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SHAKESPEARE'S CLOWN-FOOLS REVISITED WITH AN ORIENTAL ESCORT: A RECONSIDERATION OF FALSTAFF, LEAR'S FOOL, CLEOPATRA'S CLOWN, AND AN EXAMINATION IN THIS LIGHT OF A CLOWN-FOOL OF SANSKRIT DRAMA

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Ratna Ray was born in Shillong, India, on July 22, 1936. She received the Master of Arts degree from the University of Calcutta in 1957.

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PREFACE TO ADDENDUM:

MATERIAL PERTAINING TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS THESIS BUT APPEARING IN PRINT AFTER THE ORAL DEFENSE OF OCTOBER 13, 1970.

It is a pleasure to recognize "*Antony and Cleopatra*: Limits of Mythology" by Harold Fisch, Professor of English in Bar-Ilan University, Israel, which work appeared for the first time in print in *Shakespeare Survey*, XXIII (December, 1970), subsequent to the presentation of this thesis and its defense, October 13, 1970, and to see our prior analysis of the *Antony and Cleopatra* material substantiated by such a renowned scholar.

PREFACE

Despite centuries of critical efforts to fully explain the meaning of Shakespearean characters, there remain some which need further examination. Three of such characters are Falstaff, Lear's Fool, and the Clown in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Examined carefully they reveal yet different and deeper significance than they have been given. The greater part of this study will be devoted to minute textual analysis leading to elaborate examination of the functional and meaningful roles played by the three above-mentioned characters. The approaches taken in this study provide for other possible standpoints from which these characters may be studied. As we present our appraisals of a character in question, we will purposely and systematically introduce major previous English scholarship in this area so that the merit of the one against the other may be unbiasedly evaluated. For reasons which will be made evident in the lines to follow, we will refer to all of the three characters examined in this study as Clown-Fools.

From the examination of the general qualities of the Clowns and Fools we find that their major characteristics overlap. Renowned authorities in this field have found it necessary to use the two terms, *Clown* and *Fool*, as interchangeable terms. We merely follow the precedents set by

masters and do not take it upon ourselves presumptuously when we decide to make a compendious term out of these two terms by hyphenating them. Instead of suggesting a third category of classification, we merely point out that because of their common and overlapping qualities it is functional, as the scholars before us have shown, to use the terms almost synonymously. They are not a class by themselves; rather, their ways and means of entertainment strengthen our hypothesis that a Clown can not be completely differentiated from a Fool. We will explain the term Clown-Fool in the beginning of our study in the light of the existing history and development of the Clowns and Fools traced by specialists in this field.

Our basic supposition is that the three characters in concern have importance much beyond our present recognition. Falstaff is known mainly as the "most perfect comic character." But his Clown-Foollike qualities, which lead Henry V to address him as a "fool and jester" (*II Henry IV*, V.v.52), have not been examined and demonstrated extensively. To appreciate the attitude assumed here by Henry V, we have to consider the facts that as a Clown-Fool type, Falstaff makes presumptuous demands, performs unruly deeds, and indulges in irresponsible activities, enabling the playwright to implement the rejection necessarily and smoothly. Unlike Lear's Fool, the Clown-Fool type Falstaff is devoid of wisdom, an indispensable quality in a true Court Fool;

therefore, instead of being an instrument in the advancement of the kingdom, he becomes an impediment to it. Hence his rejection is justified. In order to prove beyond reasonable doubts that Falstaff is a Clown-Fool and not necessarily a Vice, a sacrificial beast, or Prince Hal's father-substitute, we will cite extensively from major English critics who hold such views and cite substantially from the text with a deliberate intention that such comparative study will automatically establish the merit of the stronger view.

The Fool in King Lear has been traditionally interpreted as the "wise Fool who sees the truth" before Lear is aware of it. A careful analysis of the lines spoken by the Fool (II.iv.79-86) sheds a magnifying light upon his character and justifies his meaningful role in the play. Substantiated by the text we will demonstrate that according to the specifications given by him of an ideal friend, the Fool proves himself to be just that to King Lear. That the Fool is a compassionate person has been suggested by some English critics but this part of his role has not been analyzed in detail. Textual analysis shows that the malignity of the alien world in which Lear lives becomes more dismal-looking when the King is accompanied by a true friend, played by the hired entertainer of whom the world does not expect more than "hire and salary." Also, the Fool uses universally recognized ethical principles to point out

the inhumanity in Lear's daughters. Here the significance lies not merely in the Fool's important role as a friend of the bereft King but also in that his particular usage of universal ethical rules reinforces the fact that mankind is bound by a common sense of well-being despite the surface differences. This particular ethical slant in this section will have more bearing on the findings of our last chapter in this study.

The Clown in Antony and Cleopatra has received very little attention other than that he is a "foolish clown" who exhibits just love of "long words without being too sure of their meanings" and who incidentally becomes involved in the final scene of Cleopatra's reign. An alert reader can not overlook a line which describes Cleopatra as the "serpent-woman of old Nile" (I.v.25); he may not disregard the fact that Cleopatra is referred to as Isis (III.vi.17-18), an Egyptian goddess; he can not possibly ignore the Queen's traditional belief that "the dead are well" (II.v.33); he may not disregard the change made by Shakespeare in the manner of Cleopatra's death; and last but not least he can not turn away from lines such as V.ii.235-237 and V.ii.311-313 where first the Queen expresses her gratitude to a rustic Clown for he performs a "noble deed"; and where next, she asks Charmian to be quiet for the baby at her breast [asp] nurses her to sleep. These, and many more such references to Egyptian belief in after-life and in their

mythology, would necessitate a minute analysis and exploration of all possible sources and information which would lead to a possible explanation of the Clown-Fool's role in this play. The traditional belief of the serpent-woman Cleopatra about death is that death liberates one's soul from fleshly captivity and leads it to "live" eternally in after-life. The pitiful rustic Clown brings the Queen to her death. Hence he performs the role of the Executioner-Priest who assists Cleopatra-Isis, the serpent-goddess of the Nile, to be reunited with her eternal lover and husband, Amon Ra-Osiris, as represented by Antony. It follows logically then that in order to understand properly the role of the Clown-Fool as the Executioner-Priest one is lead by reasons evident to examine the sincerity of Cleopatra as a lover; what Antony means to her in terms of her belief; and what their union may mean in Egyptian terms because the Queen comes from that culture and not from the West. The playwright has used masterfully the fine nuances and representations typically Egyptian in the play to evoke the meaning necessarily Egyptian in nature. One may not ignore such references, explicit and implicit, while reading the play. Hence, to appreciate the immeasurable importance of the Clown-Fool's role we are bound to introduce in detail some features of the Egyptian culture, namely, their mythology and their belief in after-life.

Lastly, the Clown-Fool types in Shakespeare show

definite and striking similarities to those in Sanskrit drama. Not only are they alike in their conventional characteristics, but their similarities lie deep in their meaningful and dramatically functional roles in their respective plays. We will examine and analyze the Clown-Fool, Vidushaka, in Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā* and compare him with some of the major Clown-Fools in Shakespeare. This comparative study may be a small contribution to the existing scholarship which endeavours to foster a fuller understanding of different cultures through their continuous belief in an implicit thesis that, in their literatures, men live in "one world." Through a substantial textual, comparative study of Kālidāsa and Shakespeare in this section and through the extensive references in Chapter II to universal ethical principles, we have drawn together some of the basic ethical rules which show the two hemispheres to be much closer in universal terms than is commonly understood.

CHAPTER I

SECTION A

WHAT IS MEANT BY CLOWN-FOOL?

Previous scholarship inadequately explains the character of Falstaff. Hence the present writer found it necessary to re-examine Falstaff carefully so as to come to a possible satisfactory meaning of his character. Detailed analysis led us to notice major qualities of Clown and Fool of tradition in Falstaff. It also appeared from studying the different treatises on Clowns and Fools[1] that they demonstrate no significant differences to be classified as separate entities. Instead, most of the distinguishing qualities are common to both of these types. It is also noticed that noted authors have found it necessary to use

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[1]In this connection we have consulted the following studies: John Doran, *The History of Court Fools* (London: Richard Bentley, 1858); E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage* (London: Oxford University Press, 1903), Vols. I & II; Olive Mary Busby, *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama* (London: Oxford University Press, 1923); M. Willson Disher, *Clowns and Pantomimes* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925); Barbara Swain, *Fools and Folly: During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932); Enid Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (New York: Doubleday & Co. Ltd., 1961); and Robert Hillis Goldsmith, *Wise Fools in Shakespeare* (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1963).

these two terms synonymously. From examination of their views and a review of the texts we conclude that Clown-Fool, a compound word denoting common properties of both Clown and Fool, is comprehensive enough to describe Falstaff, Lear's Fool and Cleopatra's Clown, the three comic characters analyzed in this study. The discussion which follows will show that we do not promise any solution to the problem in regard to Clowns and Fools which has baffled specialists; rather, following the authorities, such as Busby, Disher, Chambers and Swain we come to the logical conclusion that Clown-Fool is not a third category but it is a reasonably comprehensive and functional term which describes the characters with whom we are involved in this study. Before proceeding with the actual analysis, we will place in perspective the native qualities of the Clowns and Fools and also will determine what part these characters have played in the development of what we consider a Clown-Fool.

Recorded history of all countries shows that at one time or another each society has felt the necessity of a merry-maker, one who provides amusement and entertainment. And each in its own manner has come up with its own comedian to satisfy that particular society's need and taste. This comedian, sometimes known as Fool and sometimes as Clown, is a perennial figure. Apart from the two main categories such as Clown and Fool, these walking fountains of mirth were known also as *fou*, jester, joculator, rustic, zany, *badin*,

boor, minstrel, sot, narr, vidushaka, and so forth. Their appearance, accessories, and manner of delivery varied as much as did their names. They were known for mask, coxcomb, motley, slop, bells, wooden lath, malice, wisdom, garrulousness, monosyllabic bluntness, physical agility or deformity, shrewdness or stupidity. But Barbara Swain tells us that whatever his special attributes might have been,

> the creature behind the mask and the name when he is genuinely one species of the great genus fool has one inevitable characteristic; he appears from some point of view erring and irresponsible. He transgresses or ignores the code of reasoned self-restraint under which society attempts to exist, is unmeasured in his hilarity or in his melancholy, disregards the logic of cause and effect and conducts himself in ways which seem rash and supposed to be not due to intention but to some deficiency in his education, experience or innate capacity for understanding. He is not to blame for them, and society, amused at his freedom from the bonds of its convictions, laughs at him while it condemns him. Within any society these undisciplined irresponsible individuals are found. They are its "fools," . . .[1]

Despite their earnest efforts, critics have not been able to distinctively categorize qualities and characteristics of the Clown and Fool separately. Rather, we find that in course of time these two "terms fool and clown became interchangeable."[2] In accordance with this observation of M. Willson Disher, Olive Mary Busby tells us that because of the overlapping qualities among Clowns and Fools, she

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 1.

[2]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 28.

decides to use these terms synonymously in her study.[1]

> . . . in many cases it is difficult to distinguish between clown-proper from the domestic fool; and this likeness, which renders classification difficult, proves that the conventional stage clown must have inherited a good deal from the domestic fool. . . . One prominent feature of it is the close personal connection between fool and master, so characteristic of Shakespeare's fools. It is where we see this personal attachment, . . . , we see servant following master's fortunes throughout the play, often grumbling at his hardships, real or imagined, offering cynical comments on the situation, and jesting in and out of season, but often, too, conveying sound advice in his jests, and sometimes showing true devotion. It is there that we may assume with certainty the indebtedness of the clown in question to the domestic fool.[2]

It seems that a deep interaction and fusion went into the making of these humor-producing characters in different ages. Even when she is speaking specifically about the Fool, Swain is relating to the Clown's traditional qualities, such as nonsensical prattle and silly acrobatics. Swain describes that the

> fool's prattle was but chief means of amusing his employers, aside from awkward acrobatics and practical jokes. The piquancy of his nonsense lay in the gleams of truth which his simplicity or his wit allowed at times to come through the main stream of babble.[3]

It may be relatively easy to analyze every element which constitutes a chemical synthetic, but it is not at all

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[1]Busby, <u>Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama</u>, p. 5, footnote.

[2]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 14.

[3]Swain, <u>Fools and Folly</u>, p. 59.

possible to be definite about the multifarious components which go into the making of a social and literary comic. A character of this sort may reflect the fine nuances and uniqueness of a particular culture; therefore, we may possibly identify the broad and wide characteristics evidenced in such character on a universal basis, but it is next to impossible to identify with certainty what part each influence played in the creation of such comic personalities in literature. Busby says about the Fool on the English stage:

> The difficulty in dealing with his origin is not to find possible sources--of these there is no lack--but to decide what part each played in determining his character. It may be admitted at once that the complete performance of this task is impossible. Many of the stage clown's comic devices are part of the common stock-in-trade of merrymakers of all ages--crude and boisterous horse-play, coarse personal satire, gibes at women and love, and the like--and in the case of other characters, it is impossible to decide from which of several likely sources they were drawn. All that can be done here is to indicate each of the various possible sources of influence, pointing out any characteristic which seems to have been derived from that source rather than from any other.[1]

Francis Douce, in his detailed study of Shakespeare's costumes, shows disappointment in the "ancient writers" because "though improperly" they used the two terms Clown and Fool synonymously. He states that

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 8.

these writers referred to these humorous characters in the dramatis personae in quite the same manner with no effort to see the distinction between them. We would expect that Douce would provide us with a definite distinguishing mark by which we might differentiate the two terms clearly. Although he puts forth "something like a classification of the different sort of fools and clowns . . . ," yet he remains unsuccessful in providing a satisfactory distinction. He explains the "general domestic fool" as

> 1. A mere natural, or idiot.
> 2. Silly by nature, yet cunning and sarcastical.
> 3. Artificial.[1]

And to Douce, "the clown" was

> 1. A mere country booby.
> 2. A witty rustic.
> 3. Any servant of shrewd and witty disposition, and who, like a similar character in our modern plays, was made to treat his master with great familiarity in order to produce stage effect.[2]

Even a superficial examination of these "classifications" shows that there is no real distinction between a Clown and a Fool. Rather, this only indicates that they share basically common qualities.

Later, Douce observes:

> . . . but although the _fool_ of our old plays denoted either a mere idiot or natural, or else a

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[1]Francis Douce, _Illustrations of Shakespeare_ (New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), p. 499.

[2]_Ibid_., p. 500.

> witty hireling or artificial fool, both remained for the purpose of making sport for their employers, the Clown was certainly a character of much greater variety.[1]

However, it would seem to us that "greater variety" does not distinguish the Clown from the Fool; rather, it indicates that the Clown may have used greater scope and liberty. That, however, is also not proven by Douce. The implication seems to remain that for some reason or other it was more gainful to pretend to be a Clown, a rustic idiot, a stupid boor, a clumsy insensible fellow. Folly becomes noticeably profitable. Disher observes that the "quick-witted coveted the place of the half-witted and obtained his privileges without shame."[2] From Disher again we learn that:

> That is the origin of the jester, the "material fool" whom Shakespeare dubs clown, because in his day the servant licensed to abuse had become confused with the mummer subjected to abuse. But the real stage clown is different in origin. The country lout was not dressed in livery and given a seat at lord's tables. The only share he took in the profession of mirth was to inspire comic actors to mimic his ways. Then, as the name of the fool stuck to the jester long after he had ceased to resemble the half-wit, so the name clown was kept by comedians.[3]

A little later Disher reinforces his observations about the

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[1]Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare, p. 498.

[2]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 28.

[3]Ibid.

interchangeability of the two terms Clown and Fool. He states:

> When lords hired players, the jesters were merged into the companies. Consequently, the terms fool and clown became interchangeable. Thus Touchstone is dubbed Clown, though his cry of "It is meat and drink to me to see a Clown" at the sight of William shows distinction. General use has now given the preference to "Clown"--not necessarily Clown of the Harlequinade--and, therefore, clownship, a Jacobean expression of mockery before invested with the pathos of Grimaldi's farewell, is the best label for all that makes a clown: his state and his art.[1]

Disher makes his point stronger when he states that only the name of the comedian changes from age to age, and, to a certain extent, his manner of presentation of the humorous material. ". . . clowns remain steadfast without the aid of tradition. But the changing needs of human nature are ever exerting an influence."[2] Different taste and different need give rise to hybrids and special breeds from the original genus Clown and Fool. Regardless of the number of variables one thing remains constant, that is, basically an entertainer, the Clown and the Fool appear in life in various appearances, with different names, but their innate natures are those of merry-makers. Disher's point is extremely well-taken as he remarks:

> The more he changes the more the clown is the same. Take away all the vestments and ritual that proclaim his calling, still his every word and act

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[1]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 28.

[2]Ibid., p. 37.

> reveal his relationship with the clot and the lump.[1]

And following this observation, Disher explains the correlation between the Clown and the Fool which makes these two terms nearly synonymous. He says:

> And there is no necessity to invest him in motley if there be virtues in his looks naturally, if his body be blown up like Triboullet's bladder, or his face resemble "a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire." There is, moreover, no special need of these if he be openly and palpably irresponsible, and therefore immune as a lunatic from all the laws of morality and justice. But our mood depends not a little on the knowledge that he is a fool as well as a knave, a butt as well as a bully, that he is these things equally and therefore undeserving of anger and pity.[2]

Both Swain and Disher imply that there is an effect of irresponsible and unrestrained nature in the Clown and the Fool.[3] Now we must determine the veritable nature of these characters as it was in the beginning. It is most relevant at this time to go back a few hundred years in the history of development of the Fool and Clown, because only on the successful demonstration of the close association between the Fool and the Clown depends the significance and justification of using a new term, Clown-Fool, in this study, especially with reference to Falstaff. Thus we are led

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[1] Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 34.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 34 and Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 1.

backwards into the history of the Fool and the Clown in an effort to establish our assumption on a stronger basis. The mythical explanation of the origin of the Fool arouses both awe and laughter. John Doran tells us the story. Life in Olympus was dull and Zeus complained,

> yawning the while, that there was not a _fool_ amongst the gods with _wit_ enough to keep _the_ divine assembly alive, _or_ to kill the members of it with laughter.[1]

To cure Zeus' boredom, Mercury suggested that it would be a "rare sport" to "scatter all the gaily-robed revellers, and by a shower, spoil their finery," as they were enjoying the festivities of the holiday season on earth. Zeus saw a potential of fun in Mercury's suggestion. But he had a better idea. "Let that serene priest," he said,

> who is fast asleep by the deserted shrine below, announce that a shower is indeed about to descend, but that it will wet none but the fools.[2]

Continuing his story, Doran informs us that there was a philosopher standing close by. No sooner had he heard that the impending shower was to wet only the fools, than he covered his head and hurried into his hut. But none of the others participating in the revelry felt the necessity of protecting themselves in this manner, as each "waited to see the fools drenched, and every man there was, in two

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[1]Doran, _The History of Court Fools_, p. 1.

[2]_Ibid_.

minutes, wet to the very skin."[1]

Still with the story, Doran tells us that having ascertained that the sun had reappeared, the philosopher came out of his shelter. The wet and angry mass addressed the "wise" philosopher as a "fool" when they found him dry and comfortable. They stoned him, tore his clothes, plucked his beard and called him abusive names. The philosopher, however, maintained his sense of humor and, in a commanding voice, said to the roaring crowd, "Oh, sagacious asses!" They were stunned by the compliment paid to their wisdom and became silent, and the philosopher continued:

> . . . have patience but for a single minute, and I will prove to you that I am not such a fool as I look.[2]

Then, kneeling as if in prayer, he stretched out his arms and begged to the heavens that he be allowed to be wet to the skin

> even as these fools are wet. Constitute me, thereby, as great a fool as my neighbours, and enable me, in consequence, a fool, to live in peace among fools.[3]

The words of this old man moved the two assemblies of the "idiots below and the Olympians above" to roar with loud

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 2.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., p. 3.

and inextinguishable laughter. His request was fulfilled, the showers came pouring from the skies, but seemingly with something more than rain, because when the philosopher rose from his knees, he "seemed ten times wittier than he was before."[1]

Though entertained by this amusing scene, yet Jupiter felt that some injustice was done to the philosopher and expressed his desire to do something which would recompense the loss of dignity incurred by the philosopher. Juno replied that this mission was already in its process of being worked out, as the "chief of the district was now taking the philosopher home with him to be at once his divertor and instructor."[2] Here, then, lay the seed of the Court-Fool who had to possess some qualities of foolishness to be entertaining and some qualities of wisdom in order to prove instructive to his patron. We have to remember these two most important requirements of a Court-Fool as it will be significant in the proper appreciation of Falstaff.

From Doran still, we learn that that night all Olympus looked down into the court of the Prince, near whom, at the banquet, stood the wise Fool, "pouring out witty truths as fast as his lips could utter them, ..."[3]

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 3.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

Observing this, Jupiter predicted that this Fool would

> be the founder of a race. Henceforward each court shall have its fool; and fools shall be, for many a long day, the preachers and admonishers of kings.[1]

Jupiter's prediction pointed out the inseparability of freedom of speech, wit, wisdom, and foolish behaviour in the Fool of the future. This little anecdote provided by Doran also suggests strongly that in order to be entertaining, the Fool had to act and behave sometimes like a simpleton, idiot, stupid boor, or, in other words, a Clown as he is known in later years. The Fool reigned in his patron's court in the form of Parasite, Buffoon, Jester, Joculator, Scurra and so forth. And his counterpart could be seen in the minstrel, court bard, and variety of entertainers in the years to follow. Parasites and other funmakers were abundant in the Hellenic world, in the courts of Philip and Alexander, and more or less permanently in the patrons' households. The Fool entertained the most illustrious company without any reserve or censure on the material he used to evoke laughter. Coarse and provocative jokes, fully sanctioned mockery and mimicry became the stock-in-trade of Fools and Clowns of later years. Doran informs us:

> In many instances, the philosophers of ancient times fulfilled the duties which were performed much less efficiently, perhaps by the official fools

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 3.

> at modern courts. They appeared to have exercised, generally with impunity, a marvellous licence of speech, and to have communicated disagreeable truths to tyrants who could not have accepted an unpleasant inuendo from an ordinary courtier, without rewarding it with torture or death. This very rudeness of speech, on the part of many philosophers, to princes who were patrons, was the distinguishing feature of the modern jester.[1]

The term Fool itself has been misused many times. Therefore Charles the Simple, though not a fool, but a man of extraordinary simplicity, was called such. And Homer, when he called Telemachus a fool, or silly, did not use it to scold him but rather as an address of endearment.

Doran says that "fool," "*fou*," "*fol*," these words have Northern origin. He recognizes, however, that every language has an original word "expressive of that office." Doran informs us that the

> French writers deduce the term Fool,--that is their own word *Fol*, or *Fou*,--from the Game of Chess. . . . Regnier, however, indicates the place of the "*Fou*" not only at Chess, but at Court--namely always near the King. The dignity of the latter, however, was preserved by a simple arrangement, namely, the ranking as "fool" or of deranged wit, everyone who ventured to utter to his superior a disagreeable truth. As for a closer connection between kings and fools, it is marked by Rabelais, who observes that wearers of crown and sceptre are born under the same constellation as the wearers of cap and bells.[2]

Motley, coxcomb, bells and bauble usually constitute a Clown-Fool's official costume. But like other rules

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[1]Doran, *The History of Court Fools*, p. 3.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 42.

in this world this rule about the Fool's costume has its exceptions, too. Clown-Fools in different ages, in different places do appear without the official motley. Leslie Hotson states that the motley, long title parti-coloured hose, hood and/or bell

> proves to be no more than a latter-day and radically misconceived upstart. We need but glance at a chronological series of theatrical costume prints to realize that the Eighteenth Century knew nothing of this gaudy medieval dress; and that the use of it for Shakespeare's Fools is no more than a modern fancy which pushed itself in with the Nineteenth Century and its medievalizing notions bred by the Romantic revival.[1]

Confirming the findings of Francis Douce and of Hotson, Robert Hillis Goldsmith states that it would be foolish to

> try to reconstruct the fool and his history merely from an examination of his characteristic clothing. First of all, the domestic and court fool did not always wear the official motley (Douce, II, 325). And in the second place, some of those who formerly wore the eared hood, the coxcomb, or the motley dress had little else in common with the professional jester.[2]

Though Shakespeare does not make particular reference to a Clown-Fool's bald head, yet the tradition shows that "the Court or domestic fool usually was bald or he wore his hair shorn like a monk's."[3]

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[1]Hotson, Shakespeare's Motley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 5.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, pp. 4-5.

[3]Ibid., p. 1.

Douce implies that a Clown-Fool may have shaved his head in imitation of or perhaps to ridicule a monk's crown. But Cornelius Agrippa leads us to think that the Clown-Fool's custom may antedate the monk's by a few centuries. He states that the "Greek Gelatopois (laughter-maker), the Mimes, and the Moriones are never represented otherwise but bald."[1]

It is not clear what the significance may be of the coxcomb worn occasionally by a Clown-Fool. But we learn from Goldsmith that Lucian describes a "jester with his head closely shaved except for a tuft left at the top in the shape of a cock's comb."[2] The archaeological discoveries of the Third Century B.C. "picturise the mimic fool of the Phylakes" in the terra cotta vases, and also portray farcical figures of Southern Italy "as bald-headed or wearing a conical shape hat or pilos."[3]

The Clown-Fool usually carried a stick, staff or club, "which," says Doran,

> was originally nothing more than a plant (Typha Linnaei) which grows in marshes, and which was commonly known as the Fool's club, or sceptre.[4]

This stick is sometimes known as a marotte or

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 54.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 1.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 56.

bauble. Sometimes it is seen as a

> rough stick with an attached bladder to a finely wrought sceptre tipped with a fool's head in miniature. The obvious inference is that the fool reigned over his followers with a bauble as the King ruled with his sceptre or the Lord Mayor with his mace.[1]

But Douce implies that occasionally the form of the fool's bauble was "obscene in the highest degree."[2] The bawdy insinuation associated with the bauble may be seen in Mercutio's remark about Romeo's infatuation for Rosaline (*Romeo and Juliet* II.iv.95-97) and in the conversation between Lavache and Lefeu in *All's Well* (IV.v.23-28).

Some old plays show the Clown-Fool with a dagger. Douce suggests that perhaps it is

> the same instrument as was carried by the *Vice* or buffoon of the Moralities; and it may be as well to observe in this place that the domestic fool is sometimes, though it is presumed improperly, called the *Vice*.[3]

To substantiate his remark, Douce cites Ben Jonson's *Devil is an ass*. Trying to rectify the existing misconception, Douce points out that the dagger of the Vice was "made of a thin piece of lath; and the use he generally made of it was to belabour the Devil."[4] From the various examples cited in this connection by Douce we can see that no writer has

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[1]Goldsmith, *Wise Fools in Shakespeare*, p. 4.

[2]Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, p. 509.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 510.

[4]*Ibid.*

adhered to one or the other, the dagger or the stick, with which they adorned their Clown-Fools. Douce indicates that the confusion specifically takes place in the Elizabethan times, during the time of Greene and Chapman, markedly.[1]

Among other characteristic features and accessories we notice that long, drooping ears, bells, feather, and tail combine to suggest that the Clown-Fool "derived his dress from some sort of primitive animal masquerade."[2] Critics have tried to relate these features to some religious rituals or sacrificial feasts, but it still remains to be proved conclusively. Goldsmith rephrases Pickard-Cambridge's theory on this:

> . . . he believes that the comic spirit springs from man's childlike delight in whimsey and playful mimicry. If he is right, then some articles in the fool's wardrobe may well go back to the very dawn of comedy.[3]

A long coat or jerkin of motley was a usual apparel of the natural Fool. But somewhere along the line of development the long coat was adopted by the Court Fool, too. On special occasions only his dress became elaborate. Douce makes an observation about the long petticoat, yet another dress known to be worn by Clown-Fools:

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[1]Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare, p. 510.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 3.

[3]Ibid.

> This originally appertained to the idiot or natural fool, and was obviously adopted for the purpose of cleanliness and concealment. Why it came to be used for the allowed fool is not so apparent. It was, like the first (motley) of various colours; the materials often costly, as of velvet and guarded or fringed with yellow.[1]

We must remember that motley is not a "multi-coloured patched coat." Hotson conclusively demonstrates that it is a coat made out of multi-coloured, textured material, called motley, "an undemonstrative vest of humility."[2]

Douce admits that no one can definitely rule out other variations of the Clown-Fool's dress. We have noted earlier in this chapter that not all Clown-Fools necessarily wore the official costume. And Douce discusses this matter elaborately in his study.[3] We will note his findings in detail in Chapter II of this study as they will pertain most significantly to our analysis of Falstaff as a Clown-Fool.

From examination of important studies on Clowns and Fools we note that most of the authors agree that on many occasions a sane manservant plays the Fool to earn his living and hence possibly keeps his official habit for particular occasions. Synthesizing the findings of Doran, Busby, Swain, and Enid Welsford, Goldsmith speaks of the

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[1]Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare, pp. 510-511.

