹⁴⁶Quoted in Furness (ed.), Romeo and Juliet, p. 22.

¹⁴⁷Horne, op. cit., p. 62.

justifies Romeo's inconstancy in love by making the reader feel the difference in Romeo's passion.¹⁴⁸ The second example of Romeo's progressing maturity is manifest in his clashes with Tybalt and Paris. When he fights with Tybalt, he has not yet reached the point in which he really knows himself or has a complete control over himself.¹⁴⁹ Consequently, with the death of Mercutio, Romeo begins to act solely upon the grounds of passion.¹⁵⁰ In contrast, his encounter with Paris demonstrates Romeo's genuine attempt to avoid a conflict, for, instead of taking the initiative in perpetuating the fight, Romeo reacts only when Paris forces him into action. The third indication of Romeo's development is shown by his expressions of life's contradictions. He first views these contradictions with confusion in his immature "O brawling love! O loving hate!" speech. Contrastingly, in his speech to the apothecary concerning poison and gold, he no longer views the paradoxes of life with confusion but rather demonstrates his insight into life.¹⁵¹ Moreover, upon receiving the news of Juliet's "death" when he is in Mantua, he becomes a fully developed character.¹⁵² He is, then, determined to

¹⁴⁸Quoted in Furness (ed.), Romeo and Juliet, p. 92.

¹⁴⁹Bowling, op. cit., p. 212.

¹⁵⁰Dickey, op. cit., p. 115.

¹⁵¹Bowling, op. cit., pp. 212-213.

¹⁵²Harley Granville-Barker, Prefaces to Shakespeare, II, 341.

return to Verona, regardless of the consequences, and demonstrates for the first time a genuinely mature behavior.¹⁵³

Thus, one may conclude that Romeo and Juliet evidences more development in character, as a result of the union of the two lovers, than is found in the characters in The Two Gentlemen of Verona. In fact, the basic changes in both Romeo and Juliet can be directly attributed to their deep love and passion for one another. Juliet is transformed from a girl into a woman because of her love for Romeo. Likewise, Romeo becomes a man of quality and stature because of his strong love for Juliet.

The next play, The Taming of the Shrew, reveals that Shakespeare is beginning to shift his emphasis from appearances and situations to the more complex realm of character and moral considerations.¹⁵⁴ Even though Kate and Petruchio are both bold, vigorous, and effective, Boas believes that they lack the complexity and the "mellow, rich humour" of Shakespeare's later characters.¹⁵⁵ Yet, the spirit of the play suggests his later comedies and advances his concepts about the relationships between people grounded on the attitudes of mutual respect and consideration.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, in combining the Kate-Petruchio and the

¹⁵³Gerwig, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁵⁴Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 68.

¹⁵⁵Boas, op. cit., p. 173.

¹⁵⁶D. A. Traversi, An Approach to Shakespeare, I, 77.

Bianca-Lucentio stories by incorporating the plot of I Suppositi into the play, Shakespeare presents the realistic and idealistic attitudes toward marriage and shows that, in the end, it is the shrew, not the idealized Bianca, who becomes the good wife and submits to the accepted view of marriage.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, the contrast developed between the spirited and devoted women in this play and in The Comedy of Errors has significance for the later and more complex discussions related to the nature of women.¹⁵⁸

As Petruchio is quick to point out, Kate's shrewishness is not so much a part of her natural character as it is of her will and spirit, which could and does make her a valuable wife once it is controlled.¹⁵⁹ Because her father has allowed her to dominate, her natural and potentially winning high spirit is, instead, merely a mark of temper.¹⁶⁰ However, she does not become a ridiculous figure in her demonstration of force and shrewishness, since she has a woman's tenderness and sensitivity juxtaposed with an almost masculine intelligence and

¹⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 72-73, 76. H. B. Charlton, Shakespearian Comedy, p. 44, discusses the marriage as a mock and a burlesque.

¹⁵⁸Brooks, op. cit., p. 356.

¹⁵⁹Loc. cit. Charlton, Shakespearian Comedy, p. 97, sees Kate crying over her fate as an old maid, and then over her fear that Petruchio will not appear for the wedding as indicating she is really not a shrew and does not need taming.

¹⁶⁰Boas, op. cit., p. 178.

determination.¹⁶¹ However, Kate must acknowledge the fact that she is a member of the weaker sex before Petruchio will allow her to have any womanly rights.¹⁶² For instance, at the wedding feast, she makes her last attempt to assert herself with him, but he allows her to show her temper only for a short time before he, again, dominates. Again, Petruchio instructs her in wifely submission in the scene in which he toys with Lucentio's father; however, she recovers, this time, by responding to the situation with humor.¹⁶³ Finally, she develops as a feeling person and gains the new characteristic of human consideration.¹⁶⁴ Thus, it becomes apparent that her change in attitude and behavior is affected by Petruchio's perceptive understanding of her character. Moreover, she becomes submissive to Petruchio, because she has found in him a man superior both in intellect and spirit.¹⁶⁵ However, she does not become just another Bianca as a result of her change.¹⁶⁶ In fact, Bianca serves only as a contrast to her,

¹⁶¹Brooks, op. cit., pp. 352, 356.

¹⁶²Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 64.

¹⁶³Cecil C. Seronsy, "'Supposes' as the Unifying Theme in Taming of the Shrew," SQ, XIV (1963), 15-30.

¹⁶⁴Traversi, op. cit., I, 76.

¹⁶⁵Brooks, op. cit., p. 352.

¹⁶⁶M. C. Bradbrook, "Dramatic Role as Social Image: A Study of The Taming of the Shrew," Shakespeare Jahrbuch, XCIV (1958), 145.

conventionally winning wooers through beauty and submissive behavior, and in the end proves not entirely submissive.¹⁶⁷ In contrast to Bianca, re-directing much of her earlier spirit in her closing speech, Kate stresses that a woman should share the rewards of the man's work and, in return, should give "love, fair looks, and true obedience."¹⁶⁸

The elimination of Kate's shrewishness subsequently resolves Petruchio's only conflict that is both external and objective.¹⁶⁹ Through his method of wooing and subduing Kate by presuming that she has potentially good traits, Petruchio indicates that he has far more insight into this woman than do any of the other characters.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, in contrast to Bianca's lovers, he exhibits common sense, employing words rather than using wealth or deceit, and, thus, converts Kate into a natural and reasonable wife.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, his motives for seeking a wife are primarily mercenary, whereas Lucentio's for wooing Bianca are the conventional standards for love.¹⁷² Thus, for Petruchio, love is undertaken for a business venture rather than for sentimental

¹⁶⁷Horne, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

¹⁶⁸Boas, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

¹⁶⁹Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

¹⁷⁰Seronsy, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

¹⁷¹Traversi, *op. cit.*, I, 75.

¹⁷²Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

reasons.¹⁷³ Furthermore, unlike Lucentio, who seems content with idleness, Petruchio is attracted by the challenge of a courtship with Kate because of his adventurous spirit.¹⁷⁴

In terms of love, The Taming of the Shrew is in obvious contrast to The Two Gentlemen of Verona and Romeo and Juliet because of the expressed motives for wooing. Petruchio's reason for wooing Kate is mercenary and undertaken because of the challenge of taming her. Furthermore, as a result of their union, both Kate and Petruchio's characters are enhanced. The taming requires Petruchio to summon his innate characteristics of wit, cunning, and insight successfully to evoke the change in her; consequently, because of his domination and overpowering spirit, Kate is transformed from a shrew into an ideal, submissive wife.

The last play of this group, The Merchant of Venice, contains three man-woman relationships, and the partners of the three matches manifest varying characteristics: e.g., Bassanio is merry but without money; Portia is intelligent and strong; Gratiano is talkative and volatile; Nerissa is lively and bright; Lorenzo is carefree and languid; and Jessica is childlike and airy.¹⁷⁵ In contrast to the Portia and Bassanio relationship, the Jessica-Lorenzo match is made in defiance of parental

¹⁷³Charlton, Shakespearian Comedy, p. 96.

¹⁷⁴Boas, op. cit., p. 173.

¹⁷⁵Horne, op. cit., p. 50.

approval, and their love is not tested.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, their relationship is presented as ideal and inspired by their courageous love rather than as an outgrowth of the inherent traits of the two individuals.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, Shakespeare apparently includes this episode of more ideal love in order to compensate for Portia's less idealistic match.¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, Nerissa and Gratiano's union parallels and, thus, heightens Portia and Bassanio's love, especially the giving of the rings and its consequences.¹⁷⁹ Through this contrasting and paralleling, Shakespeare emphasizes the complexity of the main man-woman relationship.