[2]Hotson, Shakespeare's Motley, p. 100.

[3]Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare, p. 511.

Fool's freedom and hence the lucrativeness of playing the Fool:

> Since the man in motley enjoyed this privileged, if somewhat eccentric, position in the medieval court or manor house, what was more natural than that the itinerant jester or _joculator_ should disguise his wits and assume the role of a domestic fool? . . . The office of the fool, degraded as it sometimes was, yet offered a haven of security and an escape from obloquy. In exchange for this security and the right to practice his profession, the _joculator_ was ready enough to pull on coxcomb and bells over his already shaved head. Besides, it was no new thing for the professional entertainer and laughter-maker to pretend to be something less than he was.[1]

Goldsmith continues to say that it is no wonder then that the wandering minstrels and jesters in the early middle ages were so eager to put on the guise of the mentally deranged and idiots. In conclusion, Goldsmith points out that the

> merging of the professional jester with the licenced fool gave rise to a new species--the artificial fool or court jester. The fusion must have taken place as early as the twelfth century, for at that time a distinction already was being drawn between "natural fools" and "fools artificial" (Welsford, 119). And it was this artificial fool of tradition who was to grow eventually into the wise fool of Shakespeare's plays.[2]

About these man-servants, who played the witty Fools or Clowns, Douce indicates that they substituted themselves in place of the original domestic or natural

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[1]Goldsmith, _Wise Fools in Shakespeare_, pp. 6-7.

[2]_Ibid_., p. 7.

Fools, and their dress "was not distinguished by any peculiarity."[1] We can gather from Douce's observation that from the very beginning there was no strict rule for dressing by which one could distinguish between Fools. Goldsmith makes it clear for us that exact distinction between the various classes of laughter-makers is not possible. He states:

> The bald-headed fool began his theatrical career as a travesty upon the mythological Herakles and Odysseus and ended as the *stupidus* of the early Roman Empire. The circus clown of today, who stumbles as he tries to imitate the acrobats, is in the direct line of descent from this Roman mime. The *Cicirrus*, who may have worn a coxcomb as a part of his comic mask, belongs in the tradition of the plumed Greek *alazon* and the Roman *miles gloriosus*; types more foolish than fooling. In the comedies of the Renaissance, the swaggering captain was often the butt of the clever *Zanni*, *badin*, or witty fool. And *Arlecchino* of the *Commedia dell' Arte*, although he, too, wore a patched or parti-coloured suit, exhibited a very different kind of humor from that of the motley fool. Not so much witty in himself as a cause for wit in others, *Arlecchino* resembled the antique buffoon and the whimsical sot.[2]

Concurring wholeheartedly in this respect, we may note that all these types enumerated above, instead of varying from each other in any significant manner, show basic similarity. They all have one trait in common; it is their ability to evoke laughter.

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[1]Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, p. 513.

[2]Goldsmith, *Wise Fools in Shakespeare*, p. 5.

From the findings about the Fool in the last few pages, we would like to emphasize the fact that the Clowns of the later years absorbed within themselves many major qualities of the Fools in general and Fools of different orders. Among the most noticeable qualities are the unrestrained liberty to speak the truth, sometimes stupidity, sometimes wit, physical weakness, funny acrobatics, cumbersomeness, boastfulness, love of food, and practical jokesters (both as butts and as performers). Later when the Clown appears in scene, the critics strive vainly to distinguish between him and the Fool, overlooking the common qualities.

We have indicated in this chapter that the Fool was not the exclusive possession of the monarch. In course of time, wealthy men began to keep their Fools and felt proud to have such entertainers about them. The profession in most courts survived the name; and the office has been "exercised by many gentlemen, who, perhaps, little thought of the duty they were performing."[1]

Fools were hired in the court according to the taste of the lords. Some were coarse, rude, licentious men. Others were refined of speech, keen on observation, quick at repartee, of great memory, and had much learning. Some others were ugly, as Satyrion was an ugly

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 42.

man, with a shaven head except a tuft standing upright on his crown. Some were deformed, and had beastly enormous appetites. Their looks made the audience laugh. Though it was gross, yet it was taken as customary as life itself.

Still there was quite a difference among the kinds of Fools hired by different households. "Ordinarily, a clever lord preferred a clever fool, and the dull lord, who could neither read nor write, found the same sort of retainer a necessity."[1] Thus, the Fool of merit, according to his profession, "was the ablest man at court; and his superiors in rank were his inferiors in intellect."[2]

From Goldsmith we learn that

> . . . people sometimes kept monstrous imbeciles as pets much as ladies of a later day kept monkeys (Flögel, 159). These mental defectives were bought at public auction in the monster-market, and the more foolish they were, the better was the price they brought.[3]

Goldsmith points out that a modern man is apt to censure his ancestors for such a callous sense of humour. But he reminds us that "far back in the racial memory of man was the taboo that set apart the divine madman or the fool as a kind of seer. The popular mind even in Shakespeare's

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 49.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 5.

day looked on these 'innocents' as they were called,"[1] with mixed feelings of awe, contempt, and something like pity. We may note here that out of this peculiarly lenient attitude toward him, the Fool developed his licence to speak freely and behave irresponsibly. We may add to this information a few words from Swain. Speaking of these physically handicapped and mentally deranged people, she says:

> they remained in their villages, regarded with a mixture of disdain and superstitious awe as privileged children of God, . . . sacred beings having some mysterious connection with the unknown.[2]

It is our impression that, cruel as it may be, we laugh at others' incongruous or absurd behaviour, act, and/or appearance. In most cases, events or objects evoke amusement in us if they do not fall into the usual pattern of our lives.

No one speaks of the specific age of the Clown-Fool. From his perennially young nature, and fun-loving disposition, we conclude that his age was not considered as important as his humor. Although the wisdom shown by some of the Clown-Fools would make us be inclined to think that he must have had great experience in life to come up with philosophical and serious observations on the world. Yet we have no specific evidence from the history to conclude one way or the other. We must agree with the

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 6.

[2]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 53.

saying that the "Fool is as old as he feels."

Among many delightful stories cited by Doran to describe the exact role of the entertainer in the court, the following story prepares the reader for the insolence exhibited by the Court-Fool in the Elizabethan drama, especially in Shakespeare's Court-Fools. Doran informs us that

> it was rather a perilous matter to joke with or convey rough truths to the mind of the great Alexander. But his favourite philosopher, the light-hearted Anaxarchus was able to do both, with impunity. What a necessary but disagreeable truth did he impress on his royal master when the latter was bleeding from a recently received wound, "Ah!" exclaimed the philosopher, pointing to the place, "that shows that after all, you are only a man, and not a god, as people call you, and as you would like them to believe."[1]

Roman gentlemen used to possess Greek slaves who seemed to be both witty and learned. If the Romans wanted their evenings to be entertaining, they called for "the slaves with comic dispositions and merry turn of thought and expression, to accompany them."[2] These stolid masters felt quite complacent when the sallies of their slaves produced roaring laughter and applause. It follows from this and preceding examples that man can face the truth about himself, no matter how bitter it may

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, pp. 7-8.

[2]Ibid., pp. 16-17.

be, if it is pointed out by someone who is deficient or retarded according to his values. Hence, the Fools enjoyed the freedom of speech, and in the twentieth century comedians like Bob Hope, Alan King, and the like can rail the most disagreeable truth about the topmost ruler of their country and produce amusement by it and never be reprimanded for it.

We may note here that the old classical, professional jesters in Athens had the privilege of entering any company, without invitation. He was like a "Fly." There was not much civility or manners vouchsafed towards him, if he was of the class that did not wait to be invited. He would invite himself to the banquet and would be ordered to "play the fool for the amusement of the company."[1] In this category were the Buffoons and Parasites. The earliest evidence about Buffoons is found in Second Century Greece. We learn that Buffoons provided merriment in the feasts of wealthy households. But Plutarch used the word Parasite in place of Buffoon, a "dignified title applied to those associates of priests and magistrates who took part in official banquets not by right but by special invitation."[2] Later, the term Parasite acquired a degraded meaning. He was regarded as a free-loader, an officious flatterer capable

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 17.

[2]Welsford, The Fool, p. 4.

of mimicry and of having a quick repartee. These connotations of the term

> were practically identical with that type of buffoon whom the Greeks called . . . , laughter-maker, and not always distinguishable from other professional entertainers such as the . . . , clown, comic actor, and the . . . , conjurer, juggler, acrobat.[1]

Enid Welsford provides us with an anecdote from Lucian's record The Feast of the Lapithae, through which we know that sometimes the Buffoon and the philosopher "spar together, as do Philip and Socrates, sometimes they are shown to be indistinguishable from one another, as in the case of Alcidamus and Satyrion, though in this case it is the philosopher who is the greater buffoon of the two."[2] Alcidamus was a cynic, invited in a wedding banquet, where Satyrion was the buffoon of the host. He challenged the philosopher "to a bout of fistcuffs." They provided everyone with a good laugh.

Philip, the King of Macedonia, had his own jester in his court, who in his appearance and action exhibited an assimilation and fusion of many qualities of Fools and Clowns in history, qualities which are inherent in the making of these comedians, and we strive in vain to designate distinctive characteristics breaking them into two

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[1]Welsford, The Fool, p. 4.

[2]Ibid., p. 7.

different categories because in truth they enjoy close relationship with each other. Learning from Flögel, Doran informs us that Philip's Jester, Cliesophus, aroused laughter by his ugly and deformed looks and imitation of his "royal master's style, voice, manner, and even his infirmities."[1] Doran also states that Cliesophus seems to have been a parasite,

> who imitated his patron out of flattery, and did not mimic him in order to excite risibility. At other courts there were mimics who played the fool before their sovereign lords, by caricatured imitations of fencers, singers, and even orators, especially of their defects.[2]

Liberty taken here by the jester, a favoured member of the court, takes different form elsewhere and later becomes known as the Fool's freedom of speech. Aristophanes in his play, The Clouds (423 B.C.), makes use of this accepted freedom of the jester in the conversation between the characters "Just Cause" and "Unjust Cause." We cite the conversation from Doran:

> "Unj. Now then, tell me: from what class do the lawyers come?
> "Just. From the blackguards.
> "Unj. Very good! And the public speakers?
> "Just. Oh, from the blackguards, also.
> "Unj. And now look; which class most abounds among the audience?
> "Just. By all the gods, I see more blackguards than anything else. That fellow, I particularly know; and him yonder; and the

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[1] Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 22.

[2] Ibid.

blackguard with long hair."[1]

The preceding example shows the "true licence of the fool, in the professional use of the term; and the Athenian blackguards only laughed to hear themselves thus distinguished."[2] This kind of public insolence is evidenced in the *Iliad* where Thersites rails without restraint over any and everyone. The effect of it is described by George Chapman:

> All sate, and sylent usde their seates, Thersites sole except,
> A man of tongue, whose ravenlike voice of tunnels jarring kept,
> Who in his ranke minde coppy had of unregarded wordes,
> That rashly and beyond al rule usde to oppugne the lords,
> But what soever cam from him was laught at mightilie:
>
> (*The Iliad of Homer* II)[3]

Welsford tells us that an "important part of the stock-in-trade of successful buffoons was a talent for telling good stories about themselves."[4] But we are not so sure that we can positively attribute this quality to Buffoons. Court-Fools in general show excellence in the art of story-telling. We may relate, for example, from the

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[1] Doran, *The History of Court Fools*, p. 24.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, Vol. V: The Roman Plays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 120.

[4] Welsford, *The Fool*, p. 13.

treasury of an Indian Court-Fool. Gopāl, the Clown-Fool in King Kṛshnachandra's court, was the finest story-teller around. One night at the royal banquet, he told the following story to entertain his guests.

"My previous employer was having difficulties in controlling a widow in town, who was a money-lender by profession. Now, mind you, it is good to lend money to people in need, but it is pretty bad to charge an exorbitant rate of interest from poor and incapable folks. But the King, as I said, was unable to do anything to stop this woman. So one day he came up to me and said exasperatedly, 'Friend, help me to curb this woman's greed.' I listened to the ruler of the realm, the 'wise' King, as he related his failure to me, a Fool. Being as soft-hearted as I am, I could not turn him down. So I assured him of some action in this matter." A few days later Gopāl came to the Court gleaming with joy and an air of success and said, "Well, my King, do not worry any more. I have fixed it so that the widow will not try to extract money from poor people again." The King as well as the court was amazed at Gopāl's quick success. They wanted to know how he did accomplish what the "wise" King could not perform. So Gopal pulled out a cushion, sat relaxed, chewing on his beetle-nut and told his story. "Last Sunday afternoon I went down to her house," said Gopāl, "and asked her if she would offer some lunch to me, a poor Brāhmin. Being a

miser, she was reluctant at first, but she could not win over my art of persuasion. She bade me to go to the river and take a bath, while she would prepare some food. So I went down to the river, cleaned my bald crown, scrubbed behind my ears, took fair amount of time so that she would be able to prepare a good meal. When I went back my lunch was ready; it smelled sumptuous, and without any more delay I sat and started to partake of my food, letting her know by my gestures that I was relishing each dish. Before she would ask me for another serving, I helped myself to it leaving almost nothing for her. As she looked at me as if to say 'Oh, you wretched Brāhmin, I had to spend so much money to satisfy your greed!' I spoke up. 'Auntie,[1] I liked all the varieties of food that you made for me. But the Prawn curry, mm-mm, it was superb, no comparison, no comparison to it!' She was stunned by the words as if the thunder had stricken her. Quiet for a moment she spoke out in a defending voice, 'What on earth are you saying, Gopāl, Prawn curry? It can not be. Don't you know that I am a widow, and for that reason, follow a vegetarian diet? You must be playing a terrible joke on me, Gopāl!' I was not to give up so easily. I challenged her, 'are you implying then, that I, a Brāhmin, am a liar?' I opened up my folded left palm and showed her the little Prawns I had supposedly

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[1]No relation of Gopāl, but it is a form of address.

picked up from the curry. She looked at them with total disbelief and started to shake her head and then cried out, 'Oh, my God, what will happen if people find out about this? I will lose all my business, they will most certainly have nothing to do with a widow who eats fish. Oh, what have I done to deserve this?' and she kept on. I made a gesture of leaving, went a few steps towards the door, turned my head stealthily to see what she was doing. She stood there pale and shaky. I turned around and came near her, 'I guess for five rupees this story may remain within these doors.' Quick as a wink she took the money out, handed it to me and begged, 'please, Gopāl, see that it does.' I stepped out of the door; she gazed at my footsteps; as she was about to bolt the door, I went back and said, 'Better still, Auntie, I think if you forget all about lending money and charging interest like a butcher, I will even forget that Prawns live in the river and that it is very easy to catch them.' I pointed to the many folds on my bulky stomach; she gaped her mouth open with awe, and before she could say anything, I ran all the way to the court." A story such as this, even from a culture generally known as different from that of the West, indicates that ingenuity in telling a story is not unique to Buffoons or or any particular order of Clown or Fool. This is a quality found usually in comedians in general.

Variety entertainers, known variously as joculators,

jugglers and jongleurs, wandered all over Western Europe in the Middle Ages and earned their livelihood by their performances in the various towns and great wealthy houses. These entertainers appear to be the successors of the Fools and Jesters of Roman times. Busby ascertains that

> . . . the jongleurs combined in varying proportions the qualities of the honoured bard of Germanic times and the coarse and licentious buffoons of the later Roman stage, often adding to these, acrobatic and other tricks acquired from other strolling entertainers of the Middle Ages.[1]

We learn from Busby that performers of this nature found their way into England at an early date. There is evidence of a series of clerical attacks on once-admired "scop," a type of entertainer, which may have been caused by debasement brought about by the influence of performers of a lower class. Busby finds support for this hypothesis in the

> confusion of nomenclature in Anglo-Saxon glosses and vocabularies, where such different terms as 'minus', 'comicus', 'joculator', 'cantator', 'poeta', are impartially translated as 'gligmon' or 'scop'. In all probability, the intercourse between England and the Continent in ecclesiastical matters was largely responsible for the early introduction of the jongleurs into England, . . .[2]

Though it is possible to establish a connection between these performers and those of the Roman times, yet it is difficult to pinpoint the exact influences they had on

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 9.

[2]Ibid.

their English counterparts. We note, however, that "jesting formed an important part of these entertainments, and it is easy to see that performance including dancing, gesture, and masking accompanied by jests, might easily develop into something of the nature of drama."[1] This also suggests that it would allow for the development of a Clown-Fool character.

Another development of a comic character, to which we have not paid any attention at all is the character of Vidushaka, the Clown-Fool in Sanskrit literature. Bharata, the Aristotle of India, in his Nātyasāstra (theoretical study of dramatic art), mentions and describes this fully-developed Clown-Fool character. Extant in palm-leaf manuscript, Nātyasāstra dates back to the Sixth Century B.C., thereby taking a lead over the development in Greece. We may assume that possibly the two developments were parallel. Bharata describes the Clown-Fool as a dramatic as well as a social character, providing fun and amusement to all. We have noted that in Bharata's study we find Vidushaka as a developed character. This leads us to believe that possibly Bharata, like Aristotle, may have witnessed many dramatic performances of such manner to enunciate a general theory about drama and its individual

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[1] Busby, Studies in the Development of The Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, pp. 9-10.

characters. The notion that India had a dramatic tradition quite well developed before Bharata is strengthened by an archaeological discovery between 1912 and 1915 of thirteen plays of varying size and merit. These works, by merit of their excellence and remarkable characteristic similarities are ascribed to Bhāsa, an Indian dramatist who lived sometime between the Sixth and Fourth Century, B.C. Already different parts of the plays have been minutely examined; and "even if no definite conclusion is yet logically derived by the results of these intensive studies, they have helped to clear up misconception"[1] about the worthlessness of the efforts made by scholars to establish that Bhāsa preceded Bharata's Nātyasāstra at least by a century and a half. This leaves a possibility that Bharata may have witnessed Bhāsa's plays before writing his book.

Bhāsa's play Swapnavāsabadattā portrays the Clown-Fool as the companion of the main male character. His functions lie mainly in providing amusement by his appearance, wit, and absurdities. He is a schemer and intrigue-maker. But it seems that the character suffers from lack of scope and rough-hewn treatment. We will discuss in detail, the origin, development, major characteristics, function and role played by the Clown-Fool of Sanskrit

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[1]S. N. Dasgupta, ed., A History of Sanskrit Literature: Classical Period (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1962), pp. 106-107.

literature in Section B of this chapter. Therefore, we may do well here to examine some more of the mulitifarious facets of humorous figures in the literature of the West to appreciate later the most significant use Shakespeare makes of his Clown-Fools.

According to tradition the Fool was often "painfully candid," remarks Goldsmith. He arrives at this conclusion from some comments made by Moria in the Praise of Folly:

> . . . we see, that of fooles oftetymes, not onely true tales, but even open remarks are with pleasure declared. That what woorde comyng out of a wisemans mouthe were an hanging matter, the same yet spoken by a foole shall much delight euin him that is touched ther with.
>
> . . . .
>
> For what soever he hath in his thought, that sheweth he also in his countinaunce, and expression it in hys talke.[1]

Use of licence by a Clown-Fool is abundantly seen in the tradition. Cleisophus, the jester of Philip, anticipates later Clown-Fool's impudence. Goldsmith relates the story:

> Once Philip gave him [Cleisophus] a damaged horse, which he sold. And when after a while, he was asked by the king where the horse was, he said, "It's been sold for damages." And when Philip, amid loud laughter, perpetrated a joke at his expense, he said, "After that, ought I not to be the one to keep you?"[2]

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[1] Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 8.

[2] Ibid.

Some Fools showed shrewdness and wisdom at the same time. Diogenes, the philosopher-type Fool in Alexander's court, evidenced such qualities which became absorbed in later plays and adopted by the Clown-Fools. From Lyly's play Campaspe (1584), Goldsmith cites a delightful anecdote to this effect. "Alexander is seen toying," says Goldsmith,

> with the surly wit of the philosopher much as a later king would amuse himself with the pleasantries of his favourite fool:
>
> "Alex. If thou mightest haue thy wil, how much ground would content thee?
> "Diog. As much as you in the ende must be contented withall.
> "Alex. What? a world?
> "Diog. No; the length of my body."[1]

In the later Middle Ages, moral and religious instructive literature referred to the offenders against their codes as "fools." By the Fifteenth Century Fool became synonymous with "erring man"; it implied the one side of many antitheses between good and bad, desirable and undesirable, virtuous and vicious, rational and irrational, etc. People misguided in life, gone away from society and religion, were termed "fools." Hence The Ship of Fools described all society as Brant saw "it in terms of its culpable folly,"[2] Praise of Folly pictured society "as a kingdom of

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 9.

[2]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 2.

fools, but by shifting from one attitude toward folly to another transformed the fool from a figure cynically denoting man's depravity to an ironic symbol of his composite weakness and strength."[1] A Fool generally known as defective in nature or lacking education, the half-wit or simpleton, stood as an antithesis to wise man. The wise men were sometimes wrong, and there was the scope of the Fool to be right. By the Thirteenth Century Marcolf, the Fool, became known as the parodist of Solomon's wisdom. But Swain discovers that by the Fifteenth Century Marcolf's reputation spreads "chiefly as the impudent outcast who humbled the wise man."[2] Swain tells us that here Solomon's chief reputation is that of a Fool, while Marcolf, the Fool, had risen to the position of the counsellor to the King. She continues that:

> The inversion of status . . . here is complete. The wise are no longer wise, their methods no longer lead to the accomplishment of their desires, and the foolish now speak with wisdom to those in authority.[3]

During this time when the term Fool was a "popular metaphor standing for indiscreet, sinful, innocent or carefree," the genuine "or other sane people masquerading as fools, were however really visible in towns, in cloisters,

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, pp. 2-3.

[2]Ibid., p. 31.

[3]Ibid., p. 35.

in manor houses."[1] Masquerading Fools took advantage of the "blend of disdainful tolerance and awe with which the real fool was regarded."[2] And Swain points out clearly that in the name of folly they claimed "particular privileges and high spirits and irresponsibility."[3] This spirit was instilled into the lower order of clergy who used the name of the Fool and turned festivities into the Feast of Fools. It became almost a general rule that no festival was complete without its Fool.

From Busby we learn that the later Clown-Fool's range of humor was much moulded by the "*sermon joyeux*," some ludicrous and hilarious medleys of

> mock-pious exhortations, learned allusions and scurrility, full of dog-Latin and religious tags, which, originating in the mock services of the Feast of Fools, later played a prominent part in the performances of the Fool Societies, who delighted to parody both religious sermon and the rhetorical disquisition of the schools.[4]

Here lies the seed of a serious turn of the age-old foolery. A group of French actors adopted the costume and name of Fool and so obtained a particular satirical and moral effect in certain of their plays, as well as the freedom to

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[1] Swain, *Fools and Folly*, p. 53.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Busby, *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*, p. 15.

rough-house and to criticize the political and social authorities. This form of entertainment having great influence on the growth of the Clown-Fool is known as "sottie." Both Busby and Swain believe that in all probability this was "instrumental in making the clown a vehicle for satire, for the 'sottie' was in its very essence a satire of society."[1] We have learned from Swain and from Welsford that in the Middle Ages liberty of speech was nearly inconceivable except under the mask of folly; and the "sottie" introduced this liberty in its completeness on the stage. The chop-logic of the later Clown-Fool and his mock-learning may be traced back to have originated with the "sottie." "Sotties" were all in French. It seems from the information gathered by Chambers, Swain, Busby and Welsford that the influence exerted by the Fool Festivals and the Fool Societies on the English Clown-Fool came via the "sociétes joyeuses" of France, because neither the religious nor the secular revels appear to have prevailed at all generally in England.

The Zanni or comic servant of the Italian Commedia dell' Arte seems to have influenced the Clown-Fool in the ridiculing of his master to the audience and insulting him more or less ingeniously. It is a common-place that

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 15. It should be noted that this author uses Clown and Fool synonymously.

Italian dramas were well-known in England. Not only do we find many translations and adaptations of them, but also there are numerous references to the different "masks" of the "Commedia" in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries--"references which sometimes suggest connexion between the Zanni and the English clown."[1] Among the qualities the Zanni passed on to the Clown-Fool are that he is usually the confidant or intimate servant-friend of the main character; sometimes a rascal, sometimes a dunce, almost always the chief plot-weaver, his main function is to rouse laughter, to entertain at all costs.

We note that the next important comic character is created out of necessity. The prolonged and dull dramatic explications of spiritual plane called the Moralities, needed some form of comic relief to lighten the strain they put on their audiences. A play like Passion could continue solemnly for three long days. But it was quite difficult to sustain the interest of the audience. Hence, to dispense with the boredom, some comic relief or some light variation was needed. The Clown-Fool created out of such necessity was sometimes totally irrelevant to the main action of the play, but he used all the wealth from his treasury of humor to provide some relaxation for the spectators over-burdened with a dramatic presentation of serious import. This, of

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[1] Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 21.

course, combined the nonsensical prattle and factious criticism of the action of the world in general. The Clown-Fool's deficient nature was exploited to create such characters as Ignorance, Idleness' boy in Wit and Science, who speaks an almost unintelligible dialect, and whom Idleness tries in vain to instruct. The idiocy or stupidity of the Clown's nature at this time adds to the strength of the stage's Clown-Fool character later. Misunderstandings, real or pretended, figure prominently among these devices. In the process of playing on the deficiency or sinful nature of man in the Moralities, the Fool of tradition had become

> merged in the character of the comic Vice of the Tudor moral play, his trait of ironical jesting having interfused with other, less commendable features. And it is this trait or irony which the Vice chiefly passed on to the later stage fool.[1]

It is an extremely knotty problem to determine who influenced whom. Critics have been baffled by this question, but in view of the fact that the earlier Vices evidence strong similarities with the domestic Clown-Fool, and also the fact that the comic devices used by the Clown-Fools constantly appear in the roles of the Vices, "it seems safe to conclude that the court or domestic fool was from the first largely instrumental in determining the character

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 17.

of the Vice."[1] We will discuss quite in detail the question of Vice and Clown-Fool in relation to the make-up of Falstaff in Chapter II of this study. It would suffice here to indicate that Vice was employed in the Moralities to portray human shortcomings attractively but also in quite a ludicrous manner to prove that this trend of vice was not worthwhile to follow. His devices, such as verbal shifts, distorted echo, misinterpreting a word, comic stychomythia, innuendo, stage asides, parody are common with most fun-makers in history. Occasionally, the Vice becomes intriguer, and sometimes he himself brings laughter to the otherwise sullen Morality play. Although the Vice showed himself as almost a professional comedian, some Moralities have had a separate Clown-Fool over and above him.

The popularity of the stage Clown-Fool became so great in the Elizabethan period that dramatists wishing a successful box-office introduced a Clown-Fool regardless of the requirement or the propriety of the play. In most cases the Clown-Fool wanders through the stage aimlessly, sometimes spoiling serious or even tragic scenes with his untimely jesting. In Hamlet we come across a heavy attack on the abuse of the Clown-Fool character. It would seem logical that if his part were carefully worked out by the

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 13.

dramatist instead of selling him for his name's sake, then the Clown-Fool would not seem worthless. Busby points out that

> As higher dramatic ideals began to prevail, the dramatists seem to have realized that the only way to prevent the clown from spoiling their plays was to develop his part more fully them-selves, and to connect it as closely as possible with the main action. They began also to see the dramatic possibilities of the character--to realize that it might be made a real asset in their plays.[1]

In this study, our main focus will be on a few of Shakespeare's Clown-Fools. Therefore, because it is not within our immediate area we will not examine any individual Clown-Fool from the period as such. The only observation we would like to make is that by and large in this period the Clown-Fools are used as servants, but non-servant Clown-Fools also prevail. Skelton and Greene seem to have treated the Clown-Fools better than others. Prior to Shakespeare, Greene's Clown-Fools show better scope than others. Miles in Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (1589-1590) and Slipper in James IV (1598) both are parts of the main action in the plays. Both of them are so effi-ciently mingled with the main action throughout that it is difficult to imagine the play without them. Busby indi-cates that Greene and Shakespeare show superior quality:

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 26.

> during the ten years which elapsed between the appearances of Greene's two clowns, contemporary dramatists apart from Shakespeare produced no clownish servant worthy even to compare with Miles, ...[1]

We may note that by the end of this period Shakespeare's Clown-Fools were beginning to appear. Bottom, Launce and Launcelot had come earlier than Slipper, and Touchstone and Feste appeared two or three years later. And from this time a marked improvement is noticed in the dramatic treatment of Clown-Fools. It would be an understatement to say that Shakespeare's Clown-Fools are generally used for significant dramatic functions. But it is more than true that in Shakespeare's works we witness the "very consummation of clownage."[2] Lear's Fool, Feste, and Touchstone stand out; others like Falstaff, and the Clown in _Antony and Cleopatra_ play dramatically functional and significantly motivated roles, but for different reasons none of them has received adequate attention. Falstaff has been acclaimed as the greatest of comic characters, but he also evidences strong characteristics of the Clown-Fools of the tradition, and being such a character he serves a significant purpose although this fact has been relatively unnoticed. Besides serving as the antithesis of Lear's

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[1]Busby, _Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama_, p. 33.