This relationship of Portia and Bassanio begins rather ignobly, since Bassanio's original motive for wooing Portia was to pay his debts. Therefore, Portia is ironically aligned not only with a man who is her obvious inferior but also with the mercenary type of man that her father so emphatically sought to have her avoid.¹⁸⁰ However, Bassanio's

¹⁷⁶Robert Hapgood, "Portia and The Merchant of Venice: The Gentle Bond," MLQ, XXVIII (1967), 31.

¹⁷⁷H. N. Hudson, Shakespeare: His Life, Art, and Characters, I, 283.

¹⁷⁸Virginia Taylor McCormick, "Women and Love as Shakespeare Sees Them," Catholic World, CL (1939), 331.

¹⁷⁹Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 461.

¹⁸⁰Brandes, op. cit., I, 191. Hapgood, op. cit., p. 24, points out that Portia's father did not want her matched with a man who was concerned with outward appearances, and Hapgood indicates three cases which reveal that Bassanio is concerned with outward show.

original motive is soon altered by Portia's confession of her love for him and her willingness to submit to him; in this long speech, she discloses to Bassanio her true character.¹⁸¹ To symbolize their union, Portia gives him a ring, which, moreover, has other significant, dramatic purposes.¹⁸² First, the ring episode points out that, for a time, Bassanio has placed friendship above his love for Portia by giving the ring to the "lawyer." Nevertheless, according to Renaissance teaching, friendship should come before love. The friendship between Bassanio and Antonio is not ideal, however, since it is rather one-sided and too possessive on Antonio's part.¹⁸³ The giving of the ring, moreover, reveals Bassanio's weakness, since he is controlled by Antonio's request to give away the ring. This weakness is further emphasized when Bassanio is with Portia, because he is then manipulated by her will.¹⁸⁴ Finally, the ring episode gives Portia another opportunity in which to demonstrate her mental prowess. For instance, the situation which Portia creates places Bassanio at her mercy.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, Bassanio must make three pleas before she will pardon him. The first two are tainted

¹⁸¹Gerwig, op. cit., p. 110.

¹⁸²Bullough (ed.), op. cit., I, 461.

¹⁸³Hapgood, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁸⁵Gerwig, op. cit., p. 113.

with self-defense, but finally Bassanio simply asks forgiveness.¹⁸⁶ He, then, promises, "Pardon this fault, and by my soul I sweare / I never more will break an oath with thee" (V.i.247-248).

Thus, one observes that Portia is obviously the stronger character of the two. Furthermore, she is one of Shakespeare's representations of the new Renaissance woman whose characteristics of power and intelligence reflect the age in which she lives.¹⁸⁷ This intelligence, along with enthusiasm, decisiveness, and resiliency of spirit, individualize her.¹⁸⁸ For instance, in the trial scene, she demonstrates this individuality through her intellectual power, religious sense, honorable principles and finest womanly feelings.¹⁸⁹ At the same time, her femininity is not diminished by the masculinity indicated by the sharp wit she uses in this scene.¹⁹⁰ Thus, her independence and ability to handle the men around her demonstrate her capability and capacity to turn potential tragedy into comedy.¹⁹¹ Hence, much of the action of the play hinges

¹⁸⁶Hapgood, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

¹⁸⁷William Van O'Connor, The New Woman of the Renaissance, p. 157.

¹⁸⁸Jameson, op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁹⁰McCormick, op. cit., p. 331.

¹⁹¹Gerwig, op. cit., pp. 101, 105; Stoll, op. cit., p. 62.

upon Portia's strength of character. Furthermore, although not revealing any change herself, she ennobles Bassanio through an assertion of her virtues, particularly of her own nobility. Moreover, possibly because of Shakespeare's creation of Portia, the other characters pale and lack development. Similarly, because of her strengthening influence in her relationship with Bassanio, his depiction of the other relationships between men and women in the play seem comparatively undeveloped.

As a result of this investigation of the early plays, one concludes that the man-woman relationships discussed herein are responsible, to varying degrees, for the development of the individual characters. As was observed in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, little character development was possible because of the shallowness of the relationships. On the other hand, the characters of Romeo and Juliet change decisively as a result of their love for each other and the conflicts that this love produces. Moreover, the relationship of Kate and Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew aids in the development of the two, since Petruchio must exercise all of his potential strength and ingenuity in taming Kate and transforming her into an obedient and submissive wife. Finally, the Portia-Bassanio union in The Merchant of Venice is responsible for ennobling the character of Bassanio and, at the same time, gives Portia the opportunity to exhibit her outstanding qualities and individuality.

For the most part, the love relationships in these early plays develop primarily as a result of situation rather than innate characteristics

of the individuals. To ascertain whether Shakespeare continues this means of development of the man-woman associations, an investigation of representative later plays will be conducted next.

CHAPTER III

SHAKESPEARE'S DEVELOPMENT OF MAN-WOMAN

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE LATER PLAYS

An investigation of a selection of plays from Shakespeare's later period may aid further in the formulation of his concept of character and situation regarding the relationship between men and women, thus, establishing a contrast between this later development and that which was found in the earlier plays. The plays selected for this analysis are Measure for Measure (1604), Othello (1604), Macbeth (1606), Antony and Cleopatra (1606-1607), The Winter's Tale (1610-1611), and The Tempest (1610-1611).¹⁹²

Perhaps, more than in any other play of Shakespeare, Elizabethan

¹⁹²Bullough (ed.), op. cit., II, 399, and Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 833, were used in establishing the date of composition for Measure for Measure; Malone (ed.), op. cit., IX, B2, believes the date to be 1603. Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 943; and quoted in Furness (ed.), Othello, pp. 344-357, were used in establishing the date of composition of Othello. Craig (ed.), op. cit., pp. 1043-1044; and quoted in Furness, Jr. (ed.), Macbeth, pp. 353-379, were used in determining the date of composition of Macbeth. Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 215; and Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1071, were used in establishing the date of composition for Antony and Cleopatra; Malone (ed.), op. cit., XII, M2, believes that the play was written in 1608. Craig (ed.), op. cit., pp. 1215-1216; and quoted in Furness (ed.), The Winter's Tale, pp. 309-321, were used in determining the date of composition of The Winter's Tale. Craig (ed.), op. cit., p. 1247; and quoted in Horace Howard Furness (ed.), A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Tempest, pp. 272-282, were used in establishing the date of composition of The Tempest.

moral beliefs and laws are deeply involved in an understanding of Measure for Measure.¹⁹³ While incorporating these moral beliefs into the plot, Shakespeare emphasizes the romances involved and, by resolving the problems of the man-woman relationships, creates a happy ending.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, the complexity of the play is greatly due to the variety of sexual behavior of the characters, which is more important in the action of this play than in most of Shakespeare's other works.¹⁹⁵ The social concepts of marriage prevalent during Shakespeare's time may help to explain the apparent inconsistencies of the play.¹⁹⁶ For example, in the opinion of the Church, Claudio and Juliet have committed two sins in contracting of a secret marriage and in the consummating of it.¹⁹⁷ Their actions convert their original de futuro contract into a socially irregular marriage.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, Claudio is technically guilty of

¹⁹³Schanzer, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁹⁴Bullough (ed.), op. cit., II, 416. A view quoted in Malone (ed.), op. cit., IX, 209, is that the happy ending is achieved by the creation of Mariana, which removes much of the implausibility of the source as well as much of its horror and villainy.

¹⁹⁵James Van Dyck Card, "In Just Proportion: Notes on the Final Scene of Measure for Measure," Topic, IV (1964), 61.

¹⁹⁶Schanzer, op. cit., pp. 82, 88. S. Nagarajan, "Measure for Measure and Elizabethan Betrothals," SQ, XIV (1963), 115, points out that all the necessary information needed for understanding the play is to be found in the play itself.

¹⁹⁷Schanzer, op. cit., p. 83.

¹⁹⁸Nagarajan, op. cit., p. 119.

fornication and is legally punishable, because of the old law that Angelo has recently enforced.¹⁹⁹ Because he was sincere in his intention to have the union publicly solemnized, censure of his actions is lessened.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, his sin was prompted by natural instinct and with no sinister designs.²⁰¹ However, Isabella and the Duke recognize Claudio and Juliet's act as sinful, and Juliet herself admits her guilt.²⁰² At the same time, Claudio recognizes his act as a compromise of his religious principles but objects to his being executed on a legal principle.²⁰³ Moreover, in his bid for life, he suggests that Isabella accept Angelo's proposal, an idea that would only have indicated cowardice to the Elizabethans.²⁰⁴ His weakness is further pointed out in his faltering resolution to accept his inevitable death.²⁰⁵

On the other hand, the contract between Angelo and Mariana is

¹⁹⁹Schanzer, op. cit., p. 83.

²⁰⁰Nagarajan, op. cit., p. 116.

²⁰¹Traversi, op. cit., II, 49.

²⁰²Harding, op. cit., p. 155.

²⁰³Nagarajan, op. cit., p. 116; also, Schanzer, op. cit., p. 83, states that Claudio's attitude is a result of Shakespeare's exploitation of the marriage contract laws of the Church.

²⁰⁴Harding, op. cit., p. 156.

²⁰⁵Card, op. cit., p. 64.

de praesenti, and, therefore, quite binding.²⁰⁶ In fact, since this couple would have been regarded by Shakespeare and his audience as truly "married," there is nothing immoral suggested about the bed-trick.²⁰⁷ However, Angelo breaks the contract by propositioning Isabella and compounds his villainy by breaking his promise to free Claudio and by slandering Mariana when forced to disclose the existence of his contract with her.²⁰⁸ Although knowing of Angelo's evil, Mariana agrees to the bed-trick, because she still desires him for a husband, partially, because he is contracted to her and equally, perhaps, because of his very rejection of her.²⁰⁹ Her saving Angelo through her pleas to Isabella gives her an ascendancy over him, but, because of her love and submissiveness, she does not take advantage of the opportunity.²¹⁰

Although Isabella's refusal to accept Angelo's request and Claudio's plea, and her consent shortly thereafter to deceive Angelo all seem inconsistent, Elizabethans readily would have accepted her action, since it reflects the general inconsistency of the times, although they always

²⁰⁶Nagarajan, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-118. Schanzer, *op. cit.*, p. 85, sees Angelo and Mariana's contract as a de futuro one.

²⁰⁷Jain, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁰⁸Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

²⁰⁹Card, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

²¹⁰Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

recognized and praised the ideal.²¹¹ On the other hand, her apparent contradictory behavior is, perhaps, the result of her knowledge of the two contracts and the significance of each.²¹² Unable to disregard these facts, she not only reveals her rigid concept of justice but also exhibits powers of reasoning and eloquence in justifying her position.²¹³ Moreover, Isabella's attitude toward Claudio is in harmony with her high moral character, because to overlook his sin would be to compromise her principles.²¹⁴ Her condemnation of her brother is further justified because of her special position as a novice, which, at the same time, renders impossible her making any other decision concerning Angelo's proposal.²¹⁵ Furthermore, because of her position, her abrupt union with the Duke seems rather unbelievable. However, these two have more in common than any one else in the play; in fact, throughout the drama, one finds that subtle similarities, such as their mutual desire

²¹¹Harding, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

²¹²Nagarajan, *op. cit.*, p. 119; Schanzer, *op. cit.*, p. 86, believes that Isabella is ignorant of her brother's marriage contract, for, had she known about the contract, her inner struggle would not have been as great, and she would have altered her plea to Angelo. Because of her high moral principles, she would have been forced to demand justice rather than mercy.

²¹³Bullough (ed.), *op. cit.*, II, 409.

²¹⁴Harding, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

²¹⁵Bullough (ed.), *op. cit.*, II, 408; O'Connor, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161, views Isabella's steadfastness in her decisions as characteristic of the new Renaissance woman, reminiscent of Portia.

to be removed from life, are given in preparation for the match.²¹⁶ One concludes that the relationships herein presented are deeply involved in Elizabethan moral and marriage codes; in fact, both types of marriage contracts are included and, indeed, provide the focal point for the action of the play. Furthermore, Isabella, perhaps the outstanding and significant character in this play, is allowed to exhibit characteristics considered ideal in the Elizabethan woman as a result of her involvement in the marriage disputes. Moreover, Angelo's relationships to Isabella and Mariana emphasize his villainy and baseness, and Claudio's weaknesses are made apparent because of the situation he creates as a result of his affair with Juliet.

In the next play, the union of Othello and Desdemona is founded not only upon differences of race but also upon other opposites, such as difference of age, thereby, creating adversities from the very beginning.²¹⁷ Because the union is founded upon these differences and mutual admiration rather than upon the lovers' accurate understanding of each other's personality, its future contains disillusionment and is potentially disastrous.²¹⁸ Although there is no real defect in the love between Othello and Desdemona, its shaky foundation provides a basis

²¹⁶ Card, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

²¹⁷ Brandes, op. cit., II, 120.

²¹⁸ Boas, op. cit., p. 426.

for the villainous Iago to bring about the destruction of a love that otherwise might have endured forever.²¹⁹

Although Othello is the first of Shakespeare's heroes whose downfall is the result of his own failings, his weakness is combined with nobility.²²⁰ His nobility and strength are exemplified in his demonstration of honor, bravery, and endurance in the face of much physical testing as a soldier.²²¹ In addition, these characteristics, that are simple and straightforward, prompt his rather naïve belief in others' goodness.²²² On the other hand, his weakness results from his inability to look within himself and reflect, once he has acted.²²³ At the same time, his imagination is quick, powerful, and, thus, easily transformed into passion.²²⁴ Because of this passion, Othello demands immediate relief and support for his beliefs.²²⁵ Once he is convinced, through Iago's allusions, of what he believes is the truth, his self-reliance and

²¹⁹John Middleton Murry, "Shakespeare and Love," in John Clare and Other Studies, p. 42.

²²⁰Traversi, op. cit., II, 88.

²²¹Beryl Pogson, In the East My Pleasure Lies, p. 12.

²²²Brandes, op. cit., II, 117.

²²³Bradley, op. cit., p. 152.

²²⁴Granville-Barker, op. cit., p. 118.

²²⁵Bradley, op. cit., p. 155.

decisiveness prompt his swift and powerful action.²²⁶ However, he is not mastered by Iago but by his own mind through unreasonable doubt about his wife; thus, his self-centeredness brings about his destruction.²²⁷ Othello makes an idol of Desdemona, and this idolatry is shattered when he is forced to look upon her as a woman with a woman's instincts.²²⁸ Therefore, his agony is complete when he thinks that she loses this godliness.²²⁹ Moreover, he reaches this conclusion through Iago's prodding and stereotypes her as a Venetian wife whose virtues are questionable.²³⁰ Othello, consequently, views the murdering of Desdemona as an act of justice that he, as executioner, must carry out, no matter how difficult it might be.²³¹ When Desdemona fails to name him as her murderer, he is plunged into further conflict. Through his thought of her and Emilia's condemnation of his behavior, he repents and changes from a self-centeredness to an overwhelming concern for

²²⁶Loc. cit.

²²⁷C. R. Elliott, "Othello as a Love-Tragedy," The American Review, VIII (1937), 279.

²²⁸R. N. Hallstead, "Idolatrous Love: A New Approach to Othello," SQ, XIX (1968), 124.

²²⁹Pogson, op. cit., p. 22.

²³⁰Elliott, op. cit., pp. 275-276.

²³¹Lily Bess Campbell, Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes, p. 176.

Desdemona.²³²

In contrast, Desdemona repeatedly exhibits the traits of unselfish love.²³³ At the same time, she is typically modest, submissive, graceful, devoted, refined, and delicate.²³⁴ Perhaps, these are the very qualities that permit her to become the victim of Othello's unfounded jealousy.²³⁵ She demonstrates youthful assertiveness and determination, but her lack of perception and her innocence make it difficult for her to comprehend Othello, result in her passive attitude, and lead to her cruel demise.²³⁶ Moreover, she lacks strength and independence and becomes helpless, all of which emphasize her suffering.²³⁷ Through her suffering, not only is her love perfected but so is her character, for in her dying words, she is self-sacrificial in assuming the entire guilt for her death. Similarly, her death brings about Othello's perfection, since he recognizes her innocence and all-sacrificing love and, thus, relinquishes his self-interest.²³⁸ Therefore, in Othello,

²³² Elliott, op. cit., pp. 286-287.

²³³ Ibid., p. 265.

²³⁴ Jameson, op. cit., p. 184.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 166.

²³⁶ Bradley, op. cit., p. 165.

²³⁷ Ibid., pp. 145, 166.