[2]_Ibid._, p. 7.

folly, the Fool in Lear plays another important and meaningful role. An analysis is necessary to illustrate this point. Antony and Cleopatra's Clown is much more than a mere rustic simpleton, as will be demonstrated later in this study. But now, in Section B of this chapter, we will explain the term Vidushaka so that our apprehension of Chapter V becomes meaningful.

CHAPTER I

SECTION B

WHO IS VIDUSHAKA?

Vidushaka refers to a jester or a Fool, a popular figure in Sanskrit drama. But unlike the Fool in Western Comedy, the origin and evolution of the Vidushaka are unfortunately matters for conjecture only. The theoretical treatises, beginning with *Nātyasāstra*[1] of Bharata, are silent about the question of the origin of the drama. Bharata simply assumes the Vidushaka to be a necessary character in a dramatic presentation, and without suggesting the probable origin and growth of his character, proceeds to explain his characteristics and functions on the stage. If a careful study of the dramatic literature could have furnished material to trace the origin and growth of the Vidushaka, the prospect is ruined by the fact that the Vidushaka already appears as a fixed character in Classical drama. Though suggested by some Western scholars,[2] the possibility of the influence of Greek drama on the creation

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[1]Bharata, *Nātya-Sāstra*, Kāvyamāla, No. 42 (Bombay: 1894). This book is known in both forms, as shown here.

[2]Among the well-known are A. Weber, E. Windisch and A. B. Keith.

of the Vidushaka is ruled out by modern discoveries of manuscripts of plays wherein appears a full-fledged character and which antedate the Greek plays.[1]

A. B. Keith suggests that etymologically Vidushaka means "one who is given to abuse."[2] But the root word dus does not mean "abuse" (as Keith implies) but it means "to spoil," or "to blame"; and the preposition vi only indicates a particular mode. "The word applied to the character thus means, that the Vidushaka is 'one who spoils things for fun' and does it in his own characteristic humorous way."[3]

Dramatists writing in Sanskrit have used such a jester or a Fool with varying degrees of success. The major male character, who is usually a scion of a noble or a royal family, is allowed some associates who can amuse as well as advise him when required. Great dramatists, such as Kālidāsa, have shown that Vidushaka is capable of questioning his patron and pointing out his shortcomings, but Vidushaka does not attend courts and kings only. He is a comedian who makes his livelihood by his wits and friendly advice. He is generally well-versed in some art or other and he is trustworthy. There is reasonable evidence in the

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[1]See Section A, p. 35 of this study.

[2]A. B. Keith, The Sanskrit Drama (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1924), p. 113.

[3]J. T. Parikh, The Vidushaka: Theory and Practice (Surat: Chunilal Gandhi Vidyabhavan, 1953), p. 32.

history of Sanskrit literature that Vidushaka was a real person in real life in the Second Century, B.C., and that he was not merely a dramatic invention.[1] "He was born as a psychological necessity, and came to stay as a social fact."[2] Kāma-Sutra, a treatise on the art of love written in Sanskrit by Vātsāyana in the Second Century, B.C., refers to singing, dancing and witnessing of the performance of drama as edifying and instructive. In this connection Spring festivities, seasonal and religious, are mentioned. In Kāma-Sutra we come in contact with Vidushaka and two other type-characters. Still, the determination of the actual origin of the character of Vidushaka remains a knotty problem.

According to the earliest extant Sanskrit work on the science of dramaturgy, Nātyasāstra, dramatic art is the art of reproduction by imitation.[3] It is conducive to increasing the understanding and is instructive to people in general. Bharata holds that through music, dancing, and acting, the dramatic performance is entirely a new art for the production of aesthetic joy and it is not imitation in an ordinary sense of the term. But,

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[1]Dasgupta, A History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 646.

[2]G. K. Bhat, The Vidushaka (Ahmedabad: The New Order Book Co., 1959), p. vi.

[3]Bharata, Nātya-Sāstra, p., xiii

> as it is an imitation of life, Bharata justly emphasizes the propriety in the presentation of life on the stage. Each act performed, word uttered and garment worn must all be in agreement with what is actually found in life. Thus the representation of life on the stage by the dramatist is Lokadharmi [realistic].[1]

Dramatic performance becomes an art when recitation in the form of dialogue, associated with suitable gestures, postures, movements, dancing, costume and music, succeeds in giving expression to sentiments and passions so as to rouse similar sentiments in the audience. Bharata, the Aristotle of India, tells us that "drama would serve as a source of relief to those who are afflicted with sorrow, fatigue, and grief, and to the helpless."[2] It is the duty of the dramatist, we learn from the Nātyasāstra, to see that his truths are imaginative truths, that his presentations are ideal and not photographic. The exhaustive treatment of selection and reticence, dialogue, music, dance, and the minute gestures and other expressive devices on the stage make-up adopted by the artist to idealize facts and help the onlooker to imagine things of his experience and things beyond it--all these come within the scope of the goal and purpose of drama. Thus, drama is the result of the direct intellectual observation of life by the playwright and his

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[1]Chandra Bhan Gupta, The Indian Theatre (Banaras: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1954), p. 15.

[2]Bharata, Nātya-Sāstra, p. 19.

artistic imagination. It follows from these remarks that Sanskrit drama precludes utilitarian as well as aesthetic effect both on the readers and on the audience. The logical deduction here is that if the end of Sanskrit drama is to instruct and to delight, the role of Vidushaka as a comedian will only be to arouse laughter by some means or other. We cannot disregard the fact that Sanskrit dramatists were bound by some basic principles laid down with regard to the sentiments[1] which could or could not be developed in the play. This restriction has particular bearing on the development of Vidushaka as a jester. It will be meaningful here to provide certain facts about the origin of drama in Sanskrit literature and its possible bearing on Vidushaka's character.

Though it is commonly accepted that Sanskrit drama originated in the rituals of religion, yet it is not conclusively proven. We know for certain that elements of drama were present in the dialogue hymns in the Vedic times.[2] We can also with reasonable assurance state that Sanskrit drama has been considerably influenced by religion or religious cults. Though we may find the inception of Sanskrit drama in the Vedas, it is only in the post-epic period that we find Sanskrit drama in its present

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[1]Known in Sanskrit as Rasa.

[2]Dasgupta, History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 46.

form.[1] Written partly in prose and partly in poetry, Sanskrit drama introduced two new features which were not present in the epics. First, the epics were woven around superhuman beings or demons of darkness, while Sanskrit drama generally depicted human characters and human situations. Second, the dramatic literature introduced the language of the people. Literary criticism of ancient India always regarded drama as a form of refined poetry. It is classified as _Drasyakāvya_[2] as contrasted with _Sravyakāvya_.[3] Now poetry which begins to concentrate on human situations and human characterization and poetry which can be exhibited or seen naturally inclines to show human beings in all situations of life. Playwrights begin to feel the urge to portray human beings under all possible circumstances--in court and in rural life, in religiosity and unscrupulousness, in sorrow and in happiness, in their achievements and shortcomings. But the original dramaturgy directed dramatists towards evoking a particular sentiment rather than towards concentration on characterization. _Rasa_, or sentiment as the dramatists understood it in ancient times, was "the lasting impression of feeling pro-

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[1] See section A, p. 35, about the modern discovery of the plays of Bhāsa, who is believed to have lived during this period.

[2] Poetry which is capable of being exhibited or seen.

[3] Poetry which can only be heard.

duced to [sic] his overwhelming delight in a man of poetic susceptibility by the proper action of the *Vibhāvas*[1] and the *Anubhāvas*."[2] The main sentiments to be considered in the drama are heroic (*veera*), pathetic (*karuna*), love (*sringāra*), comic (*hāsya*), furious (*roudra*), terrible (*bhayānaka*), loathsome (*bivatsa*), marvellous (*advuta*). There is the ninth sentiment, quiet (*shānta*), which has tranquility as its permanent quality. *Shānta*, however, is not considered suited for dramatic purposes and rarely occurs as a main sentiment in the drama. As these rules specified by the dramaturgy are quite closely followed both in theory and in practice, as the sole object of the dramatic art as well as of the poetic, everything else is subordinated to this end. We are told that

> although the drama is described in theory as an imitation or representation of situations, the plot as well as the characterisation is a secondary element; its complications are to be avoided so that it may not divert the mind from the appreciation of the sentiment to other interests . . . the poet's skill is concerned entirely with the developing of its emotional possibilities. The criticism, therefore that the Sanskrit dramatists show little fertility in the invention of plots may be just, but it fails to take into account this peculiar object of the Sanskrit drama.[3]

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[1]It is the excitant which, being perceived, nourishes the main sentiment.

[2]It is the ensuant which is the outward manifestation of the inner feeling through the eyes, face, etc. Keith, *The Sanskrit Drama*, p. 315.

[3]Dasgupta, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 56.

Although the dramatists are bound by rigid rules, only the lesser authors are overshadowed by the strict adherence to these rules. Kālidāsa takes great liberty with these rules. He delineates Vidushaka, the Jester, quite differently from the depiction by previous dramatists. The King in Kālidāsa's _Śakuntalā_[1] is an individual rather than a typical king-lover prescribed by convention. The dramatists preceding Kālidāsa tend to adhere to the rigid rules of type, but Kālidāsa does not hesitate to break with convention and deviate from type. Although Vidushaka is a jester who evidences major qualities of the conventional comic character, Kālidāsa does not sacrifice the potentiality in the jester or in the King for evoking a particular sentiment. The main sentiment in _Śakuntalā_ is love or _Sringāra_. But in order to receive a full enjoyment of this sentiment the audience or the reader has to feel the sentiments of the pathetic, comic, heroic, and marvellous. The fusion of these sentiments intensifies the main sentiment, love. Vidushaka in _Śakuntalā_ contributes immensely to the proper development of the major sentiment as expressed through the characterization of the important figures in the play. The sentiment of love deepens, progresses, experiences adversity, and culminates in success by the assistance of Vidushaka, the jester. Therefore, we may conclude that

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[1]Discussed in Chapter V of this study.

the stereotyped figure of the Fool or jester in Sanskrit drama is liberated by Kālidāsa from the antique imprisonment of rigid rules--he is given liberty to work in other areas of the play than his own, namely, the comic or farcical. This conclusion brings us to an opportune moment to describe the appearance and characteristics of Vidushaka as he is known traditionally.

Nātyasāstra portrays Vidushaka as a Brāhmin of dwarfish nature. His teeth are protruded, he is hunchbacked, lame, baldheaded, red-eyed and has a deformed face; in short, he is ugly and repulsive in appearance. Later he is seen to have a tuft on the top of his nearly-bald crown, and sometimes he has two side locks of hair which resemble crow's feet, conical shaped. The underlying idea in the appearance of Vidushaka seems to be of physical deformity only, which Bharata suggested by means of these attributes. It is left to the actor or the dramatist to emphasize one or more of these characteristics in the actual dramatic performance. Some incongruity would certainly be a source of laughter on the stage, but it remains up to the discretion of the individual dramatist to decide how much of these absurdities may be used without destroying the main sentiment of the play.

There is no direct prescription of the dress worn by the Vidushaka. Since he is the friend of the King (in most cases) he has free access to all quarters of the

palace with unrestrained liberty. I. B. Sekhar tells us:

> On one hand he can crack jokes with the minor female characters, and on the other hand he is privileged to be friendly with the inmates of the royal harem.[1]

Bharata has provided the Vidushaka with a tawny, long loose robe, to evoke laughter. He carries a stick, danda-kāstha or kutilaka, made of wood or bamboo; and it is crooked in three places. Originally, it was the weapon of Brahmā, the Creator, and it was given by him to Vidushaka to beat off any disturbance which would impede the dramatic performance. It became the part of the convention with the Vidushaka.

It is not clearly understood why the Vidushaka should be a Brāhmin. There are a few possibilities which may be helpful to explain such specification. According to the Nātysāstra, the Vidushaka first appeared in the Prologue Purvaranga of the drama. In Sanskrit drama it is the custom to have the invocation to God and the deities of Fine Arts to bless the performance. This ritual should be performed by a Brāhmin, a member of the priest class. The commentator or the Śutradhāra cannot perform this function. Therefore, the Vidushaka is the immediate choice.

It is significant that no Sanskrit theorist has ever tried to fix the age of the Vidushaka. It would have been in vain to do so, because a comic figure is truly

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[1]I. B. Sekhar, Sanskrit Drama: Its Origin and Decline (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), p. 75.

"ageless." If one is keenly interested in determining the age of a particular Vidushaka, one has to perform this task on the basis of the reference, if any, in this direction, in a particular play.

Bhat discusses Parikh's point as the latter tries to pinpoint the Vidushaka's age in Kālidāsa's _Śakuntalā_.[1] Parikh stresses two words, _Batu_, which means young Brāhmin student, and _Yuvarāja_, denoting the young heir-apparent. Bhat points out that main male characters in Sanskrit drama are almost in all cases far from young. So he comments:

> . . . a boy Vidushaka could hardly be consigned as a mirth-provoking and "worldly wise" companion of a polygamous hero; and both addressing each other by the intimate term _vayasya_ as prescribed in theory. Furthermore, Harsha, Rājsekhara and Mahādeva have definitely shown Vidushaka as married men.[2]

We may also note that the Vidushaka's calling himself _Yuvarāja_ (heir-apparent) in _Śakuntalā_, Act II, is no definite proof that he is a young boy. An heir-apparent is not necessarily young. When a monarch is alive and ruling, his son or brother is continued to be addressed as _Yuvarāja_, whatever his age may be. King Dushyanta is childless and the presumptuous and fun-seeking Vidushaka usurps the title

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[1]We will discuss this play in detail in Chapter V.

[2]Bhat, _The Vidushaka_, p. 18, footnote. _Vayasya_ means "dear friend," "good fellow."

Yuvarāja when he gets the chance.[1] The term Batu also, instead of telling the age of Vidushaka, is used in the sense of "old boy," or "old chap" of colloquial English.

As a companion of the main male character, the Vidushaka should have a social status consistent with his role and in keeping with the dignity of the character whose companion he is. On the other hand, in a comedy situation the dignity of characters is a matter for ridicule and mixing up of social status becomes, therefore, a dramatic device for caricature; but in a dignified comedy, as most of the classical plays are, such a device may prove to be of bad taste.

Vidushaka is known for his malicious and free tongue. He makes fun of everyone, including the King and Queen. Sekhar observes that "at times he could be ribald, silly, and vulgar."[2] He can play this part better without malice or offence, by being a member of the socially highest class, that of Brāhmin.

To prove as a successful entertainer one needs to possess intelligence and special aptitude for comic perception. These qualities demand education and culture. In ancient society, education and cultural refinement were the privileges of the members of the higher class, the Brāhmins.

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[1]See Chapter V for this discussion.

[2]Sekhar, Sanskrit Drama, p. 75.

It can not be accidental, then, to have the humorous and witty companions of the aristocracy to be from the Brāhmin class.

The Vidushaka is not only a joker, he is an object of practical jokes, too. People love nothing better than to expose and ridicule the members of the affluent or elite group of the society. This is human psychology, and is true for all times and all places. Therefore, poking fun at Vidushaka, a Brāhmin, becomes more meaningful.

Thus we may conclude that it is neither an unaccountable freak nor a literary accident that the Vidushaka in Sanskrit drama happens to be a Brāhmin. The conventions of Sanskrit drama combined with social, cultural and psychological qualities must have moulded this character in its particular form.

Vidushaka's contempt for physical labour and his love for food and drink are used to provide material for laughter. His attempts to amuse by his witticisms about his gastronomical sensibilities are "inevitable concessions to the groundlings."[1] Impropriety or absurdness arouses laughter no matter what the sentiment may be in the play. Thus King Dushyanta, lamenting the separation from his wife, Śakuntalā, is sad and arouses <u>Karuna Rasa</u>, pathetic sentiment, in the main theme of love. But when the

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[1]Dasgupta, <u>A History of Sanskrit Literature</u>, p. 57.

Vidushaka laments over his lost sweets or because his appetite is ruined by some trivial reason, instead of arousing pathetic sentiment, it necessarily evokes a roar of laughter.

Vidushaka as a Brāhmin should speak in choicest Sanskrit. But he speaks in Prakrit, the common people's language. This paradoxical feature makes him vulnerable to comic situations. Bhat adduces definite reasons for this puzzling prescription. He points out that in Nātyasāstra, Bharata has made a threefold distinction among the characters in drama. According to Bharata, the highest characters in drama may be heroes, ministers, ascetics and priests; the middle level should contain Brāhmins in general, chamberlains, kings and officers; and the lower class comprises of women in general, servants and assistants in the royal household. But this classification is not actually the parallel corresponding to actual social classes because the Brāhmins as a whole are superior class socially, although they are placed by Bharata in the second category. The Queen should occupy a high position, but she is placed in the lower class and as a woman character she speaks Prakrit. Bhat believes that it will be more correct to say that

> Bharata's three classes pertain strictly to the nature of the dramatic plot; the characters are classed as the highest, middling, and low according to the part they are supposed to play in the drama proper. In other words, the distinctions of the characters correspond to their status in

> the dramatic story. Obviously, the Vidushaka belongs to the "low" class in this scale of classification; and hence, Bharata lays down the rule that the Vidushaka should use Prakrit like other minor characters in the Sanskrit drama.[1]

For example, Bhat cites the episode of Indra, the Lord of the Sky, disguised as a poor Brāhmin in Bhāsa's Karnabhāra, who speaks Prakrit, whereas Karna and his charioteer use Sanskrit. Also, incongruity is the essence of any comic character. Vidushaka, a Brāhmin, speaking Prakrit is an obvious device on the stage.

The Vidushaka's capability for wit and humor is evidently his distinguishing trait. Bharata connects him with the sentiment of laughter primarily and endows him with ready wit, Pratyutpannaprativo. Real wit certainly presupposes wisdom; in this sense, we may note that the Vidushaka is "wise" by virtue of his being. The "knowledge of the Vedas" has been utilized for making fun at him almost invariably in all drama. But it must be remembered that not all the speeches of the Vidushaka are nonsensical, incoherent, and meaningless babble. The classical wit is both sharp and brilliant. Although the humor of the Vidushaka is on a popular level, yet the classical writers have not allowed it to descend into all shallow and vulgar humor. Parikh points out that the use of "abuse and vulgarity as means of laughter is seen in the decadent

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[1]Bhat, The Vidushaka, p. 75.

period and in the hands of the lesser writers."[1]

Vidushaka plays many significant roles in the drama to which we will turn later. But he serves some minor, but indispensable functions, too. We have noted earlier in this section that the Vidushaka invokes gods in the Prologue part of the play. He also participates in the Trigata, which is a conversation on the stage among three people; Śutradhāra (commentator), his assistant and the Vidushaka. Vidushaka suddenly appears on the stage and delivers a discourse consisting mainly of irrelevant narration which evokes amusement in the commentator (Śutradhāra). He tries to intervene and discuss the play but is interrupted many times by the nonsense of the Vidushaka. Finally, with the help of his assistant, the commentator manages to calm the Vidushaka and introduce the play, its author, plot, etc.

Dramatically, the Vidushaka is the companion of the main male character, who is known as the hero in English literature. He assists the King or the noble in his love entanglement and provides entertainment when he is sad because of separation from his love. The Vidushaka helps build an atmosphere of intrigue in the play. Although he is seen mostly as an aid to his master in his love-affair, he also adopts an attitude of reproach; in a few cases he

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[1]Parikh, The Vidushaka, p. 17.

openly disapproves of the hero's conduct. Sometimes he becomes the mouthpiece of some common sense.

Dramatists following from Bharata found it necessary to add more functions to the role of Vidushaka. This was inevitable, because, once the Vidushaka was accepted as an actor in the play, Bhat states,

> it was natural that he should assume the role of a real participant and not appear as a detached instrument for the production of humor. It would be an artistic defect if Vidushaka, even as a conventional character, were not somehow integrated with the structure of the dramatic story and the business of its stage representation.[1]

Sanskrit drama did not place too much emphasis on scenic background and technical assistance. Various characters, including the Vidushaka, performed choric functions in one form or another, hence helping the development of the plot. The Vidushaka is often seen describing a change of scene or introducing the hero whose companion he is. In Sudraka's Mrcchakatikaṃ (The Clay Cart), the Vidushaka begins the opening scene of the play by narrating the background of the play and by introducing the hero. In Kālidāsa's Mālavikāgnimitraṃ (Princess Malavikā and King Agnimitra), the Vidushaka arranges for a musical competition which creates an opportunity for the King to see the Princess again. Also in this scene, the Vidushaka introduces the action of the following Act. The Vidushaka in

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[1]Bhat, The Vidushaka, p. 129.

Śakuntalā opens the Second Act, describes the antecedent action leading to the King's appearance in the forest, and introduces the King and his present love-entanglement. We will demonstrate in Chapter V that the Vidushaka in Śakuntalā performs tasks of far greater importance than those to which we are referring at present.

Along with his functions as a Court-jester, the Vidushaka often carries messages and acts as a mediator. As a Court-jester he carries his professional weight well. In Rājsekhara's Karpuramanjari, we get a real hint, if not an actual portrayal of the Vidushaka's role as a Court-jester. In this play the Vidushaka leaves the King as a result of a serious and nasty quarrel with a maid. He refuses to return and advises the King to invest the maid with the Clown-Fool's wig and ears and appoint her in his own place. This is a clear picture of his professional privileges. He can be insolent, impudent, and may not be punished.

Sanskrit drama cannot be classified as a formal tragedy or a pure comedy. Different sentiments, as we have noted earlier in this section, contribute in developing one main sentiment. Therefore, there is no definite need of so-called "comic relief" in Sanskrit drama. But Vidushaka's humor provides for a normal equilibrium in the play wherein pathetic sentiment is a predominant note. For instance, the Vidushaka in Śakuntalā appears first in the

Second Act; and his jests provide a contrast to the delightful yet serious matter of the King's newly born love on the one hand, and on the other hand they make a balance to a more serious dilemma confronting the King. The Vidushaka again appears in the beginning of the Fifth Act; and between the solemn mood of the parting scene in the Fourth Act and the intensely tragic scene of repudiation in the Fifth Act, the suggestion of a comic situation involving the Vidushaka serves to maintain the necessary emotional equilibrium. Bhāsa, Sudraka, and Kālidāsa were masterful in using the ability of the humorous Vidushaka in meaningful manner.

The Vidushaka often conceals real practical wisdom under the cloak of his foolish babbles. When it takes the form of playful criticism, the Vidushaka assumes the role of a critic, symbolizing, as it were, "the keeper of the hero's conscience."[1] This does not happen too often, though, because Sanskrit drama usually follows conventional plot-pattern and the position of the Vidushaka as a companion of the stately hero poses some limitation. There are a few instances, of course, where the Vidushaka stands a little detached and makes his intelligent criticism of the King's moral and ethical conduct. Such a role of this fun-

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[1]S. N. Sastri, The Laws and Practice of Sanskrit Drama, Vol. I (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1961), p. 227.

maker is particularly noticeable in the plays of Kālidāsa. In Chapter V we will analyze such a role, played by Vidushaka, a critic in motley of a different material.

On the whole, before Kālidāsa appears in Sanskrit literature, Vidushaka's duties in general amount to amusing by his unfortunate appearance and to being a butt for all other characters.

> The Theorists offer no explanation of the anomaly of a Brāhmin in such a curious position, but Asvaghosa [after Buddha] already has the figure, as has Bhāsa [just before Kālidāsa], . . . and later he is established as almost an essential feature in all drama not derived from the epic.[1]

One undisputed common characteristic of Vidushaka is that he remains unfailingly by the side of a King or a Prince. Elizabethan Clowns and Fools have been criticized because they have been allowed to be associated with Kings and Noble characters. Whatever the reason may be, Sanskrit drama is quite similar to Greek, Roman and Elizabethan drama in this respect. In all of these cases, Clown-Fools are seen in association with or in relation to the most prominent characters in the play. Kālidāsa is the most important dramatist who employs Vidushaka as a dramatically functional character, and hence frees him from the audience's preconceived notion of him as an "object" which evokes laughter merely by playing on his deficiencies.

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[1]Keith, The Sanskrit Drama, p. 311.

Similar in many ways to the Elizabethan Clown-Fool, in Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā* the Vidushaka stands as an individual playing a functional role and acting on his traditional merit. The comprehension of Vidushaka's role and function in that play depends substantially on our awareness of the origin, development, and major qualities of this character.

CHAPTER II

FALSTAFF: "A FOOL AND JESTER"

Volumes have been written on Falstaff, but despite most that has been said by major English critics, the interpretation of this complicated character still remains less than complete. Shakespeare created Falstaff as a Clown-Fool type, "a fool and jester," and that is what we will demonstrate him to be.

In order to promote our point of view, we must take into account major findings in the existing studies on Falstaff's ancestry. Therefore, at this point we will begin an examination of some of the major critical comments.

It is a commonplace that the original source of Shakespeare's Falstaff is Sir John Oldcastle of _The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth_ (1588). James Monaghan observes that Falstaff is not merely an image of Sir John Oldcastle, but that he also has some visible similarities with Derrick, the Clown in the play. Monaghan tells us:

> What we know, . . . , is that Shakespeare found the prototype of Falstaff in the well-marked

> characteristics of Derrick the clown, that he grafted these on Sir John Oldcastle, and that they grew, under his magic hand, and developed into the greatest jester of all time, the immortal Falstaff.[1]

This appraisal is not complete. Derrick and Sir John Old-Castle may have given the initial impetus to the playwright to create a character such as Falstaff, but Falstaff evidences far more wide and diversified qualities and characteristics of the Clown and Fool of the tradition in general and of the Elizabethan drama in particular than is indicated by Monaghan. We will never be able to trace back to the moment of Falstaff's conception in the artist's vision, when innumerable images and impressions interacted and a fusion took place to bring Sir John Falstaff into being to amuse the world, but we may attempt a closer and deeper look into this controversial figure. We will trace and exhibit later in this chapter the traditional general and specific qualities of different Clowns and Fools which are parallelled in the character of Falstaff.

Daniel C. Boughner asserts as fact that Falstaff has his ancestry rooted in the Vice of the Morality plays. He holds an allegorical view of the _Henry IV_ plays. He also believes that "Falstaff's affiliations are with the braggart soldier, a role which the Italian humanists

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[1]James Monaghan, "Falstaff and his Forebears," _Studies in Philology_, XVIII (July, 1921), 361.

regularly infused with a strongly pedantic flavor."[1] By imposing requirements of a Morality play and by seeking allegorical representation in the Henry IV plays, Boughner confuses and complicates the meaning of Falstaff's nature. We acknowledge that the "earliest representation" of the stage Clown was as the Vice character,[2] and we may note, too, that this Vice has usually been seen "as an ethical abstraction representing the 'summation' of the Seven Deadly Sins," acting as the opposite of good, as tempter of mankind, but "degenerated into fun-maker in the later Moralities."[3] At the same time we cannot disregard the fact "that in the earliest instances of the occurrence of the term the characters so called [Vice] are jesters pure and simple, ..."[4] Vice characters were mainly used to provide comic relief in the boring, dull, and long-drawn moral expostulations in Morality plays, but in the Henry IV plays, which mainly concentrate on a study of kingship, the requirement of a Vice character is superfluous. As much as Boughner cites examples from Morality plays, Falstaff, even from his standpoint, does not come off truly as a Vice. We

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[1]Daniel C. Boughner, "Vice, Braggart, and Falstaff," Anglia, LXXII (1954), 59.

[2]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 11.

[3]Ibid., p. 26.

[4]Ibid.

will deal with the question of Vice in relation to Prince Hal in detail later in this chapter. The plays in which the Vice character appear, namely, Heywood's *Play of Love* (1533) and *Play of the Wether* (1534), are not Morality plays. It would follow from the preceding observation that Vice was chiefly notable as the merry-maker of the play and that moral or allegorical overtones were not necessary. E. K. Chambers relates that the Vice came into the play through farce and is closely related to the Fool:

> And in later plays, even if he has some other dramatic function he always adds to it that of a riotous buffoon. Frequently enough he has no other. It must be concluded then that, what ever the name may mean,--and irresponsible philology has made some amazing attempts at explanation--the character of the Vice is derived from that of the domestic fool or jester.[1]

We must insist that although Falstaff shows similarities to Vice to the extent that he serves the "double function of the Vice--the conducting of the intrigue and the providing of amusement";[2] yet he is not a personification of any particular abstract evil quality inherent in mankind.