²³⁸ Elliott, op. cit., pp. 282-283, 285-286.

one witnesses the effects of jealousy and the lack of understanding upon a relationship of deep love, as these elements destroy that love and those who profess it as well.

The marriages which Shakespeare creates in his plays are seldom ideal, and in Macbeth, the union between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is no exception, because of her overly ambitious love for her husband.²³⁹ Moreover, in taking the initiative, she brings out the subdued characteristics of Macbeth.²⁴⁰ Yet, possibly her greatest fault in marriage lies in the fact that she misinterprets her husband's strength, not realizing the impact on him that the murder of Duncan will have.²⁴¹ However, in one respect their relationship is ideal; e. g., they support and love one another, and they suffer together.²⁴² Furthermore, they complement one another, for when one is weak, the other is strong. For instance, when Lady Macbeth realizes that her husband is weak and hesitant about the planned crime, she, however unbecomingly, strengthens him in his resolve.²⁴³ At the same time, Macbeth's penetrating love is understanding and sympathetic, for he does not resent her calling him a coward

²³⁹Milton Goldberg, "The Human Demensions of Time," Antioch Review, XXIV (1964), 13.

²⁴⁰Traversi, op. cit., II, 120.

²⁴¹William Farnham, Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier, p. 127.

²⁴²Bradley, op. cit., p. 293.

²⁴³Gerwig, op. cit., p. 142.

but, in fact, regards her as his "dearest partner in greatness."²⁴⁴ Their ambition is the ruling force in their lives and is the most outstanding trait that they have in common.²⁴⁵ Indeed, it is their ambition that causes them to become so mentally involved in desire for the kingship that their minds are corrupted.²⁴⁶ As a consequence, opposition to the natural way arises. For example, Duncan's murder is an unnatural, ambitious act, because it transgresses the sacred tie between subordinate and king.²⁴⁷ Thus, Macbeth's personal ambition obscures his vision of the accepted code of behavior.²⁴⁸ After the murder, their passion turns into the passion of fear which, then, becomes a motivating force.²⁴⁹ Moreover, this fear results in the alteration of the natural bond between husband and wife, since it dominates their thoughts and actions.²⁵⁰ At the same time, this fear coupled with a sense of ambition becomes an obsession and creates an inner-conflict.²⁵¹

²⁴⁴Farnham, op. cit., p. 127.

²⁴⁵Bradley, op. cit., p. 293.

²⁴⁶Gerwig, op. cit., p. 135.

²⁴⁷Robert M. Wren, "The 'Hideous Trumpet' and Sexual Transformation in Macbeth," Forum, IV (1965), 21.

²⁴⁸Charlton, Shakespearian Tragedy, p. 150.

²⁴⁹Campbell, op. cit., p. 223.

²⁵⁰Wren, op. cit., p. 21.

²⁵¹Bradley, op. cit., p. 294.

Macbeth begins as a complete man, maintaining his wholeness, even at his wife's first insistence that he take action; however, as she continues to prompt him, he finally becomes completely transformed and yields his self-authority to her.²⁵² However, once he is resigned to advancing the deadly scheme, he discovers that he lacks the courage and strength that he once possessed on the battlefields.²⁵³ On the other hand, because he is mastered by his wife's prodding, he carries out the deed, allowing his imagination to govern him.²⁵⁴ In contrast, the conception of the next crime, the murdering of Banquo, is much more rapid, as is its accomplishment. Macbeth now needs no prompting, no emotional spurring; his fear is the catalyst now as his power of thought pushes him further toward disintegration.²⁵⁵ His conscience no longer controls him, and he no longer needs his wife's support.²⁵⁶

In contrast to Macbeth's early weakness and lack of self-determination, Lady Macbeth's inflexible will and domination give her

²⁵²Wren, op. cit., pp. 18-19. Wren views this change as inverting the natural order of marriage as the Elizabethans would have viewed it.

²⁵³Charlton, Shakespearian Tragedy, p. 160.

²⁵⁴Boas, op. cit., p. 416.

²⁵⁵Pogson, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

²⁵⁶Farnham, op. cit., p. 126; Wren, op. cit., p. 20.

greatness.²⁵⁷ Furthermore, the strength of these traits tends to dwarf the weaker Macbeth and adds to her individuality.²⁵⁸ At the same time, she exhibits rational thinking, sharp wit, and self-control.²⁵⁹ Her self-reliance is demonstrated by the fact that, although she aids Macbeth, she never asks him for help in her crisis. She dominates by planning the direction of their actions and through her will urges Macbeth and appeals to his manliness.²⁶⁰ One must, nevertheless, recognize that her ambition is not selfish but, on the contrary, is self-sacrificing. Nowhere in the play does she indicate a desire for personal gain.²⁶¹ In fact, what she really desires when she asks to be "unsexed" is to be rid of all traces of conscience, so that by becoming "unnatural,"

²⁵⁷Miguel A. Bernad, "The Five Tragedies in Macbeth," SQ, XIII (1962), 50.

²⁵⁸McCormick, op. cit., p. 330.

²⁵⁹Gerwig, op. cit., p. 145; Campbell, op. cit., p. 233, discusses Lady Macbeth's reason giving way to passion.

²⁶⁰Bradley, op. cit., p. 308-309, 311; also, Frye, op. cit., pp. 102-104, maintains that Lady Macbeth actually usurped Macbeth's authority. Pogson, op. cit., pp. 87-88, believes that, through this urging of Macbeth, the thinker and slower actor, Lady Macbeth reflects his "emotional self" and, consequently, appears stronger.

²⁶¹Gerwig, op. cit., pp. 137-138, 140; also, Bernad, op. cit., p. 52, maintains that Shakespeare's deviates from his source so that he can give Lady Macbeth this important quality of unselfishness.

nothing will stand between her and Macbeth and their resolve.²⁶²

Thus, the marriage represented in Macbeth is significant in the strength it generates as a result of the couple's inter-dependency. This relationship enables the two, especially Macbeth, to accomplish that which would perhaps be impossible without the support of the other, and, in this respect, their marriage appears to be ideal. Although Lady Macbeth is often criticized for "usurping" the dominate role in her marriage, perhaps, Macbeth is to be blamed for allowing her to do so. Moreover, her motive for this behavior is not selfish ambition, but her action is rather the consequence of her love for her husband and a desire to help him fulfill his ambitious longings.

On the other hand, Antony and Cleopatra's tragedy is not a result of fate or fortune but is created by them as a consequence of their own weaknesses.²⁶³ Their primary weakness, perhaps, is that their passion for one another obscures their ability to reason, principally because of their all-consuming preoccupation with their own

²⁶²Wren, op. cit., p. 18; also, Campbell, op. cit., p. 238, maintains that the unsexing is the process of changing all her female characteristics into courage and determination. Frye, op. cit., p. 104, believes that Lady Macbeth unsexes herself by assuming the dominant role. Jameson, op. cit., p. 362, views this loss of feminine feeling as the result of her great ambition and consequent passion.

²⁶³Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 238-239.

pleasures.²⁶⁴ More specifically, their love is weakened by Cleopatra's destructive, yet alluring, power over Antony and his failure to face his conflict.²⁶⁵ Since they are, furthermore, mutually sensual, they bring out the worst in each other.²⁶⁶ Thus, even though the two are united in the end, the price they must pay for their love is death.²⁶⁷ In the light of these points, the play may be considered either as an expression of love triumphant even over death or as an exposure of the weaknesses of love which bring about the downfall of a hero.²⁶⁸ At the same time, this drama may be considered both as a tragedy of love and as a tragedy of state, although Shakespeare obviously is more concerned with emotion, people, and events than he is with the play's political implications.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴Dolora G. Cunningham, "The Characterization of Shakespeare's Cleopatra," SQ, VI (1955), 12-13; George Saintsbury, "Shakespeare: Life and Plays," in The Cambridge History of English Literature, V, 199, sees Antony and Cleopatra as heroic as they exhibit their weaknesses and royalty in their manner of throwing all away, even the royalty itself.

²⁶⁵Dickey, op. cit., p. 187.

²⁶⁶Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 250.

²⁶⁷Sylvan Barnet, "Recognition and Reversal in Antony and Cleopatra," SQ, VIII (1957), 332; also, Boas, op. cit., p. 477, points out that the relationship never was and never becomes love, that they never spiritually become one.

²⁶⁸Traversi, op. cit., II, 213; David L. Frost, "Antony and Cleopatra--All for Love; or the World Ill-Lost?," Topic, IV (1964), 33-44, refutes Traversi's analysis.

²⁶⁹Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 250, 252.

Shakespeare's purpose in portraying Cleopatra as he does may be to show what a woman can be without all of the outstanding characteristics that elevate her, such as honesty, chastity, modesty, faith, and nobility.²⁷⁰ Moreover, throughout the play, she is depicted as being inconsistent and unpredictable;²⁷¹ hence, she becomes a complex figure, difficult to isolate for any basic principles; but, perhaps, the two most obvious elements of her personality are those of her love of self and her love of power.²⁷² First, her self-interest is illustrated in her refusal to come down from the monument to see Antony because she fears capture.²⁷³ Furthermore, her self-interest wars with her commitment to Antony as she contemplates suicide, alternately swaying from thoughts of him to thoughts of a compromise with Caesar.²⁷⁴ Not only is her true love for Antony complicated by the nature of her self-love but also by her innate desire for power.²⁷⁵ Her selfish domination

²⁷⁰Gerwig, op. cit., p. 153.

²⁷¹Cunningham, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁷²Jameson, op. cit., p. 244.

²⁷³Gerwig, op. cit., p. 166.

²⁷⁴Farnham, op. cit., pp. 176, 197; also, Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 10, 15, believes that the reason Cleopatra takes her own life is irrelevant, but the important fact is that she chooses the noble way. Cunningham also sees her reactions at this point as being consistent with Elizabethan beliefs concerning repentance and preparation for death.

²⁷⁵Jameson, op. cit., p. 255.

destroys Antony's stature and success as a soldier and brings about his death.²⁷⁶

As Antony becomes more dependent upon her, his military judgment becomes increasingly impaired.²⁷⁷ Except for his passion for Cleopatra which controls his actions, his great qualities of leadership would prevail to bring him success.²⁷⁸ Indeed, his conflict lies in his having to choose between the role of a lover and that of a statesman.²⁷⁹ Actually, the conflict is between two loves, i.e., Cleopatra and honor that brings glory, because Antony's role as a statesman stems from ambition rather than from conscience.²⁸⁰ Throughout the play, he wavers from one emotion to the other, but progressively becomes more deeply in love. Only when he hears of Cleopatra's death, does he realize that an empire without her means nothing to him.²⁸¹ Although this "double vision" causes Antony's fall, it raises him to the status of a tragic hero.²⁸² His passion for Cleopatra ruins him politically,

²⁷⁶Harrier, op. cit., p. 65.

²⁷⁷Farnham, op. cit., p. 191.

²⁷⁸Kenneth Burke, "Shakespearean Persuasion," Antioch Review, XXIV (1964), 27.

²⁷⁹Huntington Brown, "Enter the Shakespearean Tragic Hero," Essays in Criticism, III (1953), 294.

²⁸⁰Ibid., p. 295.

²⁸¹Barnet, op. cit., p. 332.

²⁸²Traversi, op. cit., II, 226.

mentally, and morally, and it makes his fall more splendid than the triumph of his conqueror.²⁸³ In spite of his fall, he has moments to the end suggestive of his former greatness, and he is aware of his downfall, although he is unable to turn the tide because of his sensual entanglement.²⁸⁴ Characteristically, he does not complain about his coming tragedy but rather reflects on his past glories.²⁸⁵ Furthermore, rising to the heights of generosity, he forgives Cleopatra for all of her deceit that has led to his suicide.²⁸⁶ Thus, the involvement between Antony and Cleopatra is founded on passion and sensuality which obscure their ability to reason and, consequently, results in their conflict and, ultimately, their destruction. Similarly, the obvious self-interest combined with genuine love creates Cleopatra's conflict and inconsistency, whereas Antony's conflict stems from his attempt to justify his behavior to his civil responsibilities. Therefore, their relationship is basically responsible for their personal struggles and is only rectified to a degree by their noble behavior when they commit suicide.

Shakespeare presents in The Winter's Tale the idea that evil

²⁸³Herford, op. cit., p. 14.

²⁸⁴Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 251.

²⁸⁵Anthony Caputi, "Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: Tragedy Without Terror," SQ, XVI (1965), 186.

²⁸⁶Gerwig, op. cit., p. 166.

is a part of life but that good can come from evil.²⁸⁷ Indeed, the actual situation is presented as being good, while giving the appearance of evil, since Leontes finds what he has thought to have been lost.²⁸⁸ However, the consequences of evil are not completely eliminated, since Shakespeare does not revive Leontes son.²⁸⁹ Moreover, the origin of the evil is totally within the mind of Leontes, who demonstrates the idea that love can give way to hate.²⁹⁰ Thus, the conflict in the relationship of Leontes and Hermione is a result of Leontes's jealousy.²⁹¹ This jealousy, which is innate to his character, is ungrounded and lacks motivation.²⁹² Furthermore, it is an evil impulse that brings out the baseness of his feelings and is against the very laws of nature.²⁹³ At the same time, this jealousy overpowers his understanding, his manners, and his decency, and causes him to gloat over his unbecoming thoughts

²⁸⁷Paul N. Siegel, "Leontes a Jealous Tyrant," RES, I (1950), 307; Theodore Spencer, Shakespeare and the Nature of Man, p. 193.

²⁸⁸Spencer, op. cit., p. 192.

²⁸⁹Hunter, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

²⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 188, 190-191.

²⁹¹Edward L. Hart, "A Mixed Consort: Leontes, Angelo, Helena," SQ, XV (1964), 458; Hudson, op. cit., p. 178; Hunter, op. cit., p. 187.

²⁹²Beekman W. Cottrell, "The Winter's Tale," "Lovers Meeting," Discussions of Five Plays by Shakespeare, p. 73.

²⁹³Traversi, op. cit., II, 301.

and fancies.²⁹⁴ As a consequence, his attributes of astuteness, generosity, and common civility are destroyed.²⁹⁵ In addition, because he is unable or unwilling to recognize the truth, he becomes cruel, obstinate, and set in his own passion.²⁹⁶ Comparable to Macbeth, he allows himself to be dominated by this passion to the exclusion of his reason.²⁹⁷ When he is proclaimed a tyrant by the oracle and rashly refuses to accept such truth, he becomes isolated from Hermione, Mamillius, and perhaps, as importantly, the gods.²⁹⁸ Nevertheless, his sixteen long years of penance and suffering are sufficient to bring about the discovery of Perdita and the reconciliation with Hermione.²⁹⁹

In contrast to Leontes, Hermione is vividly presented as a woman of mildness and tranquility, serious beauty, and great dignity, traits that are combined in such a way that she evokes the deepest sympathy

²⁹⁴Hudson, op. cit., p. 178.

²⁹⁵Gerwig, op. cit., p. 177.

²⁹⁶Jerry H. Bryant, "The Winter's Tale and the Pastoral Tradition," SQ, XIV (1963), 395.

²⁹⁷Siegel, op. cit., p. 303; also, Hallett Smith, "Leontes' Affectio," SQ, XIV (1963), 165, in contrast to those who compare Leontes to Othello, explains that Leontes is not another Othello because his attitude is much more like Iago's than Othello's since it is cynical.

²⁹⁸John Lawlor, "Pandosto and the Nature of Dramatic Romance," PQ, XLI (1962), 96.

²⁹⁹Siegel, op. cit., p. 306.

and admiration.³⁰⁰ For example, she possesses dignity, but not that grounded in excessive pride; she loves, but is not overcome by passion; she shows tenderness, but not weakness.³⁰¹ Moreover, her grandeur in the face of severe trial shows fortitude and a firm conviction of her innocence.³⁰² Even when she fails to convince Leontes of his mistake, she never cries nor complains but calmly and resignedly submits to his will.³⁰³ Since she has given Leontes her love and trust, his condemnation of her is deeply felt, and for her the only recourse is to retire and wait for his reconciliation and for the fulfillment of the oracle.³⁰⁴ Thus, her capacity to forgive and hold no resentment and to endure Leontes's insults with poise and unselfishness make her, perhaps, the most noble of Shakespeare's women.³⁰⁵

In the other important relationship, here, love is depicted as being ideal, yet practical and honest. First, Florizel and Perdita indulge in no coyness or flirtation but openly declare their love.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁰Jameson, op. cit., p. 168.

³⁰¹Loc. cit.

³⁰²Boas, op. cit., p. 522.

³⁰³Jain, op. cit., p. 173.

³⁰⁴Jameson, op. cit., pp. 173-174, 176.

³⁰⁵Gerwig, op. cit., p. 179.