Goldsmith tells us that,

> Long before the Vice had left the Elizabethan stage, regular fools in motley had already begun to appear. Cacurgus, the counterfeit Fool of *Misogonus* (1560⟨⟩1577), is not the earliest of these Fools, but he interests us because he

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[1]Swain, *Fools and Folly*, p. 169.

[2]Busby, *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*, p. 27.

> illustrates the process of fusion or contamination working in reverse. Just as the jesting Vice in his composition unmistakably shows the influence of the fool of popular tradition, this stage fool clearly shows the counter-influence of the scheming Vice. As a wit-intriguer, a knave, and an imposter, Cacurgus resembles Jonson's Mosca and Face. Though he pretends to babbling lunacy before his old master, he unmasks himself in a soliloquy. He is a schemer and a scoundrel throughout the play, but like the typical Vice he does serve a critical function when he apes the manners of a profligate priest, Sir John.[1]

The skill at lying and evasion, exhibited by Vice and the Fool of the stage, is evidenced in profusion in the character of Falstaff.

Falstaff's vocation as a thief has been a subject of criticism for those who look at him as an epitome of all evil and therefore as a Vice character. But stealing is enjoyed by Clowns as a skill. Autolycus, "a star clown,"[2] steals and is proud of his vocation and he is "constant" in it (Winter's Tale IV.iv.697-698). Elizabethan Clowns and Fools enjoy this indulgence. Mouse, the Clown in the popular romance Mucedorus, "steals a pot of ale and a stage direction follows to describe his subsequent engagement with the ale wife:"[3]

> . . . she searcheth him, and he drinketh over her

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 24.

[2]John Russell Brown, "Laughter in the Last Plays," Later Shakespeare (Stratford-upon-Avon Studies 8, Edward Arnold [Publishers] Ltd., 1966), p. 112.

[3]Ibid., p. 108.

> head, and casts down the pot. She stumbleth at it, then they fall together by the ears; she takes her pot and goes out.[1]

Marston's Dutch Courtezan shows a stealing Fool, too. Cuck e demoy picks pockets even when he is led to the place of execution. These examples are drawn to show that Falstaff is not necessarily Vice, nor is he necessarily a personification of one or more evils. The plays demonstrate him to be a more meaningful, organically functional character than the traditional Vice character represents. Falstaff does not entice Prince Hal, as we will show in the course of this Chapter. A Clown-Fool type, he becomes an intimate companion of the Prince for a time. Prince Hal explains his relationship with Falstaff as voluntary:

> I know you all, and will a while uphold
> The unyoked humor of your idleness.
> Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
> Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
> To smother up his beauty from the world,
> That, when he please again to be himself,
> Being wanted, he may be more wondered at
> By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
> Of vapors that did seem to strangle him.
> If all the year were playing holidays,
> To sport would be as tedious as to work.
> But when they seldom come, they wished-for come,
> And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
> So, when this loose behavior I throw off
> And pay the debt I never promisèd,
> By how much better than my word I am,
> By so much shall I falsify men's hopes.
> And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
> My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
> Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off.

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[1]Brown, "Laughter in the Last Plays," p. 108.

I'll so offend, to make offense a skill,
Redeeming time when men think least I will.
(I Henry IV, I.ii.218-240)[1]

Warwick explains Prince Hal's association with Falstaff to Henry IV:

My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
The Prince but studies his companions
Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
'Tis needful that the most immodest word
Be looked upon and learned, which once attained,
Your Highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,
The Prince will in the perfectness of time
Cast off his followers, and their memory
Shall as a pattern or a measure live,
By which His Grace must mete the lives of others,
Turning past evils to advantages.
(II Henry IV, IV.iv.67-78)

Warwick's observation indicates that the Prince is educating himself about the life of the common people. And Irving Ribner seems to agree with Warwick's suggestion. Ribner comments that the Prince's association

with Falstaff and his fellows is not a wasteful experience, for in it he learns to know the common people who will perhaps be his most powerful allies when he attains the crown.[2]

And the Prince makes an affirmation to this effect elsewhere:

I have sounded the very base string of humility.

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[1]Unless stated otherwise, all textual quotations in this study are taken from Shakespeare: The Complete Works, ed. by G. B. Harrison (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1952).

[2]Irving Ribner, The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1965), p. 173.

> Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers, and can call them all by their Christen names, as Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation that though I be but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy; and tell me flatly I am no proud Jack, like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad of mettle, a good boy, by the Lord, so they call me, and when I am King of England, I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap.
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.5-15)

From Warwick's remark again we learn that King Henry IV is easily swayed by the rumor about Prince Hal's "loose behaviour:"

> It cannot be, my lord.
> Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo, ...
> (II Henry IV, III.i.97-98)

Prince Hal also has suggested that the King is easily inclined to believe in rumor:

> . . . , I would I could
> Quit all offenses with as clear excuse
> As well as I am doubtless I can purge
> Myself of many I am charged withal.
> Yet such extenuation let me beg
> As, in reproof of many tales devised,
> Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear,
> By smiling pickthanks and base newsmongers,
> I may for some things true wherein my youth
> Hath faulty wandered and irregular
> Find pardon on my true submission.
> (I Henry IV, III.ii.18-28)

These different excerpts from the text prove definitely that Prince Hal is not enticed by Falstaff. Elsewhere the Prince decides to put on a disguise of a drawer to play a trick on Falstaff who is having supper in Eastcheap. Prince Hal makes clear his purpose behind such "folly":

> From a God to a bull? A heavy descension!
> It was Jove's case. From a prince to a prentice?
> A low transformation! That shall be mine, for in

> everything the purpose must weigh with the folly.
> (II Henry IV, II.ii.191-196)

We also learn that Prince Hal allows Falstaff "to be familiar with" him as his dog:

> I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as my dog, and he holds his place, ...
> (II Henry IV, II.ii.116-117)

Man's history shows that a "dog is man's best friend." And the above-quoted remark made by the Prince does not necessarily mean that he treats Falstaff in any derogatory manner as Ribner here implies:

> The Prince enjoys Falstaff, but he never fails to show his contempt for him. He never, as Tillyard (p.272) notes, 'treats Falstaff as better than his dog, with whom he condescends once in a way to have a game.' "[1]

Whatever the purpose of this association may be, Hal and Warwick make it clear that Hal is not enticed, not charmed by Falstaff as a Vice. Later in the chapter Hal's address of Falstaff--as "vain man," "reverend vice," "fool and jester,"--will be explained, and it will be shown that these terms contribute more to the interpretation that Falstaff is not a Vice but a Clown-Fool. All through the play such addresses and epithets are scattered. Prince Hal most possibly thought of Falstaff as his future Court-Fool, otherwise the use of the word "advancement" in the Prince's last speech: "We will, according to your strength and

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[1]Ribner, The English History Play, p. 173.

qualities, / Give you advancement" (II Henry IV, V.v.73-74) becomes less than meaningful. This short speech gives the reader the impression that in the past the Prince had an intention of having Falstaff as his Court-Fool. Falstaff, however, falls short of two major requirements of a Court-Fool: practical wisdom to serve as an advisor and unswerving faithfulness, both qualities evidenced by Lear's Court-Fool. Lacking these qualities Falstaff had to be rejected by Henry V.

Information furnished by John Doran may help to alter Boughner's and, to a certain extent, J. Dover Wilson's view that the Prince is influenced by Vice. In his study of the history of Court Fools, Doran refers to a book written by Tyler, who has shown that although Prince Hal "was often in the city, and in Eastcheap particular [sic] it was not for dissipation, but for serious business."[1] This information echoes Warwick's observation on the Prince's involvement in studying his companions. Tyler has also substantially shown that in March 1410 King Henry IV gave Prince Hal "a house or palace, called Coldharbour" in London. "In this right, fair, and stately house, which was not far from Eastcheap, councils were held, at which the Prince himself had presided."[2] Tyler not only proves that

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[1]Doran, History of Court Fools, p. 118.

[2]Ibid., p. 119.

Hal did not resort to what he calls "a low and vulgar part of London" for the purposes of riot and revelry with unworthy and dissolute companions, but he shows also how the charge of being guilty of such offences may have arisen. "History," he says,

> records nothing of the Prince derogatory to his princely and Christian character during his residence at Coldharbour: it does indeed charge two of the King's sons with a riot there; but they are stated by name to have been Thomas and John. Henry's name does not occur at all in connection with any disturbance or misdoing.[1]

Tyler also points out that King Henry IV provided Hal with

> twenty casks and one pipe of red wine of Gascony, to be delivered free of duty, . . . and it was not likely that, thus provided, he would have resorted to neighbouring taverns at Eastcheap. . . . The assertion of the chronicles, that Hal, on his accession became altogether a reformed man, seems irreconcilable with his modest bearing when heir-apparent. We must remember, on the other hand, that there is no contemporary record of his having committed any act of violence, wildness, riot, and dishonour, while there are many bearing testimony to his virtues; namely, the records of Parliament, which bear witness to his rectitude, modesty, and steadiness; the dispatches of Hotspur; the people of Wales; the gentlemen of various counties; and contemporary chronicles, generally.[2]

Tyler's observations which Doran cites lead the reader to take a long look at Hal as Shakespeare has portrayed him. His relation with Falstaff poses a problem in this light. The apparent problem which arises from Hal's association

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 119.

[2]Ibid., p. 120.

with Falstaff and his final rejection of Falstaff may have some satisfactory answer in the following observation by Tyler:

> In the latter capacity Henry V patronized the sacred minstrels rather than laughing fools. . . . Henry was not a patron of Court Fools. It may be indeed said that the jester and the minstrel were often to be found in the same person in England, from the time that the Saxons hovered in the land, or since Canute, his thingmen, and his bards, all sang joyously together, when they celebrated a conquest, than which that of the Norman was not more wonderful. But is clear that Henry's minstrels were of a better character than those alluded to above, and the buffoonery was not encouraged at his court. Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," supports by saying that the King was "no great encourager of popular minstrelsy, which seems at this time to have flourished in the highest degree of perfection." But his minstels "undoubtedly accompanied their instruments with heroic rhymes" said Warton.[1]

Later in the discussion of Court-Fools, Doran states that ". . . Henry V loved books more than court fools, . . ."[2] These findings may not definitely prove our point of view, but they put in question the validity of the assumptions which J. Dover Wilson and Boughner make of Falstaff as Riot and Vice.

More may be said to support our questioning the view of Falstaff as Vice. Goldsmith states that

> . . . we find a very different development of the fool in drama in England. The English Church countenanced no such (as in Europe) indecorum or

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 120.

[2]Ibid., p. 121.

> Saturnalian celebrations as the Feast of Fools. . . . the English had no fool plays of a satirical sort comparable to the French Sottie or the German carnival play. Instead we find that the fool of tradition had become merged in the character of the comic vice of the Tudor moral play. . . .[1]

The preceding lines suggest that Vice did not and could not stand on his own merit; he had been enriched by the major qualities and characteristics of Clowns and Fools of the tradition. We may conclude from the observation of Tyler that Hal was not wanton, riotous, and of loose character. This minimizes greatly the plausibility of the dramatic use of Vice in this play. We may ask ourselves, does the play require us to see the question of morality in the study of Hal? There is no definite direction towards this in the play. The only satisfactory answer to the meaning of Falstaff in relation to Hal is that he entertains Hal and amuses him as a Clown-Fool. And we will show later that as some qualities are lacking in him he is not "advanced" to the position of the Court-Fool. This is also anticipated from Tyler's finding with regard to Henry V's dislike of having Court-Fools.

Curiously, though, Falstaff evidences some qualities of "vice," but it is not the Vice of the Morality plays. Doran gives other considerations of vice that may be pertinent:

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 17.

> Learned men have looked into Greek, and found there the origin of this word vice. But, as far as it signifies this dramatic fool, Flögel's derivation of it, from the old Frank word Vis (Phiz), a face, a mask, may be accepted. Visdase, another old word for fool is derived by Ménage from Vis dane (ass face), and Vizard is a known term amongst ourselves for the mask or counterfeit representation, usually comic, of a face.[1]

A detailed analysis of the word meaning vice or associated with the word vice will be provided later. For the time being it may be sufficient to keep in mind that the meanings of vice as listed above put Boughner's and J. Dover Wilson's interpretations to question.

Boughner sees in Falstaff some characteristics which he believes are those of a Braggart. We contend that these qualities, cowardice and ostentatiousness, are not unique to Braggart, but are also common qualities of a traditional Clown-Fool. Most Clowns and Fools in tradition show fear in face of real danger or feigned danger; and though they are shown as timid and weak, lacking in bravery and courage, any little achievement leads them to swell in pride and seek reward for their achievement as insignificant as it may be. They are ready to brag and threaten, challenge without physical strength or intellectual merit, but they try to back out at the time of real confrontation.

Elmer Edgar Stoll observes about Falstaff's

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 55.

"cowardice" with reference to the scene in which the Prince combats Hotspur:

> . . . he falls flat and feigns death as clowns and cowards did in the hour of danger, not in England only but in contemporary Germany, Spain, and Italy; . . . .[1]

Then in a note Stoll refers to Clowns like Strumbo and Passarino who act similarly in similar situations. He also requests that "The reader must bear with me as I am labouring now and then under the necessity of demonstrating what is obvious."[2] What seems to be obvious to us is that Falstaff in this act of "cowardice" shows qualities of a Clown-Fool. We may have an example now:

> . . . in The Blind Begger of Bednall Green, though Swash, when entrusted with his master's money, boasts mightily of his desire to meet a thief and prove his valour, as soon as the desired marauder appears he surrenders with ludicrous abjectness--"I pray you, do bind me hard, do, good Mr. Thief, harder yet, Sir."[3]

In the Colevile scene Falstaff is inflated with false pride and starts boasting beyond measure. When Hal confronts him, Falstaff melts in fear, muttering "No abuse, . . ." (II Henry IV, II.iv.340).

Wilson regards the two Henry IV plays as basically a

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[1]Elmer Edgar Stoll, Shakespeare Studies: Historical and Comparative in Method (New York: Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., 1960), p. 422.

[2]Ibid., p. 423, footnote.

[3]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 65.

"morality play," and alludes to the bad influence of Falstaff in the "growing up of a madcap Prince into the ideal King."[1] To Wilson, Falstaff seems to have the qualities to entice Hal, qualities similar to those of Riot, a character in an Interlude Youth. Riot functions as follows:

> The young man, heir to his father's land, gives insolent expression to his self-confidence, lustihood, and contempt for spiritual things. Whereupon Charity leaves him, and he is joined by Riot, that is to say Wantonness, who presently introduces him to Pride and Lechery. . . . Yet, in the end, Charity reappears with Humility; Youth repents; and the interlude terminates in the most seemly fashion imaginable.[2]

Wilson sees similarities between Falstaff and Riot:

> The words he utters, as he bounces on to the stage at his first entry, gives us the very note of Falstaff's gaiety:
>
> Huffa! huffa! who calleth after me?
> I am Riot full of jollity,
> My heart is as light as the wind,
> And on all riot is my mind,
> Wherever I go.[3]

Then Wilson observes Riot as the precursor of Falstaff in unscrupulous and riotous activities. It is our impression that his "palpably irresponsible" nature links him to a Clown-Fool, not a Vice, as Wilson wishes us to believe in

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[1] J. Dover Wilson, "Falstaff and the Prince," in Shakespeare: The Histories, ed. by Eugene M. Waith (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 138.

[2] Ibid., p. 134.

[3] Ibid., pp. 134-135.

his analysis of the role of Falstaff.[1]

Licentiousness, love of bawdy humor, unscrupulousness, unrestrained indulgence in revelry, all these and more have been proved to be characteristics of Fools and Clowns throughout their literary and dramatic development:

> But whatever his special attributes, the creature behind the mask and the name when he is genuinely one species of the great genus fool, has one inevitable characteristic: he appears from some point of view erring and irresponsible. He transgresses or ignores the code of reasoned self-restraint under which society attempts to exist, is unmeasured in his hilarity or in his melancholy, disregards the logic of cause and effect and conducts himself in ways which seem rash and shocking to normal mortals. But he is a fool because his extravagancies are supposed to be due not to intention but some deficiency in his education, experience, or innate capacity for understanding. He is not to blame for them, and society, amused at his freedom from the bonds of its convictions, laughs at him while it condemns him. Within any society these undisciplined, irresponsible individuals are found. They are its fools, ...[2]

This insight into the character of the "fools," along with the finding of Goldsmith, may lead us to believe that Wilson consciously or unconsciously minimizes the effectiveness ofthe character of Falstaff. He does not seem to explain Falstaff more adequately than do some of his predecessors. Ribner states that Falstaff in II Henry IV

> is far less attractive a figure than in Part I,

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[1]See p. 92 of this chapter for Disher's observation on the irresponsible nature of a Clown-Fool which makes him immune from "all the laws of morality."

[2]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 1.

> for in addition to his sloth and cowardice, he now symbolizes some of the more loathsome aspects of civil disorder and misgovernment, particularly evident in his relations with Mistress Quickly and Doll Tearsheet, his fleecing of Justice Shallow, and his abuses of his military position for personal gain. . . .[1]

In his own analysis of Falstaff as Vice, Wilson emphasizes the difficulty in ascertaining the comic character types:

> . . . as heir to the Vice, Falstaff inherits by reversion the functions and attributes of the Lord of Misrule, the Fool, the Buffoon, and the Jester, antic figures the origins of which are lost in the backward and abysm of folk-custom.[2]

But Goldsmith has shown us that "the fool of the tradition has become merged in the character of the comic vice of the Tudor moral play."[3] Therefore, the process is not one of "reversion" as Wilson may see it; rather, it is one of fusion and assimilation of multifarious qualities in one character.

Wilson is not absolutely sure about Falstaff's origin as a Vice figure. He gives some other consideration and concludes "the exact significance of the Vice is exasperatingly obscure."[4] Also he contradicts himself in

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[1]Ribner, The English History Play, p. 177.

[2]John Dover Wilson, The Fortunes of Falstaff (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1961), p. 20.

[3]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 17.

[4]Wilson, The Fortunes of Falstaff, p. 131, footnote 11.

his analysis of Falstaff. About the first scene in Part I Wilson remarks:

> . . . clearly everything he says is spoken with the object of entertaining his royal patron; and as clearly the entertainment is at once keenly enjoyed and taken as merely pastime, Falstaff's function, in short, as defined by this opening scene, is to act as the prince's jester, ...[1]

But a little further on Wilson states:

> Falstaff's sauciness, on the other hand, is that of "an allowed fool;" and if, as I believe possible, he was first played by Will Kempe, the comic man of Shakespeare's company, he would have been accepted as the "clown" of the play directly as he appeared upon the stage.[2]

Referring to The Medieval Stage written by E. K. Chambers, Wilson remarks that Chambers believes "that whatever his name may mean . . . the character of the Vice is derived from that of the domestic fool or jester."[3] Wilson then risks an assumption:

> I hazard a suggestion that it was originally the title or name of the Fool who attended upon the Lord of Misrule; v. Feuillerat, Revels of the time of Edward VI, p. 73: 'One vyces dagger & a ladle with a bable pendante deliverid to the Lorde of Mysrules foole'.[4]

Wilson is firm in his conviction that Hal is

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[1]Wilson, The Fortunes of Falstaff, p. 38.

[2]Ibid., p. 39.

[3]Ibid., p. 131, footnote 11.

[4]Ibid.

enchanted by the "devil" who is Falstaff.[1] And he refers particularly to one line in a speech consisting of fifteen lines. In doing so, he extends his theory to suit Shakespeare's play, when it should be the other way around. We are speaking here of the mock-trial scene between Hal and Falstaff. Hal is playing the role of his father and reproves Hal, played in this scene by Falstaff. And Hal pretends to sound quite reproachful:

> Swearest thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace. There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man, a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humors, that bolting hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that gray iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? Wherein cunning, but in craft? Wherein crafty, but in villainy? Wherein villainous, but in all things? Wherein worthy, but in nothing?
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.490-505)

Instead of each word contributing to the whole meaning of the speech, Wilson lets one line, "There is a devil haunts thee . . ." guide the meaning of the whole speech.[2] We

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[1]Ribner, too, believes that Falstaff performs the function of the Vice in Morality Plays, by seducing the Prince from virtuous path. The English History Play, p. 174.

[2]Wilson carefully omits the words after "devil" to make the meaning of this line aligned to his interpretation of the play. He phrases the sentence thus: "Falstaff

must not forget either that here Hal only plays the role of his father and voices the feeling his father has for Falstaff. Elsewhere in the play King Henry IV has not only exhibited his disapproval of Falstaff, he has cut the Prince off and has often expressed the wish that Hotspur were his son instead of Hal. Here, Hal has a chance to mimic his father on that count.

Derek A. Traversi sees human waste in the growth of a politician:

> He [Falstaff] represents, we might say, all the humanity which it seems that the politician bent on the attainment of success must necessarily exclude. That humanity, as it manifests itself in the tavern scenes, is full of obvious and gross inperfections, ...[1]

But Falstaff seems to be above these "gross imperfections" and transcendent to them. Falstaff is

> the individual expression of the conscience of a great and completely serious artist. . . . the true and rare combination of the warm, alert humanity . . . of inherited Christian tradition.[2]

Needless to say, Falstaff does not echo Shakespeare's voice as implied by Traversi, and it is evident that Traversi imposes his moral values on the character of

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is a 'devil . . . in the likeness of an old fat man,' . . . ." The Fortunes of Falstaff, pp. 190-191.

[1]Derek A. Traversi, "History and The Artist's Vision," in Henry The Fourth, Part I, ed. by James L. Sanderson (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 148.

[2]Ibid.

Falstaff and fails to see in Falstaff's "obvious gross imperfection" the qualities of a Clown-Fool type. Though perhaps Shakespeare never dreamt of making Falstaff as Hal's "father-substitute," J. I. M. Stewart visualizes Falstaff as such. Based on meagre and scanty references, such as Hal's addressing Falstaff as "Sweet Beef" and Falstaff's huge appearance, Stewart concludes that Falstaff is used to appease the angry earth. Henry IV's rule has brought affliction, disease, and civil disorder to the kingdom. In effect, England shows more sterility than ever before:

> Now, anthropologists are always telling us of countries gone waste and barren under the rule of an old, impotent and guilty king, who must be ritually slain and supplemented by his son or another before the saving rains come bringing purification and regeneration to the land. Is not Henry IV in precisely the situation of this king?[1]

Stewart says that the mock-trial scene of Falstaff standing for the "old king symbolizes all the accumulated sin of the reign, all the consequent sterility of the land."[2] Therefore, at the end, when opportunity and conditions are proper, Falstaff is turned into the "dethroned and sacrificed king, the scapegoat as well as the sweet Beef." Stewart

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[1]J. I. M. Stewart, "The Birth and Death of Falstaff," in Henry The Fourth, Part I, ed. by James L. Sanderson (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 272.

[2]Ibid., p. 273.

continues:

> For Falstaff, so Bacchic, . . . a creature of the wine-cart and the cymbal, so fit a sacrifice (as Hal early discerns) to lard the lean, the barren earth, is of that primitive and magical world upon which all art, even if with a profound unconsciousness, draws.[1]

In view of Stewart's conclusion we may be immensely benefited now to consider what another critic has to say about Clowns. Disher gives us an insight into the custom of addressing Clowns and Fools by names of favourite meat dishes in Elizabethan times. Disher states:

> . . . the frontispiece of Kirkman's Drolls show it (bib) on three types of fools--the one who cries "Tue quo que," the simpleton, and Sir John Falstaff. These characters, says Kirkman, acted at Bartholomew Fair during the Commonwealth. Afterwards their place was taken by the Merry Andrew, one of "those circumforaneous wits." The Spectator said, "whom every nation calls by the name of that dish of meat which it loves best," such as the Dutch Pickled Herrings, the French Jean Pottage and the Italian Macaroni. In this fashion the Merry Andrew were called "Jack Puddings," a name which lends itself to the exploit of one who, having got into trouble with the authorities, walked through the Fair holding a meat's tongue and a black pudding.[2]

Disher's observation leads us to argue that the following remarks made by Wilson with regard to Falstaff are partial. Wilson regards Falstaff as a fleshly and juicy "meat" for sacrifice. Pointing to the Great Boar's Head scene, Wilson states:

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[1]Stewart, "The Birth and Death of Falstaff," p. 273.

[2]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 86.

> Hal's cue for Falstaff's entry, "Call in Ribs, call in Tallow"--. . . what summons to the choicest feast in comedy could be more apt? For there is the noblest of English dishes straightaway: Sir John as Sir Loin-of-Beef, gravy and all.[1]

Wilson disregards the fact that as an endearing Tavern Fool, the King of Clown-Fool in Eastcheap, Falstaff is likened to the best relished meat and best fancied sauce for the English tongue. Falstaff is the exaggerated, magnified comic who envelops the scene in which he appears. He enspirits the customers' heart ("Rib") and warms their blood ("Tallow") by his perennial source of laughter. All the epithets likening Falstaff to swollen animals,[2] too fat and puffed, and Falstaff's own description of himself "like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one" (_II Henry IV_, I.i.11-12), begin to build him as a proud, presumptuous, audacious Clown-Fool who lacks wisdom. But to suit his point of view, Wilson would like to see him as being prepared for a sacrifice. He says:

> In calling him "Martelmas" Poins is at once likening Falstaff's enormous proportions to the prodigality of fresh-killed meat, which the feast brought, and acclaiming his identity with Riot and Festivity in general.[3]

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[1]Wilson, "Falstaff and the Plan of _Henry IV, Part I_," in _Henry the Fourth, Part I_, ed. by James L. Sanderson (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 195.

[2]_I Henry IV_, I.ii.118, II.iv.100, II.iv.205,235, 403, III.iii.136,138; _II Henry IV_, II.i.19, II.iv.211, etc.

[3]Wilson, "Falstaff and the Plan of _Henry IV, Part I_," p. 198.

Stewart concludes from Falstaff's bulky appearance that he is the appropriate object of sacrifice in the play. But Disher offers us a more plausible explanation of Falstaff's weighty body. Fat Clown-Fools are not unique to Western drama only. We learn from the Indian tradition of Clown-Fools that a gross and bulky appearance was an inseparable feature there, too.[1] Speaking of Clowns and Fools in general, Disher comments:

> The more he changes the more the clown is the same. Take away all the vestments and the ritual that proclaim his calling, still his every word and act reveal his relationship with the clot and the lump. There is no necessity to invest in motley if there be virtue in his looks naturally, if his body be blown up like Triboullet's bladder, or his face resemble "a perpetual triumph, and everlasting bonfire." There is, moreover, no special need of these if he be openly and palpably irresponsible, and therefore as immune as a lunatic from all the laws of morality and justice. But our mood depends not a little on the knowledge that he is a fool as well as a knave, a butt as well as a bully, that he is these things equally and therefore undeserving of anger or pity.[2]

And as for Hal's calling Falstaff "Sweet Beef," this is not the sacrificial offering but an endearing address, and may be satisfactorily explained by the excerpt from Disher quoted by us on page 90. Later in the tradition of Clowns

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[1]See Chapter I Section A for the story of the fat Clown-Fool, Gopal, and Section B for Indian Clown-Fool's bulky stature.

[2]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 34. The words clot and lump mean Clown and Fool.

and Fools we meet Grimaldi who appears as "Sir John Bull," and sings before his British audience:

> John Bull is my name,
> None my spirit can tame.[1]

Neither his "Act" nor his characteristics show him as a sacrificial goat. The preceding findings lead one to question Stewart's appraisal of Falstaff's character. His evaluation does not seem to provide a satisfactory meaning of the character of Falstaff.

Another painstaking study finds Falstaff as the predecessor of Fitzerald (Omar Khyam), because it seems obvious that Falstaff lives for life. He has "an unslakable thirst for life. . . . Life is his summum bonum. . . . Life is indeed the greatest of frolics."[2]

A few decades later a joint study by Cleanth Brooks and Robert B. Heilman presents almost the same view, only in a different manner. This study regards Falstaff as "life," "vitality," "spontaneous," as someone who lives in a "timeless world which stands apart from the time-harried world of adult concerns!"[3] In essence Brooks and Heilman suggest a "generation gap." To be able to join the world of "adult

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[1]Disher, Clowns and Pantomimes, p. 34.

[2]H. B. Charlton, Shakespearean Comedy (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1938), p. 179.

[3]Cleanth Brooks and Robert B. Heilman, "Dramatic Balance in Henry IV Part I," in Henry the Fourth, Part I, ed. by James L. Sanderson (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 168.

concerns," Hal has to forego the world of youth, vitality, and gaiety. The main point of their study and of Charlton's book seems to be that Falstaff is the representation of life, spirit, frolic, and fun, and that Hal's rejection of him is cruel and unjustified. But their singular emphasis on regarding Falstaff as "life" itself is not required by the text. The text indicates that Falstaff is between fifty and sixty years old (I Henry IV, II.iv.467). Though old, he has vital energy of life. Falstaff represents youthful rhythm and delightful carefree philosophy of life no doubt, but these are qualities that he inherits from the traditional Clowns and Fools. His "privileged position" in society makes him "an allowed fool." He was not (most of the times) answerable for his actions; unrestrained liberty was the inheritance from his forebears.[1] If he could not enjoy life, none could. And he did enjoy his life, especially as a Tavern Fool. He lacked wisdom and the insight into worldly matters which were indispensable qualities of a Court-Fool. Goldsmith tells us:

> The merging of the professional jester with the licensed fool gave rise to a new species--the artificial fool or Court jester.[2]

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[1]Earlier in this study we have learned from Busby, Swain and Disher about the Clown-Fool's immunity against legal or moral judgment on him for his "immoral" or "irresponsible" behaviour.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 7.

Lacking the most indispensable qualities of a Court-Fool, Falstaff had to be rejected, not because Hal had to sacrifice "life" or because he had to join the world of "adult concerns."

Falstaff has not been fully analyzed in English as a Clown-Fool character, but some have felt the necessity of exploring the complicated character of Falstaff from such points of view. Ribner tells us about Falstaff, the "greatest comic figure in the world's literature":

> The character of Falstaff has a long history; he is a fusion of many dramatic traditions, but he has an originality which sets him completely above any of the traditions out of which he is derived.[1]

E. M. W. Tillyard agreeing with Ribner points out the multifarious possibilities in the character of Falstaff:

> He is a complicated figure combining several functions which it might tax the greatest author to embody in even separate persons.[2]

Ribner and Tillyard both suggest the multiplicity of traditional qualities in the making of Falstaff, but neither goes much further into the examination of them. Only Tillyard makes a comment in passing, in which he agrees with Enid Welsford in his declaration that "Falstaff is the fool," and "he is kin to Brer Rabbit and Fool Schweik."[3]

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[1] Ribner, The English History Play, p. 171.

[2] E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays (London: Chatto & Windus, 1959), p. 285.

[3] Ibid., p. 286.

Enid Welsford observes that Falstaff is a jesting parasite and a merry companion of Hal and that he shows in his making some qualities of a "type of fool."[1]

Stoll says that Falstaff "jokes regardless of ultimate psychological propriety; as do Elizabethan clowns."[2] Later, to a question posed by Maurice Morgann and his school of critics, Stoll answers:

> . . . why in Elizabethan Drama are fools and clowns forever elbowing kings and emperors without a ghost of a pretext or excuse? To jest, as Falstaff does.[3]

Muriel C. Bradbrook answers Stoll's rhetorical question much more satisfactorily than Stoll himself. She says:

> Renaissance ruler was encouraged to consort with inferiors, that he might relax and refresh himself.[4]

Then she explains Hal's association with Falstaff:

> In Part I, where Falstaff stands in close relationship to the Prince--he never appears in a single scene without him--his role is that of the Fool or jester, ...[5]

Along with Stoll, Tillyard, Welsford and Bradbrook, Elkin Calhoun Wilson recognizes the Clown-like qualities in

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[1]Welsford, The Fool, p. 321.

[2]Stoll, Shakespeare Studies, p. 438.

[3]Ibid., p. 453.

[4]Muriel C. Bradbrook, Shakespeare and Elizabethan Poetry (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), p. 197.

[5]Ibid.

Sir John Falstaff. But he does not demonstrate them elaborately. His emphasis on the Clown-like qualities in Falstaff lies in his conviction that Falstaff is "primarily a comic device or contraption," whose existence is momentarily free from all rules of conventional morality, only to be "caught in their colis at last."[1] We agree with Elkin Calhoun Wilson when he refers to Falstaff's humorous disposition and describes him as a "Clown par excellence." But we part with him when, far from providing an analytical explanation of the Clown-like qualities in Falstaff, he fades away in the mystical twilight of intricate rhetoric.

Welsford, Tillyard, Stoll, Bradbrook and Elkin Calhoun Wilson open up a new vista through which possibly the most satisfactory reading of the Henry IV plays can be obtained. We resume from the point where they have left off. They merely suggest that Falstaff evidences vestiges of Clowns and Fools, but they do not engage in the actual demonstration of their hypotheses. We shall analyze the text and show Falstaff not as "the device by which Shakespeare achieved the didactic ends of his history play"[2] but as a real Clown-Fool, as the playwright has

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[1]Elkin Calhoun Wilson, "Falstaff--Clown and Man," in Studies in English Renaissance Drama, ed. by Josephine W. Bennett (New York: At The University Press, 1959), p. 354.

[2]Ribner believes that Falstaff, "the greatest comic figure" is only a "device" to attain such end. The English History Play, p. 171.

portrayed.

The final scene of Henry IV, Part II depicts the "rejection" of Falstaff by Henry V. The King commands:

> My Lord Chief Justice, speak to that vain
> man. (V.v.48)

and then he denies any relation with Falstaff:

> I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers.
> How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!
> I have long dreamed of such a kind of man,
> So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so profane,
> But, being awaked, I do despise my dream.
> Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace.
> Leave gormandizing. Know the grave doth gape
> For thee thrice wider than for other men.
> Reply not to me with a fool-born jest.
> (V.v.51-59)

Apparently, these preceding lines seem self-explanatory; rejection of Falstaff seems necessary because Hal has now become the King of England. Critics seem to vary from those who feel terribly sad for Falstaff,[1] those who feel that as a King, Henry V must not associate with Vice who misled him when he was young Hal,[2] and those who feel that his education about common life being accomplished Hal does not need Falstaff any more[3]--but all of them agree that rejection is needed because Hal is now the monarch of England and hence has grave responsibilities. Yet another,

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[1]Maurice Morgann, Charlton, etc.

[2]Wilson, "Falstaff and the Prince," pp. 138-139.

[3]Clifford Leech, "The Unity of 2 Henry IV," in Shakespeare Criticism, 1935-1960, ed. by Anne Riddler (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 385-401.

driven by psychoanalytical persuasion, finds Falstaff a

> purification of the wholly self-centered pleasure-seeking principle. Although he represents the opposite of destruction, the principle of life, libido, it is the most primitive manifestation of libido, the primary self-centered, narcissistic libido of the child which he stands for.[1]

And Hal must overcome "the Falstaff in himself if he is to become a fully balanced adult."[2] Most of these above-mentioned commentators seem to fail to take into account the total meaning conveyed by the speech of Henry V, quoted above, and most of them do not see the implications of the words "vain," "fool and jester," and "fool-born jest" used in this speech. A careful analysis of this speech may allow us to appreciate Falstaff more fully and understand the action taken by the King.

In the first part of the speech the King asks the Chief Justice to speak to the "vain man," indicating Falstaff. We have to go back into the play to acquire more meaning for the word "vain." The Chief Justice, basing his feelings on Hal's previous action and behaviour, anticipates things to be upset in the kingdom when Hal becomes King. But Hal seeks wisdom and counsel from the Chief Justice, regarding him as "a father" to guide him in kingly duties. He has discarded his "seeming" exterior and his

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[1]Alexander Franz, "A Note on Falstaff," in Henry the Fourth, Part I, ed. by James L. Sanderson (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 269.

[2]Ibid.

close association with a Clown-Fool: "The tide of blood in me / Hath proudly flowed in vanity till now" (II Henry IV, V.ii.129-130). Instead of "frivolity"[1] the more significant meaning in keeping with the whole meaning of the play is "The quality of being foolish or of holding erroneous opinions (Obsolete)."[2] Having been in association with a Clown-Fool (Vain=archaic meaning, fool, foolish),[3] a "vain man," Hal has been nothing but "unavailing," "unprofitable," and above all "foolish." But now as the situation demands he discards the dolt, the Clown-Fool (as he promised in I Henry IV, I.ii.218-240) to be able to put on true "formal majesty":

> And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel
> That the great body of our state may go
> In equal rank with the best-governed nation,
> (II Henry IV, V.ii.135-137)

This will forefigure Hal's decision to discard a Clown-Fool Falstaff--a "vain" figure--who provides bawdy humor and comical, slanderous jokes but whose foolery never involves true criticism of what may be lacking in the kingdom or its ruler, who never offers counsel in the form of Fool's nonsense, never offers corrective measure through Fool's

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[1]Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 692, footnote.

[2]Sir James A. H. Murray, A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1910), Vol. X, ii, p. 15.

[3]Ibid., Vol. X, ii, pp. 15-16.

slander. All these are important and major qualities of a Court-Fool. Falstaff may be retained in the Court in that position only if he not only entertains but also advises and counsels the King to a certain extent towards the prosperity and advancement of the land. And that has been Hal's main objective during his "educational period." Similar to his care in choosing the "limbs" of Government he has been carefully observing Falstaff all this time with a special purpose in mind. He intended to have Falstaff as his Court-Fool to serve as an advisor and an "intelligencer." But Falstaff failed him, remaining as a general Clown-Fool with an overtone of Tavern-Fool qualities. As such he becomes an impediment towards Hal's objective to raise the reputation of England to be "equal with the best-governed nations" of the world. In Henry V we see that the King is a true Machiavellian, he goes to any length if it proves good for his kingdom and his people. In such capacity he could use the services of an expert "intelligencer" and an advisor in the guise of a Court-Fool who could really serve the King to play the game of the Lion and the Fox.

There are various meanings of the word vain. We have available to us a full range from "worthless," "of no real value," "unprofitable," "unavailing," "lacking in sense," and an archaic use of the word meaning "foolish."[1]

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[1]Murray, A New English Dictionary, Vol. X, ii, pp. 15-16.

What is archaic now was not so in Shakespeare's time. It is our obligation as readers to choose the meaning or meanings which will not only explain the particular line in question, but will also enhance the meaning of the following speech and add in turn to the meaning of the whole play. All of the meanings cited above seem to be fused in the tone and feeling of the particular line and the lines following it. The meaning "foolish" of the word vain lingers on with special accent into the next speech, and reasons for such deductions are provided therein. "White hair" usually denotes wisdom. But Falstaff lacks it totally. The suggestion made in Part I, such as "stuffed cloak bag of guts," "reverend vice," and "gray iniquity" all culminate into the final speech when Henry V addresses Falstaff as a "fool and jester." Falstaff wears a Vice (mask)[1] of wisdom, and his gray hairs do not suit him. These significances do point to Falstaff as being "foolish" and deficient in some quality needed for him to be Court-Fool. By his action and behaviour as a "fool and jester" Falstaff has proved himself to be insensible, unavailing, unprofitable to the needs of the King, who is the ruler and the sovereign of this kingdom. The question remains as to how he does prove himself to be a "fool and jester." Have his jests and comic acts always been unavailing? In

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[1]See p. 81 above.

what capacity did he serve comic delights? Is it merely a manner of retribution that King Henry V admonishes Falstaff as "fool and jester"? Or is the address "fool and jester" at all in keeping with his character and the conditions set within the play to consider him as a Clown-Fool type? The playwright prepares us with most of the answers in the play from the beginning. We can trace this back from I Henry IV and prove Falstaff to be a "fool and jester," hence a Clown-Fool type. Chief Justice calls him a "great fool" (II Henry IV, II.i.208) and Falstaff himself supports this view.

> Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me. The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter more than I invent or is invented on me. I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men.
>
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.7-12)

In addition to the detailed analysis of the Clown-Fool qualities in Falstaff, we will from time to time show similarities between Feste, Touchstone, and Falstaff because Feste and Touchstone are regarded as great Shakespearean Court-Fools. Therefore, possible similarities with them may fortify our assumption about Falstaff's character.

Our first acquaintance with Falstaff takes place as he is relaxing leisurely in Hal's apartment in London. Apparently in no hurry, Falstaff enquires the time of the day from the Prince. In his answer Prince Hal addresses him as "fat-witted" (I.ii.2). "Fat-witted" refers to a

"block-head," "fool," "stupid," and an "idiot."[1] Block-head signifies a foolish person. Now, we have not yet seen enough of Falstaff to judge him either as an "idiot" or as a "block-head." Why should the playwright use such a modifier to describe Falstaff if he had no purpose behind such use of the word? For a monumental figure such as Falstaff it seems unlikely that Shakespeare would use a form of address at random without a pretty good notion of what he wanted to develop finally. It would be quite unlike him to use such terms as would link Falstaff to a Clown-Fool if he did not wish Falstaff to be depicted as a Clown-Fool who has been, in his literary development, referred to as "block-head," "fat-witted," "simpleton," and so forth.

Internal evidence from the play will now be examined which indicates what Falstaff's function as a Clown-Fool is in the play. Among innumerable qualities of a Clown-Fool evidenced in Falstaff we will primarily consider his love of food and drink, love of leisure, dislike of physical labour, cowardice, presumptuousness, pretence, blundering, mock-learning, evasiveness, deliberate reversal of meaning, and so on.

Among the major distinguishable characteristics in a Clown-Fool love of food and drink and excessive indulgence in revelry are but two significant qualities. The early

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[1]Murray, A New English Dictionary, Vol. IV, p. 95.

Feast of Fools shows unrestrained mirth in eating, drinking, dancing, dicing, masquerading, and making a general nuisance of the people themselves who took part in the activities:

> The concept "fool" by its connection with them, was visibly extended beyond the image of the idiot to the vision of Bacchus and Juno setting abroach the tune while the orders of fools gather around for revelry. Their performances were candid displays of riotousness.[1]

Closer to the time of Shakespeare, we see these qualities in the role of Simplicity, the first pure Clown, who, on making

> Hospitality's acquaintance promptly invites himself to dinner, but scorns his plain fare, . . . nothing but beef, bread, and cheese for me to eat. Now I would have had some pies, or bag-puddings with great lumps of fat.[2]

The particular ogre-like appetite persists throughout the Clown's history. Simkin gloats over an anticipated wedding feast. He states:

> I expect rare cheer, as, first, the great spiced cake to go in, cake-bread fashion, drawn out with currants, the jealous furmety must put on his yellow hose again, and hot pies come mincing after: the boiled mutton must swim in a river of stewed broth, where the channel is made of prunes instead of pebbles, and prime raisins and currants in the stead of checkerstones and gravel to omit geese and gulls, ducks and dotterels, widgeons and woodcocks, of which there will be

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 74.

[2]Busby, Studies of the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 63.

plenty.[1]

In Falstaff we find the same type of longing and gluttonous appetite for food and drink. Hal points to these fancies in Falstaff:

> Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack and unbuttoning thee after supper . . . What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons . . . I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day.
> (I Henry IV, I.ii.2-13)

Wilson offers an interesting observation helpful to us here. He says that

> . . . though we never see or hear of Falstaff's eating, or desiring to eat, anything except goodwife Keech's dish of prawns and the capon, anchovies, and halfpenny worth of bread recorded with "an intolerable deal of sack" in the bill found upon him while asleep. Shakespeare none the less contrives to associate him perpetually with appetizing food by means of the imagery that plays about his person. For the epithets and comparisons which Hal and Poins apply to him, or he himself makes use of, though at times connected with the consumption of sack, are far more often intended to recall the chief stock-in-trade of the victuallers and butchers of Eastcheap, namely meat of all kinds, and meat both raw and roast.[2]

In this observation Wilson does not see Falstaff as a Clown-Fool by nature. Earlier in this section we have, with the assistance of Disher, proved that large appetite and love of drink are inseparable qualities of a Clown-Fool.

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, pp. 63-64.

[2]Wilson, "Falstaff and the Plan of Henry IV, Part I," p. 193.

In the mock-trial scene the Prince, playing the role of his father, King Henry IV, scolds Falstaff, who is playing the Prince's role. Assuming an air of anger, he gives a portrayal of Falstaff:

> . . . Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it?
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.500-502)

Falstaff defends himself against the accusation:

> . . . If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked!
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.516-517)

The Prince searches through Falstaff's pocket in Eastcheap tavern, and finds:

> "Item, A Capon, ... 2s. 2d.
> Item, Sauce, ... 4d.
> Item, Sack, two gallons, ... 5s. 8d.
> Item, Anchovies and sack after supper, 2s. 6d.
> Item, Bread, ... o6."
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.586-590)

The Prince's reaction to this is:

> Oh, monstrous! But one halfpenny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack.
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.591-592)

The Hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap reminds Falstaff wearily that:

> . . . You owe money here besides, Sir John, for your diet and by-drinkings, ...
>
> (I Henry IV, III.iii.83-84)

Even in a serious situation such as on the battlefield at Shrewsbury, Falstaff is found carrying with him drink to keep him hot, enough "There's that will sack a city." says Falstaff (I Henry IV, V.iii.56). Falstaff's love for

"sack" is exhibited throughout the Henry IV plays under different circumstances, in different situations. In the scene where Falstaff comes back all perturbed and exasperated by the Prince and Poins' joke and makes up his fantastic story of the "eleven buckram men," the Prince is thoroughly amused having played this practical joke on him. But Falstaff pretends to be outraged and ready to take "vengeance." But words are his only weapons, empty words, too. These words come out of him extempore, but "sack" makes his spirit more apt for the mood. Thrice he urges "Give me a cup of sack" in this scene (II.iv.128, 131, 168). And the Prince testifies to Falstaff's habit of drinking, "Thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunkest last" (II.iv.170). "Sack" seems to vitalize him. On a road near Coventry, seemingly exhausted by the worries of war, the leisure-loving Falstaff tells Bandolf, ". . . get thee before to Coventry, fill me a bottle of sack" (IV.ii.1-2). Falstaff's long explication of the power of "sack" demonstrates the Clown-Fool qualities of Falstaff. Because this speech evidences many of the major characteristics of a Clown-Fool, particularly of a Tavern-Fool,[1] we will quote it almost in its entirety:

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[1]Wilson describes Falstaff as he "symbolizes, . . . , all the feasting and good cheer for which Eastcheap stood." This portrays a Tavern Fool, but Wilson uses it to indicate the nature of London's underworld and its grip on noblemen. "Falstaff and the Plan of Henry IV, Part I," pp. 192-193.

> . . . Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy doth not love me, nor a man cannot make him laugh--but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine. There's never none of these demure boys come to any proof, for thin drink doth so overcool their blood, and making many fish meals, that they fall into a kind of male greensickness, . . . They are generally fools and cowards, which some of us should be too but for inflammation. A good sherris sack hath a twofold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain, dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it, makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes--which, delivered o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is the warming of the blood, which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice. But the sherris warms it and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme. It illumineth the face, which as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of the little kingdom, man, to arm. And then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage, and this valor comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it awork, and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil till sack commences it and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it that Prince Harry is valiant, for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father he hath, like lean sterile and bare land, manured, husbanded, and tilled with excellent endeavor of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them should be to foreswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.
>
> (II Henry IV, IV.iii.93-135)

Basically, this speech is a hymn in honor of sack, nourishing, vitalizing, and inspiriting material for whosoever wants to become "very hot and valiant." Aside from praising the power of sack, in this speech Falstaff has portrayed himself as a Clown-Fool type on more than three

counts. In his speech he uses words the meaning of which he is not completely aware, and he uses them in a foolish manner, making a "mock-learned dissertation" on "sack." The style of this speech is a mixture of colloquial, proverbial manner and rhetorical, metaphorical eloquence. But most significantly, he calls others fools, implying that wisdom lies within him only. An examination of this speech part by part will be enhancing to our understanding of it.

Speaking of "whimsical quibbling and choplogic" in the speech of the English Clown, Busby observes:

> Some of the clown's disputations have more than a suspicion of parody of the schoolmen, and this quality is still more marked in their frequent mock-learned dissertation on various subjects. These . . . undoubtedly owe much to the "sermons joyeux," in which the Fool societies parodied both the office of the Church and the rhetoric of the schools. It is the latter which is the more frequently travestied in the discourses of the fools. The most formal of these orations is the "argument in the defence of drunkenness" pronounced by Bosse in Every Woman in her Humour (too long to quote) [sic] in which he proves that drunkenness is a virtue and that it "ingenders with two of the morall virtues, and six of the lyberall sciences."[1]

Although Busby deprives the reader of the speech on wine and habit of drinking, she cites another to give us just one example, and we quote it to show a similar manner in a Clown-Fool while delivering a mock-learned speech on any

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 72.

subject. This is Pompey's account of ale:

> Pomp. Is it not strange, my lord, that so many men love ale that know not what ale is?
> Coll. Why, what is ale?
> Pomp. Why, ale is a kind of juice made of precious grain called malt; and what is malt? Malt's M A L T: and what is M A L T? M is much, A ale, L little, T thrift: that is, much ale, little thrift?
> (Rape of Lucrece II.i)[1]

Referring to the superficial or pseudo intellectualism in the Clown-Fools, Goldsmith tells us

> Sometimes these fools are nourished in their happiness by a benevolent ignorance or a delightful delusion. At other times, they joy in a supernal wisdom that goes deeper than reason may plumb. . . . Moria mixes matter and impertinency in about the same proportions as we find in the speeches of her devotees--the professional fools of the court and the stage.[2]

In this same process Falstaff uses the images of medicine and agriculture metaphorically and rhetorically to prove the greatness of an object which he thinks is a thing of virtue. And, to strengthen his point of view, and to give it an air of great wisdom and knowledge, he uses high sounding words--but uses them inappropriately. "Inflammation" actually means some kind of burning process, but here it is used in a curiously comical manner. The word "forgetive" is associated with the meaning of forgetfulness, but placed beside quick in apprehension it arouses

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 73.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 13.

laughter; this way of juxtaposing two opposite words is a typical device in a Clown-Fool. High-sounding words like "pusillanimity," "commences" do not properly blend with the substance and the overall style of the foolish speech. This is the use of mock-learning as well as another device used to form Clown-Fool's seemingly substantial speeches, that is, to use words and corrupt their sense. The Clown-Fool figure in Antony and Cleopatra uses the same device. He uses the word "immortal" when he means to say "mortal," and "fallible" when he means "infallible." Fallstaff shows strong similarity to the usual Clown-Fool's love for "long words without being too sure of their meanings."[1] In the same manner Falstaff evidences the use of another common device of a Clown-Fool, that is the mixture of colloquial with rhetorical and turning the speech into a mock-learning quibble. While we are on the topic of the mixture of style it would be worthwhile to examine a few more such speeches. First we refer to the most famous of Falstaff's speeches, the one on Honor. This is an excellent example of mock-sermon, mock-rhetoric expression. Only a Clown-Fool, who has the licence to speak without restraint, whether it be satire or parody, slander or just plain railing, can use such speech style as used in the explanation of Honor. Similar to the Sermons joyeux Falstaff's

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[1] Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 1263, footnote.

catechism satirizes the concept of Honor at great length. Compared to the Clown-Fool's inborn desire to live and enjoy life, the question of Honor is to him a trivial one. In making a delightful parody of the concept of Honor, Falstaff likens himself more to a Clown-Fool of the tradition. Stoll sheds some more light on this speech. Describing Falstaff's philosophy in this speech, Stoll remarks that his "philosophy is but shift and evasion. . . ."[1] We learn from Busby and Goldsmith that use of shift and evasion in speech are major qualities in Clown-Fools.[2] Again Stoll observes that Falstaff's philosophy is one "for profit and a purpose; which is negation of philosophy."[3] Swain has pointed out to us that Clown-Fools are known mainly for their irresponsible nature and for lack of any moral philosophy.[4] We feel that it is necessary to cite Stoll again at this time as he lays himself open for debate. In an indirect manner, Stoll qualifies Falstaff as a Clown-Fool:

> Falstaff is neither rebel nor critic. As clown he could be supposed to have neither philosophy nor anti-philosophy; being a comic contrast and

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[1]Stoll, Shakespeare Studies, p. 468.

[2]Shift and evasion as characteristics of the Clown-Fool will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

[3]Stoll, Shakespeare Studies, p. 472.

[4]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 1.

appendage to the heroes and the heroic point of view.[1]

The speech which attempts an explanation of "counterfeit" creates the same effect as does the speech on Honor. In the mock-rhetorical manner of Euphues, Falstaff dwells on the concept of what "counterfeit" and "real" are. Corrupting the meaning of the word,[2] he advises a means to live. The last part of the speech amounts to simple scheming and cunning--motivation of a Clown-Fool. Touchstone in As You Like It would rather be married to Audrey by a man who is "not like to marry me well, and not being well married, it will be a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife" (III.iii.92-95), a step taken now will make provision for the future. This is what Falstaff thinks of when he delivers a mock-learned speech on being "counterfeit" and decides on his future course of action. Incidentally, in the same manner that Touchstone thinks aside, Falstaff in a different situation schemes to take advantage of Master Shallow; the content and the intent are not the same, but the tone of the speech and manner of placing it exactly the way Touchstone does show a definite similarity between Touchstone and Falstaff as Clown-Fool types.

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[1]Stoll, Shakespeare Studies, p. 474.

[2]As Clowns and Fools do, as seen in Feste and Touchstone.

Returning to the speech on Honor again, we see that Falstaff points to others as "fools" and emphasizes that he is the only wise person. This reversal of qualities goes back to antiquity. We have amusing examples of such behavior as demonstrated by Doran:

> Emperor Maxmilian II . . . distinguished the dullest of his counsellors by the title of the king of Fools. On once addressing a prosy advisor by this title, the gentleman neatly enough replied, "I wish, with all my heart, I were king of fools; I should have a glorious kingdom of it, and you, Imperial Majesty, would be among my subjects."[1]

Caliph Haroun-Al-Raschid once said to Bahalul, his Fool:

> "Fool, give me a list of all the blockheads in Baghdad." To which Bahalul answered, "That were not so easy, and would take too long; but if you want a list of the wise men, you shall have it in two minutes."[2]

From a Fifteenth Century document known as "The Sage Fool's Testament" we receive a picture of a Fool about to die who also believes others around him to be fools, just the way Falstaff thinks. This Fool in question is making his will distributing his worldly belongings:

> I have lovyd so well your fadyr, that I Covett and Dessyre to be in hys Company Above all thyngis, for he lovyd me so well. And I know well that he ys in hell; wherfor I wolde be with hym. And I gyve to my lady your wyffe me Bedde, be Cawse that she myghte Lye on hyt; for now she lyethe so softe, that hyt ys All-moste none or that she Ryse. And to your Steward, my hode; be Cawse hyt hathe iiij

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 41.

[2]Ibid., p. 68.

> erys, for where ye put All your truste in hym, to pay your Credytour & the pore pepull, he may not here. And to your Amner, my Babyll: Be Cawse when he delyveryth your Almys A-monge the pore pepull, they prese on hym, & there he betis them with hys Staffe, that the Blode Ron Abowte there erys; & my babyll ys Softer.[1]

Falstaff defines Poins as a fool whose wit is "as thick as Tewksbury mustard. There's no more conceit in him than is in a mallot" (II Henry IV, II.iv.262-263). And he informs Doll that because "the Prince himself is such another," (275-276) he admits a man like Poins to keep him company.

In this type of reversal of qualities and railing and slanderous utterances Falstaff reminds us of Scurra, a type of Fool early in the tradition who later degenerated into a buffoon type. It would be easier to assimilate the similarities in function between Scurra and Falstaff if we now cite some examples.

Having experienced an overdose of practical jokes played upon him, Falstaff enters in a railing spree, calling everyone names without any valid reason:

> A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too! . . .
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.127-128)
>
> . . . .
>
> You rogue, here's lime in this sack too. There is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man. Yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it. A villainous coward! . . . . If manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 26.

> three good men unhanged in England, and one of them is fat, and grows old. God help the while! A bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver, I could sing psalms or anything. A plague of all cowards, I say still.
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.137-148)

The Hostess witnesses Falstaff slander the Prince:

> The Prince is a Jack, a sneak-cup. 'Sblood, an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog if he would say so.
>
> (I Henry IV, III.iii.99-101)

The freedom of speech is an inherent quality in a Clown-Fool type, but the manner in which it is used defines the category by which the Clown-Fool may be classified. In this instance, and from the previous example, Falstaff manifests vestiges of a "Scurra" type Fool. In another quite significant speech where Falstaff rails against the tailor "Master Dombledon," he also evidences the Clown-Fool's love for good clothes.[1]

> . . . What said Master Dombledon about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?
>
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.33-34)

Told by the page that the tailor requires more concrete financial bond than Bandolph's word for it, Falstaff pours out his angry feelings:

> Let him be damned, like the glutton! Pray God his tongue be hotter! A whoreson Achitophel! A rascally yea-forsooth knave! To bear a gentleman in hand, and then stand upon security! . . . . And if a man is through with them in honest taking-up, then they must stand upon security. I had as

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 65.

> lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth as offer to stop it with security. I looked a' should have sent me two and twenty yards of satin, as I am a true knight, and he sends me security. Well, he may sleep in security, for he hath the horn of abundance, and the lightness of his wife shines through it. And yet cannot he see, though he have his own lantern to light him.
>
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.39-55)

On this particular quality of slander and railing in the Clown-Fool, Goldsmith says:

> Along with the license to speak unpleasant truths and impudently criticize his master, the fool was free to utter uncouth and obscene language. Passerello, Will Summers and Lavache are merely exercising their prerogative as licensed fools when they indulge in coarse and ribald speech.[1]

Though this type of railing and slander abounds in the Henry IV plays, it is more profusely used in II Henry IV. Particularly one speech comes foremost in mind which is directed towards the country Justice Shallow (II Henry IV, III.ii.324-351). Now, about the origin of this pattern of fun-making by Scurra, Doran states:

> . . . they are themselves said to have been originally the "followers" in the retinue of great men, and their name scurra, or Sequura, is derived by some lexicographers from "sequi," to follow. Their wit was sharp but polished, and to be scurrilous, in the olden time, was rather a credit than a disgrace; and if the enemies of Cicero called him the Scurra Consularis, it was not that they found his sarcasms coarse, but that they felt them penetrating and fatal.[2]

But as time passed, a Scurra degenerated into a

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 33.

[2]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 31.

"buffoon" type but kept some of his original qualities. Between the two classes of comedians "who belonged to the profession of fools," the Scurra and the moriones, the Scurra evidenced the art of exciting by "bitterly extravagant yet sparkling wit." The Morio worked "more quietly, and as if he joked licentiously, by natural disposition thereto." The Scurra, "it follows then, was not in every age a polished fool."[1]

Olivia observes "There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail" (Twelfth Night.I.v.101). And Jacques hankers after a "coat of Motley" because he is aware of the liberty of the Fool, who as large as charter as the wind blows on anyone he pleases (As You Like It II. vii.47). The "intemperate and scornful language" used by Feste, Jacques, and others in this "stripe" reminds Goldsmith of "yet another kind of commentator--the railing buffoon or scurrilous tavern-jester."[2] Goldsmith continues:

> This type may be best seen in Jonson's Carlo Buffoone or in Shakespeare's Thersites. Carlo is depicted by Macilente as "an open-throated, black mouth'd curre, / That bites at all, ..."[3]

Jonson combined "the alehouse-jester" in Carlo's character, "who knows no decorum of time or place or person," and will spare no "sulphurous jest" (V.v.28).

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, pp. 32-33.

[2]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 70.

[3]Ibid., p. 70.

A little further on Goldsmith observes that:

> Thersites wears no bells or bauble, nor does he sprinkle his wit with nonsense in the customary manner of the court or stage fool. Shakespeare, in his conception of the scurrilous Greek, may have been influenced, as Professor Campbell suggests, by Jonson's Carlo Buffoone. Certainly, Thersites' mordant metaphors are reminiscent of Carlo's "stabbing similes" (Every Man out of His Humour IV.iv.114).[1]

A few years ahead of Thersites, Falstaff exhibits these distinguishing qualities (abusive, and railing, but mostly unprovoked) of the "scurrilous tavern jester" or a "railing buffoon" as pointed out by Goldsmith and Doran long ago. The only interesting fact is that Falstaff combines the characteristics not only of Thersites but also of Carlo Buffoone. As Thersites does not require the professional Fool's costume to prove his profession, Falstaff has dispensed with the usual motley, cap, bell, and bauble and appears in the guise of a "true knight," as he sees himself. In this connection it may not be superfluous to point out that not all professional Fools and jesters wore the traditional costume of the Fool. From Douce we learn that Thomas More's Fool, Patterson, and Archy, the Court Fool of James I, did not wear any official costume.[2] Will Sommers, one of the most unforgettable "fools" of all times did not seem to wear such costume.

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 71.

[2]Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare, p. 513.

Hotson tells us that

> . . . no where during Will Sommer's lifetime do we hear of his wearing anything resembling the long coat of the idiot, double or hanging sleeves, or motley cloth. . . . In fact it is clear that Will Sommer was dressed very much like any other minor officers of the royal household.[1]

John Heywood, the dramatist, played the Fool without an official costume.[2] It was not impossible for Shakespeare to have created a character like Thersites a few years prior to Troilus and Cressida. And the textual evidences show that Falstaff has significant similarities with Thersites and Carlo Buffoone. Just like an "alehouse-jester" Falstaff shows excessive love for wine and vulgar songs, and his bawdy humor and his bawdy taste are but distinct characteristics of Scurras and Tavern-Fools. Falstaff is seen entering the Boar's Head Tavern and indulging in most vulgar conversation with Doll Tearsheet (II Henry IV, II. iv.39-73). Again in the same scene we hear him ask for a merry song from Doll in the same bawdy and sensual manner as referred to previously. Falstaff's liking for "bawds" and "leaping houses" is pointed out by the Prince the first time when we meet him (I Henry IV, I.ii.8-11). Falstaff's conversation with Pistol about Doll Tearsheet (II Henry IV, II.iv.119-136) demonstrates the "alehouse-jester's" taste

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[1]Hotson, Shakespeare's Motley, p. 82. Also see the discussion on the Fool's and Clown's costume in Chapter I, Section A of this study.

[2]Doran, The History of Court Fools, pp. 161-162.

in what he considers fun. In this area Falstaff is quite close to Lavache. In All's Well That Ends Well, Laffeu asks the Clown, Lavache,

> Whether dost thou profess thyself, a knave or a fool?
> Clown. A fool, sir, at a woman's service, and a knave at a man's.
> Laf. Your distinction?
> Clown. I would cozen the man of his wife and do his service.
> Laf. So you were a knave at his service, indeed.
> Clown. And I would give his wife my bauble, sir, to do her service.
> (IV.v.23-28)

From these qualities it is evident that Falstaff as a Clown-Fool shows a fusion of Scurra and a Tavern-jester.

Impersonation or mimicry is an important quality in a Clown-Fool type. And Falstaff evidences that too when he plays the role of King Henry IV as the Prince pretends to be Falstaff. Feste in Twelfth Night impersonates a priest and mimics Malvolio; Thersites in Troilus and Cressida mimics Agamemnon, Ajax, and all the other leaders. Therefore, Falstaff is using only what is in tradition accepted as a device used by Clown-Fool types. Not only does he play-act the King's role, but he makes it more authentic by portraying the King grieving over his "misled" son:

> . . . . Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' vein.
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.422-426)

"Imitation" and "mimicry" were in vogue long before Feste or Thersites were born:

Philip, the King of Macedonia, is said to have

> possessed his own Court fool in Clisophus. Flögel says that the latter excited shouts of laughter by his imitations of his royal master's style, voice, manner, and even infirmities. . . . At other courts there were mimics who played the fool before their sovereign lords, by caricatured imitations. . . .[1]

Busby and Goldsmith both tell us that misunderstanding or pretension of misunderstanding is a "common stock-in-trade" of the Clown-Fool type:

> To pretend to misunderstand a simple remark or order, or to play at cross-purposes with an interlocutor, is the Clown's great delight.[2]

In the mock-practice scene as Prince Hal enumerates the wanton qualities of Falstaff and Falstaff pretends not to have understood:

> I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your Grace?
>
> (I Henry IV, II.iv.506-507)

Being confronted with Lord Chief Justice, Falstaff chooses not to understand, and he pretends to be deaf. When the Chief Justice tells him that he is aware of his tricks, Falstaff acts as if he could not understand anything they were trying to convey and indulges in some incoherent and irrelevant conversation; the helpless servant then tells him:

> I pray you, sir, . . . give me leave to tell you you lie in your throat . . .
>
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.95-97)

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[1] Doran, The History of Court Fools, pp. 22-23.

[2] Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, pp. 70-71.

From Busby's study we know that Cricket, the Fool in Wily Beguiled inquires, "would you have a sack sir," when he is asked to bring sack. To this Gripes, the main male character, answers angrily, "Away, fool; a cup of sack to drink." And Cricket manages to handle the situation in this manner:

> O' I had thought you would have had a sack to have put this law-cracking cog-foist in, instead of a pair of stocks.[1]

Slip of tongue is another type of blunder that critics have shown to have been committed by Fools and Clowns before Falstaff. Doran, for example, tells us that the King of Persia decided once to educate the people. Among others the Court-Fool came to learn spelling. But every day at the beginning of the lesson

> he opened the Koran and pointed out to his sovereign the passage in which Mohamet forbids the payment of impost [material offering as taxes] to the kings of the earth. The fool's vigilance kept the people in ignorance and under taxation for ever and ever.[2]

Busby notes, "there are both real and pretended blunders, but this time the first class predominates."[3] Falstaff, with his inherent freedom of speech, does not know where to restrain himself:

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 71.

[2]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 53.

[3]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 71.

> And I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art King, as,
> God save thy Grace----Majesty I should say, for
> grace thou wilt have none----
>
> (_I Henry IV_, I.ii.18-20)

Naturally, the Prince is annoyed, "What, none?" Realizing what he might be in for, Falstaff the Clown-Fool changes his tone:

> No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to
> be prologue to an egg and butter.
>
> (_I Henry IV_, I.ii.22-24)

After the Gadshill incident and after Falstaff has related a fantastic story of the eleven men in buckram, Hal tells him that he and Poins know all about Falstaff's tricks and devices and demands that Falstaff explain his behaviour:

> Come, tell us your reason. What sayest thou to
> this?
>
> (_I Henry IV_, II.iv.258-259)

The Prince's voice denotes sternness and signifies natural response of a person in his position. He is determined to be retributive. Now Falstaff changes his attitude and his manner of speech:

> Why, hear you, my masters. Was it for me to kill
> the heir apparent? Should I turn upon the true
> Prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as
> Hercules. But beware instinct, the lion will not
> touch the true prince. Instinct is a great
> matter, I was now a coward on instinct. I shall
> think the better of myself and thee during my life,
> I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true Prince.
> But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the
> money. . . . shall we be merry? Shall we have a
> play extempore?
>
> (_I Henry IV_, II.iv.294-308)

Besides saving his own skin by covering up his near

blunder, Falstaff here exhibits more of the characteristics of the Clown-Fool type. Consisting of denial, inversion, ostentatiousness, proverbial anecdote, this speech is a representative specimen of Clown-Fool type speeches. We have discussed the mixture of styles previously.[1] High estimation of their importance is shown by previous Clowns and Fools:

> This characteristic is probably partly derived from the Court fool, whose importance was generally acknowledged. . . . Thus Strumbo describes himself in his love-letter as "a gentleman of good fame and name, maiesticall, in parell comely, in gate portlie, ..."[2]

Speaking of Falstaff's manipulating himself out of near blunder, the scene showing the Prince and Poins in guise of drawers is incomparable. The Prince and Poins overhear Falstaff's derogatory comments about the Prince. As the Prince charges him: "Why, thou globe of sinful continents, what a life dost thou lead!" Falstaff is not ready to break yet: "A better than thou. I am a gentleman, thou art a drawer!" (<u>II Henry IV</u>, II.iv.309-311). The Prince takes Falstaff on his own words and declares: "Very true, sir, and I come to draw you out by the ears" (313-314). Faced with a shameful retribution, Falstaff calms down:

> No abuse, Hal, o' mine honor, no abuse.
> (<u>II Henry IV</u>, II.iv.340)

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[1]See p. 111 above.

[2]Busby, <u>Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama</u>, p. 71.

. . . .

> No abuse, Ned, . . . Honest Ned, none. I dispraised him before the wicked, that the wicked might not fall in love with him. In which doing, I have done the part of a careful friend and a true subject, and thy father is to give me thanks for it. No abuse, Hal. None, . . .
>
> (II Henry IV, II.iv.345-350)

In enumerating the major characteristics of Clowns and Fools Busby tells us:

> . . . the stage fool is almost invariably a lover of creature comforts, hating work, travel, and physical discomfort of every kind. . . .[1]

Falstaff's dislike for any kind of physical labour is explicitly shown in the plays. Prior to the robbery committed near Gadshill, as planned by the Prince, Poins, and Falstaff, Falstaff discovers that his horse has been removed, and he is not at all entertained by this finding:

> The rascal hath removed my horse, and tied him I know not where. If I travel but four foot by the squier further afoot, I shall break my wind. . . .
>
> (I Henry IV, II.ii.11-13)

Leisure-loving Falstaff dislikes walking because:

> Eight yards of uneven ground is three score and ten miles afoot with me, and the stony-hearted villains know it well enough.
>
> (I Henry IV, II.ii.26-29)

Knowing quite well Falstaff's dislike for any physical labour and especially for walking, the Prince gives him "a charge of foot" because he is sure of his capacity to walk. Falstaff will be as good as dead within a "march of twelve

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[1]Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 63.

score" (I Henry IV, II.iv.597-598). This step is taken by the Prince in order to create laughter. But some critics have interpreted this as a deliberate action of the Prince. They believe that the Prince arranges for such step with regard to Falstaff because he knows about his imminent monarchy and he is certain that as a King he will have to dismiss Falstaff from his company. Hence he uses this apparently comic action to dispense with Falstaff permanently.[1] But Shakespeare does not seem to direct us definitely toward such effect. Falstaff's similar reactions to physical exhaustion is shown in many more places. In the battlefield, Falstaff urges the Prince: "O Hal, I prithee give me leave to breathe a while. Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms as I have done this day" (I Henry IV, V.iii.45-47). Having done nothing of substantial value, Falstaff feels vain and foolishly boasts as he demands rest. Chief Justice touches on a soft spot of Falstaff when he tells him about Falstaff's next adventurous trip with Lord John Lancaster. Falstaff falls back on his leisure-loving nature. He declares:

> I am an old man, you should give me rest. I would to God my name were not so terrible to the enemy as it is. I were better to be eaten to death with a rust than to be scoured to nothing with perpetual motion.
>
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.242-246)

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[1] J. Dover Wilson is among those critics who hold such a view.

Trying to justify his position as a conscientious soldier, Falstaff explains to Lancaster, making sure that he emphasizes the physical discomfort he has gone through for it:

> Have I, in my poor and old motion, the expedition of thought? I have speeded hither with the very extremest inch of possibility, I have foundered ninescore and odd posts. And here, travel-tainted as I am, have, in my pure and immaculate valor, taken Sir John Colevile of the Dale, ...
> (II Henry IV, IV.iii.36-41)

In the history and development of Fools and Clowns it is noticed that they are "frequently duped." They love to play practical jokes on their masters, but quite frequently they themselves become the victims. The Gadshill incident in I Henry IV is the supreme example of a masterly planned practical joke, where the target is a Clown-Fool. Falstaff tries extremely hard in the beginning not to divulge the fact that he knows that the plan was intended to work on him. Later he has to allow the circumstances to take their own course. He calms down and changes the subject. But we know of Fools in antiquity, victims of jokes, who do not let the others know their feelings; rather, they use the whole joke to comment on the planner. From Doran we learn that on one occasion, in a court assembly the Fool of Mahmoud Ghizni complained that there was no sheep's tail (regarded as a delicacy). The tone of his complaint aroused laughter.

> "It is no laughing matter," added he; "I am starving, and all I ask is a sheep's tail for my dinner." . . . cried Mahmoud, "thou shall have one;" and whispering to an official who stood near, the latter

> personage presently brought in a raw vegetable, which in its shape somewhat closely resembled the long, heavy, and unctuous tail of the Eastern sheep. The fool took it without any observation; and, after giving thanks to the Prophet for excellent mutton, he began devouring it. Observing that the monarch smiled, the jester asked him, with the tail in his mouth, if what he was doing reminded his Majesty of anything.[1]

Mahmoud quipped back at the Fool saying what on earth could this sight remind him of? Then jokingly, he said, "except of the proverb that 'extremes meet'?" Doran continues:

> The fool was overwhelmed for a while by the laughter duly shouted forth by the subordinates at their great master's joke, but he soon recovered himself, and when Mahmoud asked him what he thought of his joint, he answered that the thing was eatable enough, . . . but he observed that sheep's tail was by no means so fat and well-flavoured as they had been in the days of his Majesty's predecessor; but that, as men were more lean too, now, than they used to be, perhaps the fact alluded to was of no material consequence.[2]

Doran tells us that the Eastern Monarch felt quite embarrassed by the Fool's reversal of his own joke and realized the grave meaning behind it. Then he said apologetically:

> Thou are not such a fool as thou pretendest to be," said the sovereign. "It was but yesterday that one of thy profession told me of the gratitude the owls felt for me, because of the many ruined villages in the land; and now thou hintest at the misery of the people. Go thy way with full stomach, go thy way good fellow, with assurance that both evils shall yet be remedied.[3]

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[1]Doran, The History of Court Fools, p. 71.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

Falstaff has not shown such wisdom as in this or any other Court-Fool, but the similarities in the jokes played upon both in their respective position are significant. As these stories were legendary, there is little or no doubt that they were available in the Renaissance.

A Clown-Fool Falstaff shows marked similarities with the characteristics of the Picaro, in a Picaresque novel. Made famous by the works of Cervantes, originally this type of novel portrayed the picaro,

> a central figure, through nature of his various pranks and predicaments and by virtue of his associations with the people of varying degrees, affords the author an opportunity for satire of social classes.[1]

Though Falstaff is not primarily involved in satire of any particular class, yet he absorbs the manner of "loose" character of the picaro which is the main feature of such types. This "rogue type character" of the Picaresque novel "usually stops just short of being an actual criminal."[2] Here also Falstaff shows kinship to a certain extent with the picaro. The unscrupulous and unprincipled ways of Falstaff are close to those of the Clowns and Fools of the tradition as well to those of the picaro of the Picaresque novel. The first Picaresque novel in English was published in 1594. It is The Unfortunate Traveller: or, The Life of

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[1]William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature (New York: Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 310.

[2]Ibid., p. 312.

Jack Wilton, written by Thomas Nash. The little similarities with picaro indicate also that Falstaff does not necessarily have to be a Vice.

Until now we have concentrated mainly on the similarities Falstaff evidences with the manners and behaviours of other Clowns and Fools. Presently we will endeavour to analyze a number of the address-forms and words referring to Falstaff and his action in the play which relate to Clowns and Fools in one way or another. Our main concentration will be first on the Prince's references to Falstaff and then to references as to how others see him. Prince Hal addresses Falstaff as "clay-brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool" (*I Henry IV*, II.iv.252). *Clay-brain* means a brain full of something unprofitable, signifying nothing, in turn meaning a Fool. "Knotty-pated" means a block-head, a stupid person or an idiot, which again signifies a Fool. A little later in the same scene the Prince calls Falstaff a "sweet creature of bombast" (359-360). The first two words in the address point to an endearing form of reference (usually one equates the meaning of creature, small and fool at the same time) and "bombast" means high-sounding words. Fool's language is usually high-sounding but devoid of important meaning or substance. Therefore, the address "sweet creature of bombast" means a Fool whose habit is to talk high-sounding nonsense. In the same place there is a reference to "woolsack" (149). Woolsack denoted at that time

something quite close to a cloak-bag. Cloak-bag was a kind of sack made of green motley.[1] Hotson explains that motley, a material, "homespun or a tweed was a mixture, or cloth of a mixed colour. It was the threads and not the segments of material, that were of diverse colours."[2] And the most pertinent fact for us to note here is that the Fools "were taken away in a cloakbag"[3] or rather a "woolsack." Hence the "woolsack" used by the Prince in reference to Falstaff relates him to the Fool in Motley. Not because he is cruel, but because Falstaff is a Clown-Fool, and amuses the Prince the Prince refers to him as "stuffed cloak bag of guts" (497). Hotson points out for us that the Elizabethan mind linked motley Fool with cloakbag because of the reason cited above. And she cites this address of the Prince as example, then explains that he was "genially called a fat motley fool."[4] The Prince refers to Falstaff as a "chewet" (I Henry IV, V.i.29). We find it interesting to note that this word means a Jackdaw, jackass, and hence a Fool.[5] After the Prince finds Falstaff supposedly dead, he expresses

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[1]Murray, The New English Dictionary, Vol. II, ii, p. 278.

[2]Hotson, Shakespeare's Motley, p. 10.

[3]Ibid., p. 48.

[4]Ibid., p. 49.

[5]Murray, The New English Dictionary, Vol. II, ii, p. 311.

his sorrow for his "Poor Jack" (I Henry IV, V.iv.103) which denotes the tone of affection used as an endearment for a Fool. Doll Tearsheet calls Falstaff "you fat fool" (II Henry IV, II.iv.322) and means it literally. The Prince gives an appropriate description of a Fool's kingdom when Falstaff pretends to play the role of King Henry IV (I Henry IV, II.iv.418-420):

> Thy state is taken for a joined stool, thy golden scepter for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown!

Goldsmith tells us that a Fool's throne was put together in a trivial style; his scepter was a blunt instrument denoting its ineffectiveness, referring to his bauble or truncheon. And his crown was bald because traditionally Clowns were bald which signified their lack of intelligence.[1] The description given by the Prince is quite similar in details to that given by Goldsmith. Thereby our contention is fortified. In the same scene that we are discussing, the Prince refers to Falstaff as "reverend vice" (I Henry IV, II.iv.499). Prince Hal means to say that Falstaff merely wears a mask (Vice) of wisdom, his wisdom is not real, actually he is a Fool.[2] The Prince devises some game with Poins and Francis to "drive away the time till Falstaff come " (I Henry IV,

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[1]Goldsmith, Wise Fools in Shakespeare, p. 1.

[2]See p. 81 in this chapter for the explanation of Vice as Mask.

II.iv.30). This implies that Falstaff functions as a jester, a Clown-Fool for the Prince. As Falstaff is absent the Prince tries to provide for his own entertainment.

Falstaff himself describes his function twice as the Clown-Fool type in relation to the Prince. He does so first to his Page:

> Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me. The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter more than I invent or is invented on me. I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. . . .
> (II Henry IV, I.ii.7-12)

Falstaff's comment takes note of the ability of a Clown-Fool to entertain with unending sparks of wit and mirth and also of the Clown-Fool type's frequently being the subject of foolery. In the same speech, Falstaff as a Clown-Fool type shows pleasure in describing himself as the source and inventor of all laughter, as the wise man, and the others as foolish. Following these lines in his speech, Falstaff calls his page a "mandrake . . . fitter to be worn in" his "cap." The appearance of the mandrake root, forked and resembling a man in its shape, and the popular associations with it imply that Falstaff may be considering the page as the coxcomb that he thinks should be put on his cap, thereby giving him a part of the Fool's costume. In the battle of Shrewsbury, Colevile of Dale allows himself to be captured by Falstaff and speaks in a condescending manner:

> I think you are Sir John Falstaff, and in that thought yield me.
> (II Henry IV, IV.iii.18-19)

At this the "sweet creature of bombast" spouts off his foolish knowledge:

> I have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine, and not a tongue of them all speaks any other word but my name.
>
> (II Henry IV, IV.iii.20-22)

A Clown-Fool type can have a quick repartee in many languages, although he may not use it in a knowledgable manner. And it takes a garrulous jester like Falstaff to keep everyone reminded of it.

Last, but not least, Falstaff resolves to entertain Prince Hal for ever:

> I will devise matter enough out of this Shallow to keep Prince Harry in continual laughter the wearing-out of six fashions, which is four terms, or two actions, and a' shall laugh without intervallums. Oh, it is much that a lie with a slight oath and a jest with a sad brow will do with a fellow that never had the ache in his shoulders! Oh, you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up!
>
> (II Henry IV, V.i,86-95)

Boasting about himself, implicit suggestion of making fun of others' folly as he does of Shallow, using bombastic words with colloquial--all these constitute the speech of Falstaff, who is a Clown-Fool. The crowning touch to the speech comes with Falstaff's prophecy of remaining as Prince Hal's friend for at least a year to come.

Unfortunately though, he cannot retain his position as a Clown-Fool when Prince Hal becomes Henry V. The only way Falstaff could be accepted in the court would be as a Court-Fool. And Falstaff anticipates that that position

will be offered to him; presumptuously he offers positions to his colleagues:

> . . . Master
> Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine.
> (II Henry IV, V.iii.128-130)

And then floats in premature joy:

> I am fortune's steward. (II Henry IV, V.iii.136-137)
> . . . Boot, boot, Master Shallow! I know the young King is sick for me. . . .
> (II Henry IV, V.iii.140-142)

But the King rejects him as it is seen necessary for the proper advancement of the kingdom and the monarchy. As a Clown-Fool type, a combination of an "ale-house jester" or Tavern Fool and a "scurrilous, railing buffoon," Falstaff has no place in the court. A Court-Fool has two primary functions: to "divert and instruct" with his privileged position and freedom of speech and above all with his wisdom. Falstaff is able to "divert" very well but to "instruct" or to advise wisely when necessary is entirely out of Falstaff's capability. In the two parts of the Henry IV plays, Falstaff not once has evidenced any wisdom. Examining only two of the most reputed Clown-Fools in Shakespeare, Feste and Touchstone, we observe that wisdom is a quality which is indispensable in a Court-Fool or a Clown-Fool in the Court. In As You Like It, Rosalind compliments Touchstone for his wisdom (II.iv.57). Jacques longs to be a Court-Fool because of this person's liberty, and he is thoroughly impressed by the fact "that fools should be so deep-contemplative" (II.vii.31). Touchstone

himself is impressed by Corin, the shepherd who manifests wisdom. Touchstone's remark is interesting. He believes that such a "natural philosopher" should belong in the court (III.ii.33-45). Viola in Twelfth Night observes that Feste is "wise enough to play the fool" (III.i.67). Feste is a Clown-Fool type. His function mostly involves that of a minstrel, but his insight into the foibles and frailties of people around him is remarkable. As a Court-Fool, King Lear's Fool is a significant character and to speak of his wisdom will only be superfluous. Falstaff evidences no such wisdom and deep insight which are necessary qualities to be a Court-Fool. He is, in fact, mainly a Tavern Fool. And this is Henry V's main objection to having Falstaff in his court. He is a "fool and jester" no doubt, but his "white hairs" look but ill on him. In tradition the Court-Fool has usually been an older person, experienced not only in the profession as an entertainer, but in worldly matters and also matters of Court. But old age and white hair appear to be as "reverend vice" and "gray iniquity." Falstaff's presence in the Court would be of no value because he is "vain," or foolish, as we have explained earlier, and he indulges mainly in "fool-born jest" or jest born in a Fool and Clown-Fool type's greatest love, food ("gormandizing"), both of which would have to be given up or curtailed. King Henry V leaves provision for the future. He mentions that if Falstaff can mould himself according to

the requirements of a Court-Fool, then he will be rewarded:

> We will, according to your strength and qualities,
> Give you advancement.
>
> (II *Henry IV*, V.v.73-74)

Prince John of Lancaster approves the King's action:

> I like this fair proceeding of the King's.
> . . . .
> Appear more wise and modest to the world.
>
> (II *Henry IV*, V.v.103-107)

Falstaff is not Vice who misled the Prince. But the young Prince came into close friendship with a Clown-Fool type whose occupation is not restrained to any particular thing; he is a self-seeking jester in the play. With his audacious, presumptuous, and insensible nature, Falstaff cannot become a true friend, adviser, and critic to King Henry V. Therefore, his rejection is necessary, and because Falstaff shows himself to be a Tavern Fool of the railing Scurra type, his fall comes naturally. He remains a Tavern Fool, garrulous, scurrilous, and coarse.

The wisdom of Touchstone, Lear's Fool, or Feste is totally lacking in Falstaff. Unless Falstaff shows some inclination of acquiring wisdom or of becoming prudent he may not receive the "advancement" he always has hoped for. Lacking the most important quality, wisdom, Falstaff remains at the level of a Tavern Clown-Fool of extremely garrulous nature.

CHAPTER III

KING LEAR

"O FOOL, I SHALL GO MAD!"

. . . .
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age, wretched in both.
If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely. Touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water drops,
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both
That all the world shall--I will do such
things--
What they are, yet I know not, but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep.
No, I'll not weep.
I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!
(II.iv.275-289)

The experience of King Lear transmitted through the above passage is self-evident. It is one of insurmountable torment caused by despicable treatment by his daughters. Disillusion and disenchantment of the King in his daughters lead him into immeasurable anguish and deep anger. Sad and angry, the King relates to the Fool: "O fool, I shall go mad!" In what capacity does the Fool accompany Lear into the storm and into the heath? Is the qualifier "chorus character" comprehensive enough to describe the role of the Fool? Or is his function merely to provide for a "wise"

man as an antithesis to Lear's "folly"? Is the Fool's character confined within these roles or does he fulfill yet another dramatically functional, meaningful requirement in the play? Why does Lear, in disgust and sorrow (the conditions which constitute his present world) address his own daughters as "unnatural hags" and, most possibly for compassion, turn to the professional entertainer? To be able to answer these questions, we must begin at the beginning.

The general view of the Fool is that he is a "wise fool" and has been aware of Lear's "folly" from the beginning of the play. "Lear's fool," says Enid Welsford,

> like Touchstone and Feste, is an "all-licensed" critic who sees and speaks the real truth about the people around him. His business, however, is not to deal out satirical commonplaces, but to emphasize one peculiarly dreadful instance of the reversal of position between the wise and the fool; indeed, he labors the point with a maddening reiteration which is only excusable because his tactless jokes and snatches of song spring so evidently from genuine grief.[1]

Welsford maintains that the "genuine grief" the Fool experiences for the King is "profound" and intense. But Welsford contradicts herself by making another observation which labels the Fool in King Lear as the "disinterested truthteller."[2] And even as a "disinterested truthteller," this

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[1] Welsford, The Fool, p. 256.