³⁰⁶S. L. Bethell, The Winter's Tale: A Study, p. 98.

Although Perdita is a child of nature, she is at all times realistic.³⁰⁷

In fact, she knows from the beginning that complications will arise from their difference in station.³⁰⁸ Moreover, Florizel is presented as her harmonious partner; however, his worthiness is, perhaps, of her making, since it is inspired by her spirit and character.³⁰⁹ His intuition and integrity allow him to see through her outward appearance as a shepherdess and recognize her true, high-born qualities.³¹⁰ Indeed, his clarity of vision contrasts directly with Leontes's inability to recognize the character of Hermione. Thus, one realizes that Shakespeare ennobles the relationship between Florizel and Perdita, perhaps, to heighten the less ideal one between Leontes and Hermione and uses the young pair's love to restore that of the mother and father.³¹¹

From this investigation of The Winter's Tale, one becomes aware of the effect of jealousy on the marriage of Leontes and Hermione. The fact this jealousy is merely a figment of Leontes's imagination fails to eliminate the suffering. Moreover, his unjust and unfounded accusation of Hermione reveals his lack of understanding of her genuine

³⁰⁷Schücking, op. cit., p. 246.

³⁰⁸Bethell, op. cit., p. 98.

³⁰⁹Hudson, op. cit., pp. 471-472.

³¹⁰Bryant, op. cit., p. 396.

³¹¹Ibid., pp. 236-237.

character and true love. In contrast to their marriage, Florizel and Perdita's relationship demonstrates the effects of an understanding and perceptive love.

In the last play for consideration, The Tempest, Shakespeare presents both personal and social evil.³¹² Here, obedience to social laws and those governing personal behavior are the distinguishing marks between order and disorder which are pitted against each other, although they never actually come into open conflict.³¹³ Gonzalo, Ferdinand, Miranda, and Prospero represent the ordered element, while the creators of disorder are Antonio, Sebastian, Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban.³¹⁴ Thus, one readily sees that the evil type of man exists side by side with the noble, in primitive societies as well as in civilized ones.³¹⁵ Further examples of the ordered society, which are, perhaps, more important to this discussion since they concern the pair of young

³¹²Traversi, op. cit., II, 323.

³¹³Rose Abdelnour Zimbardo, "Form and Disorder in The Tempest," SQ, XIV (1963), 52.

³¹⁴Ibid., pp. 52-53.

³¹⁵Dean Ebner, "The Tempest: 'Rebellion and the Ideal State,'" SQ, XVI (1965), 167. On p. 173, Ebner discusses The Tempest as an attempt to refute Montaigne's idea that man should return to a primitive society, since civilized man is corrupt and primitive man is good. G. Wilson Knight, Byron and Shakespeare, p. 293, sees the culmination of the return to nature that is present in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, As You Like It, King Lear, Timon of Athens, and Cymbeline as exemplified by Prospero's life on the island.

lovers, are the imposition of manual chores upon Ferdinand and the insistence on Miranda's chastity. In fact, Ferdinand and Miranda's love becomes important as an expression of order, ritual, and ceremony.³¹⁶ Another implication of the union of these two lovers lies in its contribution to the reconciliation of their fathers.³¹⁷ However, the reconciliations in the play center primarily around Prospero, who, unlike his predecessor Leontes, is the offended person and the one to forgive his enemies.³¹⁸ This personal accord is brought about by Prospero's supernatural powers, which, moreover, in addition to his learning and its resultant strength, have brought order to the island.³¹⁹ Prospero's mystical quality manifest in his supernatural dealings is softened by the feelings and virtues associated with him as a father. In fact, the presence and influence of Miranda are his link to the real world.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Traversi, op. cit., p. 343.

³¹⁸ Ernest Gohn, "The Tempest: Theme and Structure," English Studies, XLV (1964), 117.

³¹⁹ John A. Hart, "The Tempest," Shakespeare: Lectures on Five Plays, pp. 72, 83, 85; Knight, op. cit., p. 295; Zimbardo, op. cit., p. 52. Spencer, op. cit., p. 198, discusses, in terms of the play, the three levels of man: the animal, the human, and the intellectual, which Prospero represents.

³²⁰ Hudson, op. cit., pp. 428-429. Knight, op. cit., p. 295, believes the relationship developed between father and daughter, which is first tyrannical on the part of the father as in Romeo and Juliet, then more philosophic as in King Lear, is given final shape in the Prospero-Miranda relationship.

Similarly, his supernatural associations have had an influence on Miranda, for through her connection with the spiritual atmosphere and magical mystery of the island, she has unconsciously assumed a supernatural dignity.³²¹ In addition, her simplicity and originality are the result of her isolation, and, because she has not learned the wiles of womanly behavior in the relationship to men, she is unable to disguise her heart to Ferdinand.³²² Indeed, in contrast to Perdita who is more knowledgable and self-assertive, Miranda represents the idealistic portrait of love and wonder.³²³ On the other hand, almost entirely lacking in personal traits, Ferdinand is simply the model of the noble gallant.³²⁴ However, his courage, piety, and honor are heightened by his love for Miranda.³²⁵ Moreover, he is willing, because of this love, to subject himself to Prospero's tests; in fact, Miranda becomes his new life, eliminating his grief and unhappiness over the supposed loss of his father.³²⁶ Furthermore, the love of

³²¹Hudson, op. cit., p. 437.

³²²Ibid., p. 437, 439.

³²³Stoll, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

³²⁴Schücking, op. cit., pp. 246-247.

³²⁵Hudson, op. cit., p. 440.

³²⁶John A. Hart, op. cit., p. 80; D. G. James, The Dream of Prospero, p. 131.

Miranda and Ferdinand presents the operation of the principle that, when a person falls in love with the right individual, only the highest and tenderest thoughts and actions will exist.³²⁷ Consequently, as their love grows, it does so without physical contact and is the result of natural attraction, not magic.³²⁸ Thus, their relationship may be considered as an idealistic union of two souls.³²⁹ This idealism is further emphasized by the fact that it follows the accepted form of Elizabethan courtship, as exemplified in the handfasting followed by Prospero's confirmation of the contract, making it de praesenti.³³⁰ Moreover, while pointing out the pastoral quality of the love of the two, the masque that celebrates this happy union typifies Elizabethan marriage festivities.³³¹

Of all the man-woman relationships discussed in this study, the young couple's love in this last play is the most idealistic. Although Prospero uses his supernatural powers indirectly to bring Ferdinand and Miranda together, their love is genuine and grows out of their own feelings. However, to insure that Miranda will be joined to a man of

³²⁷Hudson, op. cit., p. 440.

³²⁸Francis Neilson, Shakespeare and The Tempest, p. 150.

³²⁹Jain, op. cit., p. 5.

³³⁰Harding, op. cit., p. 150.

³³¹Carol Gesner, "The Tempest as a Pastoral Romance," SQ, X (1959), 538.

equal character and goodness, Prospero tests Ferdinand to measure his loyalty, devotion, and love. Thus, Prospero's role is significant in the development of their relationship and, in addition, brings order and happiness into the lives of the other characters.

From this investigation of man-woman relationships in Shakespeare's later plays, one concludes that, in comparison to the earlier group, the involvement of the individual partners with one another is responsible in greater part for the development and enhancement of the characters and their relationships. First, in contrast to the other selections, Measure for Measure demonstrates the most complex involvement in Elizabethan concepts of marriage and morality. The resolution of the difficulties surrounding these mores provides the opportunity for the character of Isabella to become fully developed, as she interacts with the Duke, Claudio, and Angelo. This male-female inter-relationship is reminiscent of that in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, since Isabella and Angelo, like Proteus, experience development through relationships with more than one individual. However, one recognizes the maturity of the later drama because of the complexity of its relationships, the result of a more complicated view of human nature and an intricacy with which Elizabethan customs are incorporated into these relationships.

Next, more outstanding and complex than any of the previous associations is the depiction of the union of Othello and Desdemona. In this marriage, the true character of Othello is gradually revealed as

his affinity to Desdemona develops. Here, one recalls the earlier play, Romeo and Juliet, since first, the couples marry without parental knowledge; secondly, they are completely absorbed in their passion; and thirdly, they sacrifice their lives as a consequence of their love. However, the destruction of the pair in Othello is more directly the result of the complex nature of their union, since this bond is destroyed by the internal forces of Othello's jealousy and Desdemona's naïveté. On the other hand, the conflict and resultant destruction of Romeo and Juliet is created basically by their failure to observe the social proprieties, yet their love is never tarnished.