[2] Ibid., p. 258.

"tragic fool differs very profoundly from his comic brethren."[1] We are faced with a perplexing situation. If the Fool is merely a "disinterested truthteller, the '*punctum indifferens*' of the play,"[2] objective and aloof in his position, can he experience such "genuine grief" for Lear? Welsford leaves the proposition, having posed the problem for her reader. Her intention is now to examine how the Fool strikes the "keynote of the tragedy of Lear,"[3] namely, the division of the kingdom, "reversal of position," and the "startling division among the dramatic personae." And she states that

> For the full understanding of its import it is necessary to leave for awhile our meditation on the meaning of the words of the Fool, and to consider instead their reverberation in the play as a whole: examining firstly the disposition of the characters, and secondly the movement of events.[4]

Contrarily it would seem that for the full understanding of the "import" of the character of the Fool in relation to the "disposition" of other "characters" around him and the bearing of the "movement of events" on the portrayal of his role, "it is necessary" not to leave "our meditation on the meaning of the words of the Fool." By virtue of the fact

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[1]Welsford, *The Fool*, p. 259.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 258.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 259.

[4]*Ibid.*

that the Fool strikes the "keynote" of Lear's tragedy we may conclude that the Fool is a dramatically important functional character. But we must note that his functions are not restricted within the area just specified. The Fool plays another significantly meaningful role in the play, which makes his character captivating and arresting for all times and for all people. When King Lear, greatly distressed and justifiably agitated, turns to the Fool to express his unbearable agony, "O fool, I shall go mad!"--he relates to a friend, a sympathetic confidant who shares Lear's grief genuinely and stands by him as long as he is required.

In one sentence Bradley implies that the Fool is Lear's companion because he stays with Lear in the "very tempest and whirlwind of passion." But Bradley does not elaborate on his remark because "the Fool in King Lear has been so favourite a subject with good critics . . . ."[1] We propose then to extend and explicate what was anticipated by Bradley.

Our observation of the Fool as Lear's friend is supported by the position the Fool claims and in the manner in which he fulfils it by suitable action. We may come to the closest possible comprehension of meaning mainly by "meditating on the words" spoken by the Fool, and

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[1]A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd., 1956), p. 311.

examining their importance in relation to the whole "meaning-experience" of the play. In the course of analyzing the play, we will demonstrate that over and above acting as a friend to Lear, the Fool performs as a spokesman of universally acclaimed ethical principles.

The Fool makes a remarkable observation of human conduct and basic human relationship:

> "That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
> And follows but for form,
> Will pack when it begins to rain,
> And leave thee in the storm.
>
> "But I will tarry, the fool will stay,
> And let the wise man fly.
> The knave turns fool that runs away,
> The fool no knave, perdy."
> II.iv.79-86)

The truth expressed in the passage quoted above is universal. Aristotle has explained friendship in the following manner:

> It is plain that most people would rather get than give affection, the reason being that they like the feeling of being honoured. That accounts for their fondness for flattery, . . . to be loved is better than to be honoured, and . . . friendship is to be desired in and for itself.
>
> . . . friendship surely consists in giving rather than accepting affection. . . . Friendship then showing itself more truly in giving than in receiving affection, and love for his friends being considered a laudable trait in a man, it would seem to follow that the special excellence of friends consists in their bestowing this affection. So the kind of friends who stay friends and whose friendship is lasting, are those who give each other . . . .[1]

Friendship, then, consists in giving rather than in

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[1] J. A. K. Thomson, The Ethics of Aristotle (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), pp. 242-243.

expecting or accepting returns. The Fool's claim "I will tarry, the fool will stay"--denotes his objective in "giving," not "receiving." The Fool serves without any expectation of return--he performs as he sees fit. He is interested in Lear's well-being but disinterested in reward. By his action the Fool exemplifies ancient but universally acknowledged ethical principles:

> To action alone thou hast right and never at all to its fruits; let not the reward be thy motive; neither let there be in thee any attachment to inaction. --Gitā[1]

Detachment from the reward of any action is related by Bruno:

> I have fought, I have tried, that is much, victory is not mine.[2]

The Bible expresses the same thought:

> Trust in the Lord in all actions, lean not unto thine own understanding. In all action acknowledge Him--not the end they procure.
> (Proverbs 3: 5-6)

Those who remain friends, and whose feelings are lasting, are those who give each other that amount of affection, love, and solace proportionate to their deserts. "By doing this even friends who are not equal come closest to being friends in the full sense, for it would put them on an equality--caritas est paritas."[3]

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[1]Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Trans., Bhāgavad-Gitā (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 119.

[2]Ibid., p. 165.

[3]Thomson, The Ethics, p. 243.

Aristotle also believes that an internal principle keeps the friend steadfast in his path; and he shows goodness not only in not doing any wrong himself, "but in not allowing his friend to do it."[1] The Fool in King Lear remains steadfast in his determination to love and honour the King, to serve him as a friend. And his efforts in this respect mainly concentrate on not to allow the King to commit any more mistakes than he has already done.

According to the Fool the worldly wise men who follow "but for form" desert their patron as soon as they attain their selfish goal. Aristotle explains why:

> . . . the vicious are inconstant friends, for they have no consistency in their own characters. They are friends only for the brief period in which they find pleasure in each other's degradation.[2]

Aristotle implies that this friendship is of a materialistic nature. The Fool makes it quite clear in his observation that he does not stay for any "gain." And he intends to stay with Lear despite "rain" or "storm." This type of unsolicited friendship may be rare in the world but it is not a mere vision. People in all cultures feel the same way as does the Fool with regard to true friendship. The idea was exactly the same in Tenth Century B.C. in India. In Mahābhārata, one of the two national epics of India, we may find a true friend in a similar situation to that of the

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[1] Thomson, The Ethics, p. 243.

[2] Ibid.

Fool.

The main theme of Mahābhārata is a struggle for supremacy. Two related clans, the Pandavas and the Kauravas face each other in an unprecedented war to settle the issue of rightful rule over the land. Though the Pandavas are the rightful rulers, the young and haughty Kaurava leader is determined not to give up "land worth a pin's head" without a war. Our main interest in this instance lies in this ruthless young man's father, as he sits, sad, dejected, overcome by the feeling of the futility. This old man, incapacitated by blindness, was an efficient and good king. But he has been deposed by his own offspring; he has been stripped of all marks of majesty. Though blind, the old king sees the devastation awaiting his country because his son, the young and irresponsible ruler, is thoroughly unscrupulous, crafty and ruthless. He pretends to act for the well-being and advancement of the state, but in effect he manipulates all to the fulfillment of his lust of power and material gain. He is referred to as "Adharma" (devoid of all ethics) incarnated. Parental counsel does not prevail upon him. Friendly persuasion and pleas of subjects are ineffective to move him. Anticipating total disintegration of his homeland brought on by the hypocrisy and destructive nature of his son, the old king's sorrow knows no bounds. He turns to his ex-chamberlain, who, despite the ill-fortune experienced by the king, has remained faithful to him. The old king sighs in despair and vents his

futile sorrow to this loyal and faithful friend. Then he asks the ex-chamberlain, "Why do you stay with me, knowing that only injuries and heartaches will come my way?" Vidura, the sad but wise chamberlain, explains that he considers himself a Bāndhava[1] of the old king. And according to him, a Bandhava is a person who "remains in sorrow and in happiness, in famine and in civil strife, in the court of law and on the funeral grounds with his master." The role is utilitarian as well as pleasant, as Aristotle would see it. It is our belief that the Fool's claim "I will tarry, the fool will stay"--has but different words which carry essentially the same thought as the explanation given by an ancient chamberlain and by an ancient philosopher, who usually would be regarded as different because of the obvious superficial dissimilarities--but who share the same thought about a basic human relationship, ethically wholesome and commendable.

Frequently friendship and love are based on material returns. And the world considers him but a fool who serves his master or friend without an assurance of proper remuneration or reward, in kind or in quality. According to this point of view, Kent is a fool. The Fool has suggested as much by offering him the coxcomb (I.iv.109-118). Although the Fool gives vocal expression of the requirements

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[1]Means a true friend.

in a worldly wise person, he himself is a great fool who decides to stay with Lear even when it "begins to rain" and even when the "storm" brews overhead. The Fool remains when the "wise man" decides to "fly." In effect, the Fool serves the King in the capacity of a true friend, in a manner like that of Kent who has served the King in his real and assumed identity. We can perhaps go a little further to contend that the Fool assumes Kent's responsibilities as a compassionate-confidant in the play, during Kent's supposed banishment.

Kent has served Lear in as many ways as possible. We hear him explain:

> Royal Lear,
> Whom I have ever honored as my King,
> Loved as my father, as my master followed,
> As my great patron thought on in my prayers--
> (I.i.141-144)

But Lear has banished Kent for uttering the quite accurate truth, yet too bitter to accept. Aristotle states that "between friends there is no need of justice."[1] A friend should not be reproached for telling the truth. Kent is a friend, no doubt. But he is obliged to abide by the formalities which are associated with his official position. In his capacity as the Earl of Kent he cannot exhibit insolence, insubordination to the head of the realm. Regardless of his devotion for Lear, and despite the validity of his

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[1]Thomson, *The Ethics*, p. 228.

observation of Lear's mistake, in order to maintain a decorum Kent has to be banished. His banishment intensifies the gravity of Lear's mistake. The Fool, as will be shown later in this chapter, will perform Kent's duties as a friend. But by virtue of his professional liberty the Fool will remain beyond the retributive measures of the King.

Kent loves Lear and is truly devoted to him. He contrives a means to return and serve him in the best manner possible; he comes in guise of a servant. As a mere servant his action, speech and behaviour must be restricted to what would naturally be allowed to such a position. He can not utter any truth about Lear and his "folly." Having been banished as the Earl of Kent he lost some of his power. In his assumed role he can not pass judgment or offer critical view on the events, no matter how sincere the intent may be. As a servant, the Earl of Kent may be "full of labors," but there is a limitation as to how far he can intrude in his master's affairs. When the Earl of Kent becomes a servant, the position he had as a well-wisher cum advisor of Lear becomes vacant. There is no one in the play who evidences any capability of replacing Kent. Nonetheless, to demonstrate the inhumanity of Lear's daughters, dramatically, Lear needs to be accompanied by a compassionate, sympathetic and loving friend. By virtue of his occupation and the amenities which come with it, the Fool is in the most suitable position to

perform Kent's functions, namely, to be a loving friend and point out Lear's errors, as well as the apathy and cruelty of the "pernicious" daughters of Lear.

The Fool does not appear physically in the play until after the banishment of Kent.[1] The Fool serves the King as his Clown-Fool friend, a conciliator, during the interim period until the totally exhausted Lear is borne away in III.vi.107-108. Kent does not appear in his true identity again until Act V, scene iii. By the time Lear has been divested of his regal and sovereign prerogatives, he has diminished into Lear's "shadow" through invincible sorrow and suffering. This dimunitive representation of Lear is not primarily concerned with Kent's feigned or real identity; but his heart, whatever is remaining of it, is at the very brink of failing, after experiencing a traumatic but exhilarating moment of joy, the heart which for a split second felt that Cordelia was alive. In this situation, it is consoling for him to know that Kent has followed his "sad footsteps" as Caius, a mere servant. And for the time when Kent's character could not be used dramatically and structurally, Shakespeare chose to employ the "fool in motley" to serve the requirement. This is not done in a perfunctory manner;

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[1]Kent's banishment occurs in the play in I.i.170-182, he reappears as a servant in I.iv, and the Fool appears in the play in I.iv.105.

rather, this choice has fitted in well with the actual need of the play and with the traditional characteristics evidenced in the Clown-Fool type, especially in a Court-Fool.

The traditional Court-Fool was a professional Fool, not a natural idiot or simpleton. He was a clever man, witty and quick in repartee, but sometimes he used counterfeit manners to act or speak foolishly to be entertaining. Contrary to Bradley's belief, occasionally court jesters were sane men who earned their living by playing the Fool.[1] Bradley believes that to suppose "that the Fool is, like many a domestic fool at that time, a perfectly sane man pretending to be half-witted, is surely a most prosaic blunder."[2] He would rather see the Fool as a man who is "slightly touched in the brain."[3] And Bradley elaborates, "unless we suppose that he _is_ touched in the brain we lose half the effect of his appearance in the Storm-scenes."[4] To answer Bradley's first objection we may first point out that the Middle Ages have witnessed innumerable occasions when sane men played Fools in the Feast of Fools, _Sermon joyeux_, Sotties and such things, and then we may indicate that two great Court-Fools were perfectly sane men. They

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[1]See Chapter I, Section A for a detailed study on the traditional qualities of the Clown-Fool types.

[2]Bradley, _Shakespearean Tragedy_, p. 311.

[3]_Ibid_., p. 311.

[4]_Ibid_., pp. 311-312.

were Will Sommers and John Heywood, both in the court of Henry VIII.[1] Therefore, it is not a "most prosaic blunder" to regard the possibility that sane men did play "fools." To overlook the existence of Will Summers and John Heywood will unquestionably be a "most prosaic blunder" indeed. Bradley's second observation, to appreciate the "effect of his appearance in the Storm-scenes" we should see the Fool as "slightly touched." Shakespeare has not once in the play suggested that the Fool is "slightly touched." On the contrary, he has demonstrated that the Fool's understanding and apprehension of the events in the play are undoubtedly deep and accurate. The Fool is most perfectly aware of the present and future of Lear's life. As it would seem, Bradley may have been the critic to have initiated the interpretation of the Fool as a "slightly touched" man, and posterity has perpetuated his view. Among those are Welsford and Empson. Welsford finds three mad men on the Heath. She believes that, along with Lear and "Poor Tom," the Fool is also a mad man. Empson believes that the Fool is insane, too. To answer Bradley, we may point out that our appraisal of the Fool must not necessarily be based merely on the "Storm-scenes." Evaluation of any character

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[1]Bradley's work was first published in 1904 and revised in 1908. Even in later versions, Bradley did not alter his observation. For more discussions on sane men playing Fools, see Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 63, and Busby, Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama, p. 8.

should be made on the basis of the whole play. And in the whole play the Fool shows his sanity much more than we are able to discern from one particular episode. This Court-Fool, fusion of many diversified qualities, had one undisputed common characteristic. He was a licenced commentator who enjoyed full liberty to speak, and practical wisdom is nearly an indispensable quality in a Court-Fool.

In their official capacity the Court-Fools enjoyed the privileges to criticize their master or satirize characters and conditions around them. Swain observes that the

> freedom to indulge in parody and unexpected truth-telling, and the additional freedom to be wantonly licentious without incurring blame . . . made it worth the while of normal men occasionally to assume his role.[1]

With this information in mind we may observe that being a Court-Fool, Lear's Fool may not fear banishment. He can offer friendly criticism without any restraint and at the same time he can serve, console, and inspirit the King, thereby performing the functions originally served by Kent. Friendship implies utilitarian as well as pleasure-evoking relationship. The Fool's services are utilitarian, and his company is pleasant and desired by Lear. Textual analysis will show that the Fool falls short of none of the requirements which, according to his own precept, are true qualities of a real friend. The "Shakespearean friend-

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 63.

subordinate" is a sophistication of the "faithful servant" type derived from Roman comedy, but he evidences greater dramatic character as a dynamic personality than does his Roman counterpart.[1] Furthermore, as Lear's true friend the Fool evidences striking similarities with three reputed friends in the plays of Shakespeare, e.g., Horatio, the Bastard, and Enobarbus. Therefore, in the process of establishing the Fool as Lear's friend-advisor, we will, on occasions refer to these characters.

In response to the eager and enthusiastic invitation of Lear, the "fool in motley" appears.[2] He sheds his sorrow for Cordelia and the apprehension he has about the well-being of the kingdom for which Lear had such a wise plan in the beginning of the play. Our observation about the Fool's sorrow for Cordelia is based on the comment of one of the gentlemen that the Fool was "pining away" since the departure of Cordelia. The second part is built upon the awareness the Fool evidences through the rest of the play about the nature of Lear's daughters and the possible actions taken by the different characters associated with Lear. William Empson believes that "the position of Lear's

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[1]For this observation, I am particularly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Richard N. Pollard.

[2]"Where's my knave? My fool? Go you, and call my fool hither." "Where's my fool, ho?" (I.iv.45-46, 51).

fool is clearly meant to be a miserable one."[1] And he is convinced that "it is the fool who causes the beginning of the storm against Lear."[2] It is our impression that Empson is deeply submerged in an eighth "ambiguity." The text shows that if the Fool has anything to do with the "storm" in the play, he is the one who warns Lear about it in a most friend-like manner. The Fool suffers intensely for Lear, not for himself.

From the moment of his appearance the Fool does not cease indicating the true state of affairs to Lear in an articulate manner. He gives friendly warning, offers constructive criticism, shows concern and compassion, and suffers with and for Lear. Despite the threats of Goneril, the Fool serves Lear like a truly sympathetic friend-subordinate, with unswerving devotion and sincerity. When his next of kin turn against Lear in their callousness, apathy, and inhuman debasement, the friend in this professional Fool remains constant to the surprise of the world. As a professional entertainer the Fool is bound by merely "hire and salary" contract. His occupation does not demand anything more than the work prescribed for him; above all, it does not ask for human kindness. But the friend in "motley" in the Court excels in true understanding

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[1] William Empson, "Fool in *Lear*," *The Sewanee Review*, LVII (April-June; 1949), 183.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

of human nature and generously mixes personal attachment with professional obligations. The Fool suffers intensely for Lear not as a "disinterested truthteller" but as a much involved, genuine friend of Lear.

With the realization and awareness of Lear's position in relation to his hypocritical and nefarious daughters, the Fool can not help but "sing in sorrow." As he answers Lear's query about his singing, the Fool explains. The Fool can not do what Goneril and Regan can without any effort, that is to lie. It seems that the Fool in sympathy for his friend Lear criticizes Lear's daughters with words spoken by wise men long before the Fool's time. His thoughts echo the Bible:

> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharises, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead man's bones, and of all uncleanness.
> (St. Matthew 23:27)
>
> Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.
> (St. Matthew 23:28)
>
> Let love be without dissimulation . . .
>
> Provide things honest in the sight of all men . . .
> (Romans 13:9,17)

The Hindu scripture Gitā relates to hypocrisy thus:

> Serenity, self-control, purity of heart, forebearance and uprightness are virtues to be desired. Hypocrisy, deceit, maliciousness, insolence, selfishness--all these are to be rejected by one who wants to attain Me. (Gitā)[1]

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[1]Radhakrishnan, Gitā, p. 365.

If a "schoolmaster" can "teach" a "fool to lie" he would gladly "learn to lie," because the truth is too bitter to forbear. And he has been aware of it, as he says, "ever since" the King has made his daughters his guardians, handed them the "rod," and put his "own breeches" down. This to the fool is indeed a matter to mourn. The loss incurred not only affects the King now, but it has grievous effect on the kingdom. Before long the strife between the heirs will thwart the welfare and advancement of the kingdom, affecting the subjects in general. Foreseeing these repercussions, the friend in the Clown-Fool "for sorrow sung." The earliest examples of "lament" show that any loss, personal, social, or national, substantial and grave in nature was considered as suitable subject for mourning or singing as "lament." The form of song the Fool sings is an elegiac song, otherwise called a Lament:

> A Classical form, common both in Latin and in Greek literatures, the elegy originally signified almost any type of serious, subjective meditation on the part of the poet, whether this reflective element was concerned with death, love, or war, or merely the presentation of information.[1]

Grief expressed in elegy, otherwise known as lament, may be due to loss in love or from sadness at the general ineffectiveness of human life. Theocritus and Virgil, among other things, sang mournfully at the thought of "general human

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[1]Thrall and Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature, pp. 145-146.

ineffectiveness." Moschus and Bion both lamented musically for personal loss, but the loss which affected far beyond the personal level--which touched the lives of people around them and the places they inhabited. Later, in pastoral literature, people "sang" in "sorrow" caused not only by actual death of a friend or a loved one, but they also mourned through music the spiritual waste and the ineffectiveness of all the important faculties of an exemplary human being. The conditions and circumstances which cause this sort of "ineffectiveness" may differ from time to time, from place to place, from poet to poet. Sanskrit drama in the Sixth Century A.D. evidences that people mourned the ineffectiveness of an ideal King by singing.[1] Spenser's shepherds sang as they wept mournfully for the ineffectiveness of an incomparable poet-shepherd, Colin Clout, who became oblivious of his bonds and responsibilities because he was love-torn. John Donne, George Herbert, and Richard Crashaw lament in different manner about the human beings gone astray, "hard hearts" unable to pray, and about the non-believers, all of those who became ineffective in one sense or another. All these and interminable examples in the history of literature, demonstrate that the Fool's song of sorrow need not be a non-sensical riming. It carries some serious thought. It is clear that the Fool as

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[1]See Chapter V in this study.

well-wisher and close-associate of the King has foreseen the events to come from his association with Lear, the members of his family, andthe Court. He suffers intensely as he watches the great monarch bereft of due honour, reverence, and love. Based on his knowledge acquired by his unrestrained movement in the royal quarters[1] he has been able to form certain opinions about Lear's daughters. He must know Cordelia's nature very well to be pining away for the judgment passed on her. He must also be aware of the hypocritical and hideous natures of Goneril and Regan, who deceptively gave ostentatious demonstration of their love and affection for Lear. The logical conclusion the Fool may come to from his observations is that Lear's misery has just begun, and he would be criminally negligent not to warn his friend against forthcoming troubles. As a Court-Fool he can choose his own material to parody, to mock about, or to attribute to human frailties. Knowing the possibilities of endangering his own position, probabilities of retribution, the friend-confidant in the Clown-Fool character remains and does what he believes is necessary.

The professional Fool, serving his master for a length of time, has developed a bond of deep attachment for the King which is more than just a good relation with his

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[1]A Clown-Fool was noted for his unrestrained liberty. See Chapter I, Section A, p. 29 in this study.

employer. And because of this intimate attachment the Fool is inclined to consider it his obligation to express his opinion when it is needed. Therefore, as he watches Goneril,"one o' the pairings," come and accuse Lear that he indulges in "riots," and that he is totally thoughtless, then as she threatens Lear with what she considers as necessary and "discreet proceeding," the sane and compassionate friend in the Clown-Fool can not withhold his anger any longer. The Fool observes that a slight personal inconvenience seems to Goneril more important than the agony of her father, simply because the sense of sympathy and of human understanding lie beyond her experience. Recurrent throughout the play is the sense of breaking of human ties, especially ties of close blood. The Fool knows that Regan and Goneril are about to break all human bonds with their father. The Fool gives us a glimpse into the horrible reality lurking behind Goneril's insolent behaviour. The Fool speaks in his own language, but the meaning is easily comprehensible and appealing:

> For, you know, Nuncle,
> "The hedge sparrow fed the cuckoo so long
> That it had it head bit off by it young."
> So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.
> (I.iv.234-237)

Lear has made his daughters his mothers and hence he has committed an act of indubitable folly. His position is like a hedgesparrow who feeds, rears, pampers the cuckoo until it can fly. When that time arrives the cuckoo soars

proud of its voice. As it gathers fame by its song it forgets its foster parent. Goneril and Regan are ready to deny their own father. The friend in the Fool considers this as the most despicable breach of ethical principle, and as such it is an unforgivable crime. His comments are not merely directed towards Lear's "folly," they are in effect severe criticism of the actions of the most insensible "pairings."

Lear did not "renounce" his position as Empson would lead us to believe.[1] On the contrary, he planned wisely for the division of his kingdom into three parts to save it from total disintegration as he noticed dissension among the heirs-apparent was already evident. But unfortunately, he let his parental passion overrule his sovereign reasoning at a crucial moment and it resulted in a rash division of the kingdom into two equal parts, allowing Goneril and Regan to have the power that they were not capable of handling honourably. From this ensued Lear's misery. Hence the Court-Fool has addressed the King as a "fool" (I.iv.163). The Fool's remark points to the fact that for a moment Lear became blind by excess of emotion. In Nichomachean Ethics Aristotle tells us that as a deficiency to show proper response as required by a situation is a vice, so also excess of response to that same stimulus

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[1]Empson, "Fool in Lear," p. 180.

is a vice, too. Aristotle explains:

> Let us next take anger. Here too we find excess, deficiency, and the mean. Hardly one of the states of mind involved has a special name; but, since we call the man who attains the mean in this sphere 'gentle,' we may call his disposition 'gentleness.' Of the extremes the man who is angry overmuch may be called 'irascible,' and his vice 'irascibility;' while the man who reactes too feebly to anger may be called 'poor-spirited and his disposition 'poor-spiritedness.'[1]

The point Aristotle makes is man, by excessive response to anger impairs, ruins his capability to reason. Because of his rash division of the kingdom the friend in the Fool calls Lear a "fool." He means to point out that by being excessively angry at the answer of Cordelia, Lear had become overwhelmed by passion which ruined his rational power; intemperance led him to lose all control, therefore all judgment. Hindu scripture Gitā urges man to adopt a "middle way" in the same manner as Aristotle explains it, and as the Fool refers to it in relation to Lear's action. Gitā urges,

> From anger rises bewilderment, from bewilderment loss of memory, and from loss of memory, the destruction of intelligence, and from destruction of intelligence, man perishes.[2]

Therefore man is advised not to be overwhelmed by pain and joy, for it may drown one's intellect (Dhee). Man is urged, moreover, to "tread in the course of Madhyama Pantha (the

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[1]Thomson, The Ethics, pp. 69-70.

[2]Radhakrishnan, Gitā, p. 126.

middle way or the golden mean)."[1] The Fool in his observation seems to be embracing all these universal truths.

As Goneril turns against her father, after successfully acquiring power by factitious expression of love, the Fool becomes thoroughly appalled. Goneril accuses her father of misusing her residence, but she herself is guilty of misusing his love and faith in her. Proud Goneril's contumely knows no restraint. She grows so insolent that she gives an ultimatum against her father, who is still the King. She intends to diminish his retinue in number and by quality with "men as may besort" him, as she sees fit. In effect, she sets out to make Lear "obedient," using her "rod" most shamefully acquired. She actually aims at divesting Lear of all the "marks of sovereignty" with an objective of diminishing him to a mere "shadow." The Fool has foreseen these events. This sensitive friend's observation and insight into the two daughters of Lear made him sigh in futility about the future. The vigilant confidant perceived the possible caustic or corrosive effect on Lear of the constant abuse by his daughters. This could lead to ineffectiveness in Lear; the candle could go out: "So out went the candle, and we were left darkling" (I.iv.237).

As a monarch Lear is the "candle" to the kingdom, the sun, the illuminator. Ineffectiveness of his regal

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[1] Radhakrishnan, Gitā, p. 129.

qualities effected by the disgraceful treatment of his children would lead to the annihilation of the power which radiates light to the nation. Foreseeably, as it would follow from their action, Goneril and Regan would extract all power from Lear, leaving nothing but his "shadow," his name. The friend makes this observation, he can make this observation because he is concerned about and closely attached to Lear. In the presence of insubordinate confrontation of Goneril, the Fool manages to let his assurance to be known, using the usual call of the cuckoo: "Whoop, Jug! I love thee" (I.iv.245). Commentators interpret this line as merely "one of the meaningless cries made by the fool to distract attention."[1] But it is evident that the Fool uses his traditional manner of speech to express his true feeling, because "one o' the pairings" still remains on the scene. He knows from Goneril's inclement expression, "Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue, so your face bids me, though you may say nothing" (I.iv.213-215), the course of events to follow. The worst thing he can do now is to arouse her irritation and become expelled from Lear's side. Therefore, he uses his professional language to vent his true feelings and Lear acknowledges his sincere feelings. He is not at all perturbed by the Fool's remarks because he knows that this Clown-Fool truly

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[1]Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 1149.

cherishes friendliness. Therefore, when the Fool answers to Lear's most significant query in the play, ". . . Who is it that can tell me who I am?" (I.iv.250), telling Lear that he is Lear's "shadow," Lear shows no bitterness; rather, he is in consonance with the Fool who has most sensibly related the truth to the King. Believing that the Fool is his only friend in this unfriendly world, Lear concurs with him:

> I would learn that, for, by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.
>
> (I.iv.252-255)

Later in the chapter it will be shown that the seeming reproaches of Lear directed to the Fool are not really reprehensive in intent. Lear has been sure of one fact: in any situation the Fool will remain his friend, his true companion.