The marriage of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is one of the stronger unions investigated because of this couple's complementing strength, although it is their mutual ambitious desire that brings about their destruction. This play is comparable to The Merchant of Venice because in both plays, the female exhibits dominating characteristics in her relationship with her husband. For instance, Portia asserts herself by becoming involved in the trial of her husband's friend and, thus, aids Bassanio in accomplishing that which he cannot accomplish by himself. In fact, Portia's strength and superior intellect are directly responsible for ennobling Bassanio. Similarly, but more significantly, Lady Macbeth, through her influence and initiative, helps Macbeth attain the kingship that he, perhaps, otherwise might not have achieved.

Thus, she more completely than Portia involves herself in her husband's affairs and, in truth, actually usurps the authority of Macbeth. Consequently, one appreciates the complexity of this relationship, because here the understanding hinges on the human psyche rather than primarily on situation as it does in The Merchant of Venice.

Antony and Cleopatra's relationship is the most carnal. Their all-consuming passion for one another to the exclusion of reason is not only responsible for their deaths but, in the process of bringing about their demise, is revelatory of their complicated personalities. Like Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra's relationship is founded on passion. However, Romeo and Juliet's love strengthens their relationship, whereas, love demoralizes Antony and Cleopatra. The complexity of Antony and Cleopatra's involvement is a result of Cleopatra's inconsistencies and Antony's inner conflict. On the other hand, Romeo and Juliet's love is not actually complicated, since their problems are not within their union but are external.

In The Winter's Tale, the marriage of Leontes and Hermione demonstrates, as in Othello, a suffering resulting from jealousy. However, through divine help, Leontes is able to recognize his fault in time to prevent the disaster shown in Othello. Moreover, in this later play, Hermione's clear understanding of Leontes and her resolute will and strength are contributing factors in the preventing of such a tragedy.

On the other hand, Desdemona lacks the perception and the maturity necessary to cope with Othello. Another trait inherent to Hermione's character is her submissiveness, which is unlike Kate's learned subjection in The Taming of the Shrew. Moreover, Hermione's relationship with Leontes is more intricately involved in individual characteristics; whereas, Kate's relationship with Petruchio and her evolvement from shrew to submissive wife are basically the result of situation. Furthermore, Hermione innately is the ideal, submissive wife that Kate purports to be in principle.

Finally, in The Tempest, the union of Ferdinand and Miranda represents the ultimate and idealistic relationship. Although their characters and association lack the complexity and depth of some of Shakespeare's earlier couples, their elevated actions, thoughts, and words reveal their pure, devoted, and all-encompassing love. Furthermore, the lack of complexity of the couples, Florizel and Perdita in The Winter's Tale and Ferdinand and Miranda, recall the earlier love relationships depicted in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, since all of the lovers demonstrate little character development. However, upon closer analysis, one finds that these later couples are, perhaps, intended to be simple creations because of their symbolic implications, especially in the Ferdinand and Miranda union, whereas, those in the early play, reveal Shakespeare's conscious attempt to lend them

individuality, although they remain shallow in this respect. Although Ferdinand and Miranda apparently lack development, they have a deep and symbolic union. One recognizes that the relationship is of primary importance because of its symbolic nature and, perhaps, the simplicity of character is necessary to depict this ideal love.

CHAPTER IV

SHAKESPEARE'S CONCEPT OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE:

A SUMMARY

Throughout the plays under consideration, Shakespeare makes clear his view on Elizabethan concepts of love and marriage. Moreover, as he matures, his portrayal of character and situation regarding man-woman relationships gradually grows in complexity. Love is, perhaps, the most dominant theme that Shakespeare incorporates, in one way or another, into each of the ten selected plays. Although his approach is somewhat different in each work, obvious parallels may be identified. Grouping the plays into several categories facilitates the drawing of parallels and, thus, the comprehending more fully of Shakespeare's total attitude toward the prominent subject of love. First, three early plays, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Measure for Measure, and The Taming of the Shrew, conveniently may be considered together to show the influence of Elizabethan ethics, morals, and beliefs (pertaining to courtship, love, and marriage) upon Shakespeare's application of the theme to the various plots. Secondly, Romeo and Juliet, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest have in common the representation of love in ideal relationships, especially revealing love at first sight. Thirdly, The Merchant of Venice, Othello, Macbeth, and, again, The Winter's Tale present Shakespeare's views on married love. Finally, Antony and

Cleopatra reveals a relationship of lovers outside the banns of marriage and, therefore, is accorded separate consideration.

The first group of plays is important, because it reflects the influence of the times upon Shakespeare's writing, an influence that remains throughout his career. The Two Gentlemen of Verona displays codes of courtship prevalent during Elizabethan times. For example, in revealing a plot to elope with Silvia, Valentine discusses how a man should interpret a woman's behavior and, thus, win her:

Val. Win her with gifts, if she respect not words:
Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

Duke. But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

Val. A woman sometimes scorns what best contents her.
Send her another; never give her o'er;
For scorn at first makes after-love the more.
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you,
But rather to beget more love in you:
If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone;
For why, the fools are mad, if left alone.
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say;
For 'get you gone,' she doth not mean 'away!'
Flatter and praise, commend, extol their graces;
Though ne'er so black, say they have angels' faces.
That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.

(III.i.89-105)

Proteus, too, knows the artful technique of courtship and wooing, as he explains to Thurio how the latter individual must woo Silvia:

But you, Sir Thurio, are not sharp enough;
You must lay lime to tangle her desires
By wailful sonnets, whose composed rhymes
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows.

Duke. Ay,
Much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.

You know the lady; she is fast my wife,
 Save that we do the denunciation lack
 Of outward order: this we came not to,
 Only for propagation of a dower
 Remaining in the coffer of her friends,
 From whom we thought it meet to hide our love
 Till time had made them for us.

(I.ii.149-157)

Moreover, Angelo has taken the more binding de praesenti vow with Mariana.³³⁶ The Duke, therefore, explains the significance of Angelo's contract:

She should this Angelo have married: was affianced to her by oath,³³⁷ and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract and limit of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wrecked at sea, having in that perished vessel the dowry of his sister.

(III.i.221-225)

Furthermore, the Elizabethans, and more specifically the Church, frowned upon the consummation of any marriage contract before solemnization by the Church.³³⁸ However, by indicating the scorn placed upon Claudio by the Duke and Isabella and, at the same time, allowing both the Duke and Isabella to help plan the consummation of the union of Angelo and Mariana, Shakespeare reveals that the Church was less critical of the consummation of a marriage contract without solemnization

³³⁶Nagarajan, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

³³⁷The italics are the present author's.

³³⁸Harding, op. cit., p. 143.

if it were de praesenti type.³³⁹ The Duke further reveals this less critical attitude when he prompts Mariana to use the bed-trick to consummate her union to Angelo:

Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all.
 He is your husband on a pre-contract:
 To bring you thus together 'tis no sin,
 Sith that the justice of your title to him
 Doth flourish the deceit.

(IV. i. 71-75)

Thus, Measure for Measure is a play more deeply involved in the Elizabethan philosophy of marriage, because of its complicated treatment of the subject, than any other play under consideration in this study.³⁴⁰

The next group of plays depicts idealistic love, specifically love at first sight. Romeo and Juliet clearly reveals the effect of love at first sight upon Romeo:

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
 It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
 Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;
 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
 So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
 As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
 The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
 And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
 Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
 For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

(I. v. 46-55)

Before undergoing this change, when Romeo's affections were focused on

³³⁹Jain, op. cit., p. 19.

³⁴⁰Schanzer, op. cit., p. 88.

Rosaline, he was the typical malcontent lover, more love-sick than in love:³⁴¹

Why, such is love's transgression.
 Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
 Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
 With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
 Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
 Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
 Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
 What is it else? a madness most discreet,
 A choking gall and a preserving sweet.

(I. i. 191-200)

Thus, in this play, Shakespeare portrays the difference between supposed love and true love, idealistically expressed.

In two later works he portrays this type of love on an almost symbolic level.³⁴² Indeed, the thoughts, the motives, and the actions of Shakespeare's lovers are highly elevated and holy. For instance, Florizel, talking to his father in disguise, shows the impact that Perdita has had upon him:

. . . were I crown'd the most imperial monarch,
 Thereof most worthy, were I the fairest youth
 That ever made eye swerve, had force and knowledge
 More than was ever man's, I would not prize them
 Without her love; for her employ them all;
 Commend them and condemn them to her service
 Or to their own perdition.

(IV. iv. 381-387)

Even more ideal is the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda.³⁴³

³⁴¹Quoted in Furness (ed.), Romeo and Juliet, p. 22.

³⁴²Traversi, op. cit., II, 297, 321.

³⁴³Ibid., p. 321.

In fact, as it is revealed in their speeches, they and their love seem not of this world. For example, upon seeing Ferdinand, Miranda innocently regards him as a spirit but does not, in truth, change this view throughout the play. She is so amazed by him that she must repeat in even more emphatic terms: "I might call him / A thing divine, for nothing natural / I ever saw so noble" (I.ii.417-418). From the beginning, she idolizes him: "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple: / If the ill spirit have so fair a house, / Good things will strive to dwell with't" (I.ii.456-458). Similarly, Ferdinand has the highest thoughts of her, when he first encounters her:

Most sure, the goddess
 On whom these airs attend! Vouchsafe my prayer
 May know if you remain upon this island;
 And that you will some good instruction give
 How I may bear me here: my prime request,
 Which I do last pronounce, is, O you wonder!
 If you be maid or no?
 (I.ii.421-426)

From the time of this first meeting, his love for Miranda transcends all else:

Hear my soul speak:
 The very instant that I saw you, did
 My heart fly to your service; there resides,
 To make my slave to it; and for your sake
 Am I this patient log-man.

Mir. Do you love me?
Fer. O heaven, O earth, bear witness to this
 sound
 And crown what I profess with kind event
 If I speak true! if hollowly, invert
 What best is boded me to mischief! I

Beyond all limit of what else i' the world
 Do love, prize, honour you.
 (III.i.63-73)

In these types of relationships, love is presented as awe-inspiring, unwavering, honest, sincere, all-encompassing, and elevated, since pettiness, distrust, misunderstanding, and selfishness do not exist, here.

The next group of four plays contains Shakespeare's views on married love. In the first, The Merchant of Venice, the initial motivation in the marriage between Portia and Bassanio is not that of love, but rather that of a mercenary aim, because Bassanio desires wealth.³⁴⁴ However, love becomes almost immediately the basic factor in this marriage. After Bassanio chooses the correct casket, Portia willingly and completely accepts him:

Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
 Commits itself to yours to be directed,
 As from her lord, her governor, her king.
 Myself and what is mine to you and yours
 Is now converted: but now I was the lord
 Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
 Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
 This house, these servants and this same myself
 Are yours my lord:
 (III.ii.165-173)

Her generosity and obvious deep love for him prompt a change in Bassanio:

³⁴⁴Brandes, op. cit., I, 191.

Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
 Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
 And there is such confusion in my powers,
 As, after some oration fairly spoke
 By a beloved prince, there doth appear
 Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
 Where every something, being blent together,
 Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
 Express'd and not express'd.

(III.ii.177-185)

Still, there are various stages in the development of their relationship.

For example, Bassanio must learn the value of love as opposed to friendship before an ideal union can exist.³⁴⁵ He learns his lesson well, as he is reprimanded by Portia for giving the ring to the "lawyer," and vows that he will "never more break an oath with [her]." Thus, one observes a marriage that matures as the relationship develops.

In contrast to The Merchant of Venice, Othello reveals a marriage weakened by lack of trust and understanding. Hence, Othello is easily swayed by Iago because of an insufficient trust.³⁴⁶ After Iago has placed the seed of doubt in Othello's mind, the latter remarks:

. . . I am abused; and my relief
 Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
 And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love
 For others' uses.

(III.iii.267-273)

³⁴⁵Hapgood, op. cit., p. 26.

³⁴⁶Bradley, op. cit., p. 155; Elliott, op. cit., p. 279.

On the other hand, Desdemona does not exhibit, as a good wife should, an understanding of her husband and his actions.³⁴⁷ Clearly, she is far from being correct in her judgment of Othello as she describes him to Emilia:

. . . my noble Moor
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

Emil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who, he? I think the sun where he was born
Drew all such humours from him.

(III. iv. 25-31)

Consequently, she is too naïve and lacks the depth of perception needed to cope with Othello's high degree of jealousy.³⁴⁸ These flaws in both partners result not only in the destruction of the union but in the deaths of the couple, as well.

The view of marriage in The Winter's Tale can be compared to that of Othello, since the conflict is similarly centered around a lack of trust. However, Hermione exhibits a great understanding of her husband and shows patience in knowing that she has done nothing to warrant Leontes's rash judgment of her.³⁴⁹ She explains:

There's some ill planet reigns:
I must be patient till the heavens look
With an aspect more favourable. Good my lords,

³⁴⁷Bradley, op. cit., p. 165.

³⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 165-166.

³⁴⁹Boas, op. cit., p. 522.

I am not prone to weeping, as our sex
 Commonly are; the want of which vain dew
 Perchance shall dry your pities: but I have
 That honourable grief lodged here which burns
 Worse than tears drown:

(II.i.105-112)

Moreover, she is submissive, and her subjection of self to Leontes's will is expressed on several occasions. For example, she says, "I never wish'd to see you sorry . . . ," and admits that her attentions to Polixenes sprang from her obedience to Leontes:

. . . For Polixenes,
 With whom I am accused, I do confess
 I loved him as in honour he required, . . .
 So and no other, as yourself commanded:
 Which not to have done I think had been in me
 Both disobedience and ingratitude
 To you and toward your friend,

(III.i.62-64, 67-70)

Thus, to please her husband was her primary concern and obligation, or as she says, "The crown and comfort of my life, your favour"

Perhaps, the most ideal marriage relationship to be found in this group of plays is that involving Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, because of its "partnership" quality, trust, and understanding.³⁵⁰ Lady Macbeth's understanding of her husband along with her infinite willingness to help him achieve that which he is unable to obtain without her is explained as she reveals:

³⁵⁰Gerwig, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
 What thou are promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
 It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
 To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
 Are not without ambition, but without
 The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst
 highly,
 That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
 And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou 'ldst have, great
 Glamis,
 That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it;
 And that which rather thou doest fear to do
 Than wishest should be undone.' Hie thee hither,
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
 And chastise with the valour of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 To have thee crown'd withal.

(I.v.16-31)

Thus, in this group of plays, one witnesses the status of married love being strengthened or weakened, depending upon the characteristics which the partners bring to their marriage.

Of all the man-woman relationships discussed, here, that of Antony and Cleopatra is the most sensual.³⁵¹ Numerous references throughout the play indicate the contempt that other characters have for this illicit relationship. For example, in describing Antony's plight, Caesar observes that "Cleopatra / Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his empire / Up to a whore; . . ." (III.vi.65-67). Furthermore, Scarus says:

³⁵¹Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

She once being loof'd
 The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
 Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard,
 Leaving the fight in height, flies after her:
 I never saw an action of such shame;
 Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before
 Did violate so itself.

(III. x. 18-24)

Not only does Scarus reveal, herein, the extent of Antony's behavior, but he also observes how demoralizing and ruinous is Antony's affection for Cleopatra. Enobarbus, too, realizes how passion so governs Antony that it becomes "Lord of his reason." As shown in Antony and Cleopatra, all-consuming passion brings destruction as it becomes the only basis of a man and woman's relationship. Ideal love cannot exist in such an atmosphere. Furthermore, illicit love that transcends all social obligations cannot thrive and grow into an ideal relationship.³⁵²

Throughout these ten plays, Shakespeare is concerned with examples of male-female relationships before and after marriage. As he matures in his dramatic portrayal of character and situation, he allows the love relationships to gain in complexity, the result of innate characteristics of his individual characters and, thus, demonstrates a developing concept of marriage. For the most part, the code of behavior exemplified in many of these relationships conforms to many Elizabethan

³⁵²Bullough (ed.), op. cit., V, 238-239; Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 12-13; Dickey, op. cit., p. 187.

concepts. Furthermore, this marriage code consists of understanding, loyalty, trust, love, obedience, and complementing each partner through the strengths of the other. Although the marriages which Shakespeare presents are not ideal, he depicts ideal love. Perhaps, in the last two plays (The Winter's Tale and The Tempest) in the relationships of Perdita and Florizel and Miranda and Ferdinand Shakespeare depicts the ideal marriage state. These couples are completely and unequivocally dedicated to one another: love is paramount, complete understanding of one another without difficulty is apparent, and no problems appear that the two could not solve through love and devotion and complete subjection to one another.

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