What is done is an actuality now. The Kingdom, rashly divided into two, cannot be put together. It is the helplessness, the futility of the whole situation that the Fool, the friend of Lear, abhors. He wishes that Lear had not lost his power of rationality so soon! The tacit desire to see Lear reinstated in his former position is implied, though not emphasized. Realizing the impracticality of this wishful thinking, the Fool sighs for his friend:

> If thou wert my fool, Nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.
>
> (I. v.45-46)

> . . . .
> Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.
>
> (I.v.48-49)

The Fool in the above-quoted lines is not merely pointing out Lear's mistake; he is suffering for him. A well-wisher and friend, he can feel this intensely for the one he loves and respects. As a Fool

> . . .Frankness was his official prerogative; fidelity his added grace. . . . The overwhelming pathos of Lear is evolved from a situation in itself quite as capable of yielding farce; and as tragedy deepens, humour melts into pathos in the chorus-like comments of the more exquisite and finely-tempered Fool who follows the king into the night and storm, ...[1]

The traditional Clown-Fool, exalted into a position of a friend of the King, becomes a tragic character. When Lear is foresaken by his apathetic, callous and insensitive daughters, the Fool accompanies Lear into the heath and expresses concern for this unwarranted treatment shown to his dear friend. Even animals are capable of feeling affection and of showing it by one means or another. But Goneril and Regan are devoid of all affection. The Fool refers to kindness superfluously shown to a horse: " . . . 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay" (II.iv.126-127). In this case, the kindness is not expected. But Lear, who deserves

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[1]William Shakespeare, The Tragedy of King Lear, Edition de Luxe (Boston: T. T. Brainard Publishing Co., 1901), p. 18.

respect and human kindness, is deprived of it. Cordelia could foresee such behavior from her sisters; she knew that only time would unfold "what plaited cunning [dissembling exhibition of love] hides" (I.i.283). Time has shown that Goneril and Regan have broken all ethical principles acknowledged by man universally. Parent-child relationship is one that is universally recognized as the most desired relation:

> The affection of children for their parents (like man's love of God) is the sort of feeling one has for what is good and superior. For their parents have bestowed on them the greatest of blessings--they have given the life and nursed them and provided for . . . . Besides this, family affection has more pleasure and profit in it than has any friendship between unrelated persons in proportion as family life provides a better chance of getting shares in everything.[1]

But Goneril and Regan have failed to honor this desirable relationship and have declined to abide by the following ethical principles:

> Honour thy father and mother.
> (St. Matthew 15:4)
>
> It is required that a man and child be found faithful.
> (I Corinthians 4:2)

As subjects, Goneril and Regan have dishonoured the King. As young people, they have shown disrespect and irreverence to an elder. As children, they have broken the most important bond between parents and children. A Hindu will

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[1]Thomson, The Ethics, p. 251.

have the same concept as the Fool would see it, of honouring, loving and respecting parents. To a child his father is "heavens, his religion, his meditation. To love and honour his father pleases all gods."[1] Oedipus' daughter, Antigone, observes and maintains her strong belief in like concept, and she demonstrates it by her action. In Confucianism the beginning of all moral and ethical bonds is filial piety or filial obligation. Because the relation between parents and children is the first relationship and a natural one, no one can be good to anyone else unless he is good to his parents. The ethical obligation is mutual between parent and child, and it extends from family to society, to government, and to the main core of the mechanism of the rule of the state.[2] The friend in the Fool has observed all the breaches of ethical conduct in the daughters of Lear and has expressed his fear of their bearing on all things of the kingdom. He believes that before the "Winter" is over everyone in the kingdom will become "darkling." Gloucester has seen a prelude of this, too, " . . . there's son against father. The King falls from bias of nature, there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time. . . . hollowness, treachery, and all

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[1]Rāmāyāna, national epic of India.

[2]John K. Shryock, The Origin and Development of the State Cult of Confucius (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932).

ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves" (I.ii.119-124).

The natural kith and kin have left Lear with as much celerity as that of the honey-bees (when the hive is dry), and the "unnatural," the professional entertainer stands in respect and love for Lear. Although Lear is not given the dues of a rightful King, an old man, and a father, in one sense he is still a fortunate man, more fortunate than a King, because he possesses a devoted friend. Value of real friendship has been universally recognized. It is a sort of virtue, a necessary ingredient of life. No one would choose a friendless existence on

> a condition of having all the other good things in the world. So true is this, that the rich and men in positions of authority and power are believed to stand, more than other people, in need of friends.[1]

observes Aristotle.

The total meaning of this beautiful relationship of friends is conveyed in Sonnet 29, by Shakespeare. Because the experience transmitted therein relates effectively to our present discussion, it would be enlightening to quote the sonnet:

> When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
> I all alone beweep my outcast state,
> And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries,
> And look upon myself and curse my fate,
> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
> Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
> Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,

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[1]Thomson, The Ethics, p. 227.

With what I most enjoy contented least--
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at Heaven's gate.
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.[1]

Lear, though bereft of love and respect from his own daughters, is fortunate to have the wealth of friendship of the Fool. Remaining with Lear when his own daughters have forsaken him, and hence have caused him intense sorrow, the Fool fulfills one part of his pledge (II.iv.79-86).

As an intimate friend and companion of Lear, the Fool evidences some similarities with the Bastard in _King John_. Though neither of these two characters can alter the events which have already taken place, in their belief they stand firm by their kings towards whom they have developed close friendly feeling. Each supports his King's cause and offers his services as and when required. Both enjoyed the fruits of prosperous times with their friends, Lear and John. But with the ill turn of events in the lives of John and Lear, neither the Bastard nor the Fool deserted his friend, neither complained, least of all on his own account. Because it is impossible to remake the past, the friends of Lear and John try untiringly to shed light on the truth of the matters pertaining to their positions. The Bastard attempted to help John rise and take a stand against his

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[1]Shakespeare, _The Complete Works_, p. 1600.

foe, and the Fool cautioned Lear against the future so that further disappointments or disillusionments might be avoided or any other trouble might be encountered with proper preparation.

Generally, the Bastard has been regarded as the unnatural commodity seeker. We concur that he has come into this world unconventionally or in a manner which is not naturally accepted in society. But his unnaturalness does not lie in his birth as an illegitimate child, rather it lies in his unexpected growth as King John's friend, well-wisher and champion. He has falsified man's natural estimation of him, as the Fool does in King Lear by proving himself the friend of the King. When the Bastard tries to infuse spirit in the wearied king (V.i.44-53) he becomes quite different from a commodity seeker. He becomes a friend-subordinate who is interested in nothing but his patron's well-being. Social stigma attached to his kind makes the Bastard an unnatural, but in his love and understanding for John he surpasses the naturals. In like manner Lear's Fool accomplishes much more than is usually expected of his kind.

An analysis comparing the actions and responses of these characters may be enlightening. The Bastard decides on his course of action as situation demands it. Internal powers, as well as powers from abroad, have raised arms against the King. The land awaits vast confusion and

disaster. Knowing the possible consequences of the confrontation with the opposing forces, the Bastard unhesitatingly offers himself to the services of his friend: "I'll to the King" (IV.iii.157). He suffers the moments of gloom which overwhelm King John. The ineffectiveness as manifested in the final scenes makes the Bastard suffer immensely. He tries his utmost to inspirit the King (V.1.44-53). This is not merely the function of a faithful servant, but that of a true friend who holds up the banner of England on behalf of the King, who suffers for the cause of the King, and who shares the moments of desolation.
As the Bastard watches his friend King John breathe for the last time in this world, grief and shock benumb him, he moans in total disbelief:

> Art thou gone so? I do but stay behind
> To do the office for thee of revenge,
> And then my soul shall wait on thee to Heaven,
> As it on earth hath been thy servant still.
> (V.vii.70-73)

Nothing could have more fully expressed the devotion and sincerity of the consecrated soul of a friend. He has remained with King John when needed most. In the same manner the Fool has remained with Lear, showing no predilection for personal satisfaction and personal comfort. King Lear, more "sinned against than sinning" (III.ii.60), is befriended by one who rarely has been given more importance in the tradition than a jester, a Clown-Fool type. Thoroughly disgusted by their malicious behaviour, the

friend in the Fool uses his freedom of speech in bitter criticism of Goneril and Regan. His criticism of their action signifies that the Fool is on the side of the King and is speaking in favour of him. This stirs up Goneril. She considers him a threat and orders him to depart: "You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master" (I.iv.337). Now and again a little later in the play, being in the favour of the King, the Fool endangers himself. But, like the Bastard, the Fool does "tarry," he does not "fly," he knows that his place is beside his friend, and he remains there. Indescribable emotional torture, physical fatigue and intellectual weariness bring on spiritual exhaustion in Lear. In essence, it is like the death of his spirtual being. The Fool observes this in near disbelief. He becomes oblivious of the rude and harsh reality. He is brought back into consciousness by Kent who asks the Fool's assistance to "bear" his master away. At this point the Fool's deep and sincere feelings find exquisite expression in the silence of this professionally articulate man. He says the most about his sense of sorrow for the loss of his friend the King, through words which remain unuttered.

As a friend of Lear, the Fool performs services similar to services rendered by Horatio to Hamlet. Hamlet is overjoyed to see his friend Horatio in Elsinore. He embraces Horatio in sheer joy: "my good friend . . . " (_Hamlet_ I.ii.163). As Lear begins to be aware of the

"neglect" shown towards him, he asks for his Fool. Kent has been banished and Lear has been forsaken by his own offspring. Now he asks repeatedly[1] for his Fool, and he welcomes him heartily: "How now, my pretty knave! How dost thou?" (I.iv.106). Critics have often referred to the few places in the play[2] where they believe that the King is irritated, annoyed and embittered by the Fool. When read carefully in the whole context, and bearing in mind the disrupted and aggravated state of mind in Lear caused by the two daughters, these apparently reproachful, reprehensive expressions point to Lear's bitterness towards his daughters, not towards the Fool. An example may be more helpful to demonstrate what is meant by the preceding observation. The fifth scene in Act I truly exemplifies what we contend. Lear had a confrontation with Goneril and he found out, though a little late, that he let his "dear judgment out" (I.iv.294) when he handed the kingdom divided in two. Goneril's attitude has been transparently selfish and horrid. Lear's futile hope rings out in vain: ". . . I'll resume the shape which thou dost think / I have cast off forever. Thou shalt, I warrant thee" (I.iv.331-332). Tormented, and resolved to avenge his ill-treatment, Lear goes out with Kent and attendants. Lear

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[1]Eight times in I.iv.

[2]I.iv.123, 150, 198; I.v.50, etc.

sends Kent to Gloucester with the news of what has just occurred. Then we see him accompanied by the Fool apparently having a conversation amusing to a certain extent, but more pointing and revealing for Lear. He tries to participate in the Fool's funny anecdotes which really indicate the mistakes of Lear and which warn Lear against more misery. The Fool in friendly intent tells the King to be careful because his "other daughter will use" him "kindly" meaning in the same manner as Goneril. The Fool reveals such wisdom acquired from his association with the King and his family. Therefore, he "can tell." Suggesting that the King should have sensed such behaviour and such action from Goneril and Regan, the friend in the Fool speaks in his language, "Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on 's face?" (I.v.19-20). Lear answers, "No." The Fool then explains, "Why, to keep one's eyes of either side 's nose, that what a man cannot smell out he may spy into" (I.v.22-24). Lear's mind is preoccupied with the incidents which have just preceded, and he naturally can not rid himself of the deep revelation that he has just had about Goneril's true nature. Hence his realization begins to dawn on him. Although he is conversing with the Fool, his thoughts are overcome with the deep realization of his grave mistake and his gradual intense awareness of the consequences. Instead of answering the Fool's last observation about the anatomical

scrutiny, the King seems to be burdened with sad realization, "I did her wrong----" referring to Cordelia. This preceding analysis is intended to show that the King's responses to the Fool are not necessarily out of anger or annoyance towards him; on the contrary, bitterness towards his daughters grows so intense that Lear can hardly withhold them to answer relevantly to the Fool's remarks. A little later in the same scene the friend in the Fool hopelessly sighs for the mistakes made by Lear. He does not see any possibility to alter the events and feels frustration for his inability to improve the situation for Lear. His sadness is expressed through the traditional manner of speech of a Clown-Fool. "Thou wouldst make a good fool" (I.v.41-42). Lear is not annoyed at the Fool's observation; rather, his thoughts are captivated by the monstrous "ingratitude" of Goneril. And he angrily claims, "To take 't again perforce!" (I.v.43). Continuing with the same trend of conversation, the Fool expresses his futility because his friend Lear has become old before he has gained wisdom (I.v.48-49).[1] Lear is not trying to restrain his anger at the Fool; rather, he is trying to control his natural outburst

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[1]The Fool speaks to the same effect when he elucidates on the example of the codpiece and makes an observation on the fate of a man who makes improper use of his "heart" and "toe" (III.iv.27-34). Under the present condition, when there has been a total reversion of position between the ruler and the subject, it is the Fool's belief, and quite a logical one, that it is almost an utopian

of overwhelming anger which cost him his kingdom, his daughter Cordelia, and his friend and servant, Kent. He does not want to repeat his mistakes swayed by blind anger, hence he pleads with himself, "Oh, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet Heaven!" (I.v.49-50). He is not "mad" and hence not reprehensive of the Fool; his utterance of bitterness springs from his realization of the grave injury he has caused to Cordelia, Kent, the kingdom, and himself. In like manner the same kinds of expression of the King are not necessarily directed toward the Fool, his friend.

There is an affectionate bond between the monarch and the jester. Addressing the Fool as "boy," "lad," "my boy," etc., is not unique to Lear; these are conventional

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dream to expect law and order to return in the kingdom (III.iv.79-94). These two observations of the Fool make clear and perfect sense about Lear and his world. Having been aware of Lear's mistake the Fool prophesied that the candle would go out and everyone would be left in darkness (I.iv.237). We have demonstrated that his observation was based on his keen perception of all facts. But Morris LeRay Arnold does not think so. He believes that

> . . . doggrel "prophecy" of the Fool in"Lear" (III,28,79-95) is awkwardly introduced and nonsensically terminated, and, indeed, has no excuse for being. It is unquestionably spurious.

Arnold agrees with Bradley in this respect. We may note, however, that the analysis of the Fool's motivation for being with Lear and his action althrough the play, as we have demonstrated so far, show that we may have to think about these "doggrel prophecies" differently from Arnold and Bradley.
The Soliloquies of Shakespeare (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1965), pp. 109-110.

addresses of a master well-disposed towards his entertainer or his servant. But the context in which they are spoken in this play, the manner and tone which express them, and the alien world which these two people inhabit, imply that Lear finds solace, comfort, and direction from the Fool. Providing solace, comfort and direction are just some of the services that a friend may offer. Even when the friend is a professional fool, his knowledge sheds light on truth about Lear's future course of action; he warns the King in a manner so that he may not be disappointed twice. Lear takes the warning in good humour:

> Fool. If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes?
> Lear. Aye, boy. (I.v.8-10)
> . . . .
> Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly, for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell. (I.v.14-16)

The Fool is not irritating Lear; on the contrary, he is the source of assurance and of compassion for Lear. As Horatio knows the antagonistic forces in Hamlet's world, so does the Fool know quite well the nature and symptom of the forces acting against Lear, and he warns him.

Horatio remains with Hamlet through the most disastrous few months of his life. The Fool stays with Lear, passing emotional and atmospheric crises, exhibiting true concern for him and distaste for those who have treated Lear in a malevolent manner. Dying Hamlet wants Horatio's assurance that he would "Report" Hamlet and his "cause

aright / To the unsatisfied" (Hamlet V.ii.350-351). And when grief and anguish become simply unbearable, Lear cries out to none but the Fool, whom he must consider a true friend: "O fool, I shall go mad!" (II.iv.289). Here the wisdom of a Court-Fool does not suffice. This situation demands a compassionate friend, and in the Fool Lear finds one. By using the Fool in such meaningful manner Shakespeare has answered the severe criticism of Philip Sidney, among others, who reacted vehemently against mingling of "Clowns and Kings" in literature. In his portrayal of a friend the Fool gives embodiment to Aristotle's observation that there may be exemplary friendship between unequals, between older and younger persons or between "every ruler and those who accept his rule."[1]

Hamlet appreciates Horatio's excellent qualities. On the heath Lear shows concern and appreciation for his friend, the Fool's sincere faithfulness:

> Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? Art cold?
> . . . .
> Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
> That's sorry yet for thee.
> (III.ii.68-73)

The commentators see in this section just a little shred of humanity in "rash," "wrathful," and "cynical" Lear for a wretched human being. "Ambiguity"-stricken Empson agrees with others, as he observes, "nothing would have made him

[1]Thomson, The Ethics, p. 240.

worry about the Fool except his new plan of universal magnanimity."[1] It is not newly generated "magnanimity" in Lear; it is his innate affection for his Fool. Despite the adversities and inimical treatment of the world, Lear's affection has not "yet" totally parched. He has had always and "yet" a soft corner in his heart for his friend, the Fool. Circumstances and events leading to this part of the play show a reciprocal friendly concern between the two. Rain or shine or storm does not make any difference to the Fool. Once he has decided to stand by his friend with fortitude and perseverance, nothing will move him from that resolution. Therefore he sings:

"He that has and a little tiny wit--
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain--
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day."
(III.ii.74-77)

One who has a shred of common decency would do well to accept whatever comes to him once he has decided to serve his friend. If it is Lear's fortune that for him "it raineth every day," then it should be the Fool's fortune, too. It is not generally expected of the Fool as a member of the working force in the Court to share the miseries of Lear. But because the Fool considers Lear his friend, he would gladly embrace whatever comes to Lear and let the "wise man fly." His behaviour is strikingly similar to that of

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[1]Empson, "Fool in *Lear*," p. 91.

Horatio in Hamlet. Horatio, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern are all friends to Hamlet. But only Horatio remains and serves the Prince of Denmark without any expectation of personal gain, while the other two join the camp of the one "that has most might" at that particular instant, like Bilioso in The Malcontent (IV.v.97), written by John Marston.[1] This suggests that Horatio and the Fool are of the same nature as far as friendships are concerned.

A real friend never hesitates to extend help and stand by, regardless of risks involved. From this point of view the Fool evidences major characteristics as exemplified by Horatio, functioning as Hamlet's one and only friend, in a world where hypocrisy, deceit, insolence, greed, lust, and like evil forces constitute the ruling power. These forces are not dormant in Lear's world. Hence, Lear and Hamlet both are blessed to have had one friend who provides meaning in the "cursed" lives of these two great tragic characters.

Domitius Enobarbus is one of the "friends to Antony." Antony is caught in an irreconcilable dilemma. His allegiance to the Roman code of honour and his love and loyalty to Cleopatra do not reconcile. This dichotomy leads him to doubt his decision to stay in Egypt, and he

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[1]Hazelton Spencer, ed., Elizabethan Plays (Boston: D. C. Heath Company, 1933), p. 588.

questions Cleopatra's love. At this critical point Enobarbus performs his first friendly task. He clarifies Antony's thought and offers his opinion of Cleopatra, who truly loves Antony despite her natural short-comings. As a man of practical wisdom, Enobarbus remarks that Fulvia's death may be heaven's assistance to make Antony's decision easy. But Antony decides to go to Rome as his natural impulses at this moment urge him to do. Enobarbus obeys as a true friend would, seeing that disobedience on his part would only aggravate Antony's existing unhappiness. The Fool never disobeys Lear. Realizing the great agony of his friend, the Fool complies with Lear's every wish. In the mock-trial scene the Fool carries out Lear's wish, "Thou, sapient sir, sit here" (III.vi.24). As the emotional anguish builds and becomes intensified in this scene, each person in the scene feels the intense suffering and tragic awareness of Lear. As Lear confronts his "pernicious" daughters in his imagination, his "yokefellow of equity," the Fool, not only complies with the King's command as a hired Fool, but also utters truth in contempt for them--because he has friendly attachment to Lear it is unbearable for him to see Lear suffer so. Therefore, the Fool's friendly feeling finds expression in sarcastic comment directed toward imaginary Goneril: "Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint stool" (III.vi.55). Obedience in both Enobarbus and the Fool is tempered with desire to alleviate

unhappiness already existing.

Lepidus urges Enobarbus to entreat Antony to become soft and gentle in manner as a political maneuver. However, Enobarbus does not humiliate his friend Antony, but rather he retorts that he would encourage Antony to "answer like himself" (II.ii.4) as the situation required. It would not be like Antony to decline a challenge from Caesar. Enobarbus strikes back on behalf of Antony as a real friend should, watching his friend humiliated or ill-treated. Lear's Fool could not prevent Lear from committing the initial mistake, but like Enobarbus he could give directions for future course of action and future comprehension of matters by Lear. The daughters do not escape the Fool's unlimited and oblique criticism. As Enobarbus speaks for his friend's cause, so does the Fool for Lear's. Basically, friends and well-wishers are given to tell the truth no matter how bitter it may be. The Fool and Enobarbus both perform this task.

Enobarbus could see the lack of sincerity in the alliance made between Caesar, Lepidus, and Antony. He could well perceive that this deceptive measure could not prove to be good; he knew that this truce was called by their common threat, Pompey. As Enobarbus spoke out we could hear the constructive criticism:

> Or if you borrow one another's love for the instant, you may, when you hear no more words of Pompey, return it again. You shall have time to wrangle in when you have nothing else to do.

(*Antony and Cleopatra* II.ii.104-107)

Though a friend, Enobarbus is not a Court-Fool. His observation, though true, yet is bitter to accept easily. So he is reprehended by Antony, "Speak no more" (II.ii.108). Enobarbus is fortunate not to have incurred banishment like Kent. Here lies the difference between Lear's Fool, Kent and Enobarbus. All of them are friends to the respective main characters in the plays in question. But the friend in motley, Lear's Fool, is in a privileged position to utter the bitterest truth as a friend, devoted to the well-being of his master, and he may or may not be reproached for it all. The motley is his foil. He could, like Enobarbus, foresee Lear's future (I.v.14-16, 17). He warns Lear as Enobarbus cautions Antony. However wise and potent their observations are, neither Lear nor Antony pays any attention to these warnings. Lear decides to go and seek refuge at Regan's, and Antony rebukes Enobarbus. Although quiet for a moment, Enobarbus speaks explicitly to Menas later. In his estimation, Antony's marriage of political expediency could not last for long. Knowing Antony's nature, he could forecast that Antony would not remain married to "holy, cold, and still conversation" (II.vi.130-131) Octavia. Cleopatra was the most suitable woman for Antony. Antony would realize his error and eventually would go back to Cleopatra. The consequence of such action would not prove desirable. Caesar would take

displeasure at Antony's return to Egypt (II.vi.137-140). A devoted friend and well-wisher becomes a prophet--predicts the future based on his knowledge acquired through long association with his friend; his prediction covers the consequences which may possibly ensue from his friend's mistake. We have seen that the Fool performs all these functions quite effectively. Both these friends could foresee the future, but preventing the future from happening was beyond their power.

Antony is cautioned by Enobarbus not to accept the Roman challenge to fight at sea. But Antony is determined to do the opposite. The consequences are not different from Enobarbus' prediction. Yet Enobarbus follows him in good faith, though his reasoning says otherwise!

> I'll yet follow
> The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
> Sits in the wind against me.
> (III.x.35-37)

Similarly, Lear's Fool proves himself to be the most needed friend at the time of disastrous turn of events in Lear's life. He fulfills his promise, "the fool will stay, / And let the wise man fly" (King Lear II.iv.83-84).

Enobarbus realizes the risk involved in Antony's acceptance of Caesar's challenge to a duel. But it is futile even to comment on this fatal venture, because as a soldier Antony must work out what he believes will be the best demonstration of his skill and prowess. Therefore, Enobarbus remains silent. But the friend in the Fool

decides to speak up against the injustice done to his master and the course of action the King has taken:

> "Fathers that wear rags
> Do make their children blind,
> But fathers that bear bags
> Shall see their children kind.
> Fortune, that arrant whore,
> Ne'er turn the key to the poor."
>
> But for all this, thou shalt have as many dolors for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.
> (King Lear II.iv.48-55)

These are not mere proverbial jingles to "distract attention." The Fool is not an insensitive, callous and apathetic, blunt entertainer. On the contrary, unquestionably, he is a friend of Lear, suffering for and with him. His concept of friendship disallows anyone following an influential person merely for form or for personal advancement. The Fool has not gained anything by staying with Lear; rather, he has shared Lear's misfortune as a real friend without complaint.

The Fool's concept of friendship and of faithfulness to a friend is not his own precept, it is universally acknowledged. Enobarbus thinks in the same manner. The knowledge of Antony's inevitable decline does not have any decisive effect on his loyalty:

> Mine honesty and I begin to square.
> The loyalty well held to fools does make
> Our faith mere folly. Yet he that can endure
> To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord
> Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
> And earns a place i' the story.
> (III.xiii.41-46)

The pronoun "him" in the line, "Does conquer him that did

his master conquer," stands for Antony, who earned reputation in history for his unquestioned faithfulness and unswerving devotion for his friend Julius Caesar. This kind of service was not extended with expectation of any return whatsoever. Lear's Fool and Enobarbus are two different people, portraying two different characters, representatives of two different cultures, yet basically they share the same view. Though not deliberately, yet it is evident that the Fool and Enobarbus adhere to the principles of Antony who became renowned for his friendship for Julius Caesar. Yet, if only for a short time, Enobarbus deserts Antony only to be stricken by conscience. Lear's Fool goes with the King, his friend and master, even in the scene where we witness the spiritual death of Lear (_Lear_ III.vi.103-109). Hence, the Fool evidences greater merit than Enobarbus. The scene on the heath speaks more significantly of the fool's fortitude and sincerity than any other part of the play.

In the heath as a natural storm casts a lurid shadow, as a devastating cyclone unsettles the whole environment, the grief and rage in Lear increase and deepen. He prays to the natural forces to be retributive on his ungrateful, opprobrious, and most "pernicious" daughters. The friend personified in the Fool, witnessing the nearly unbearable torment of his master and friend, concludes that it is only practical, though not extremely desirable under

the circumstances, to come to a compromise with the daughters. His concern is his friend's welfare. The objective is to protect Lear from the enormity of natural disaster: " . . . Good Nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing. Here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool" (III.ii.11-13). But as Lear chooses to endure, so does his compassionate-subordinate, the Fool.

When Lear decides to become "Unaccommodated" and hastes to "unbutton" himself, the Fool instantaneously measuring up the effect of the foul weather on this heart-broken man protects Lear: "Prithee, Nuncle, be contented, 'tis a naughty night to swim in . . ." (III.iv.114-115). His concern for the King's health takes precedence over any question of modesty--contrary to the opinion of some commentators. In this scene the Fool takes leave and we do not see him again in the play. Empson thinks that the Fool is afraid and hence he never comes back.[1] But the Fool's action and behaviour evidenced throughout this chapter speak for him favourably. He has not ever once shown hesitancy to stay with Lear.

The long-drawn night of natural upheaval juxtaposed with emotional crisis has come to an end. During the time which preceded, Lear had undergone incomparable agony and torment inflicted upon him by his daughters and aggravated

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[1]Empson, "Fool in Lear," p. 211.

by his realization of the irremediable error he had committed. With the termination of the mock-judgment scene, Lear has become overwhelmed by physical and emotional fatigue. This fatigue, compounded with intense tragic awareness, has caused the cessation of his spiritual being, as it were. Temporary failure of intellectual and spiritual faculties has overcome his being. And his being borne away in the "litter" has the effect of a funeral march. The Fool can not reconcile himself with the reality. He stands numb, forgetful of his required assistance at this point. His reaction is that of the Bastard in King John--near disbelief, as if to say, "Art thou gone so?" Empson inaccurately comments about the Fool in this scene:

> . . . when we last see him he is again ordered to follow Lear, this time by Kent. "Come help me, etc." This does not suggest that Kent took his faithfulness for granted.[1]

On the other occasion mentioned by Empson (I.iv.337) as well as in this scene the Fool is nearly numbed. In the other scene, the Fool becomes inactive and speechless witnessing the insolence, impertinence, and inhuman treatment exhibited by Goneril. And in this scene he becomes mute, incapable of articulation, as the true feeling of the sane and intelligent man rises beyond the make-up of motley and coxcomb. The friend is deeply grieved watching

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[1]Empson, "Fool in Lear," p. 211.

his master's condition. It is possible that in his heart he was wishing that his predictions made before would not come true. It is probable that as the "oppressed nature" in Lear "sleeps," the Fool may be desolately thinking of the moment when he uttered a bitter truth, which seems to have come true. The King, the Candle of the Kingdom, has tapered off slowly, leaving his subjects sad and bereaved: "So out went the candle, and we were left darkling" (I.iv.237). He knew all along that the daughters would make Lear "obedient" and reduce him to his "shadow." Yet it is most difficult for him to accept the eventuality. As he stands witness to his cruel forecast coming true, oblivious of the moment's necessities, he is awakened by Kent, who does not doubt his faithfulness but is very much aware of it.

The resolution made to stay with his friend has been carried out by the conscientious, sympathetic, profound friend in the Clown-Fool character. Now that his presence is no longer needed, he leaves. His place and functions will, for the rest of the play, be fulfilled by Cordelia and Kent, in their true identities. Now that both of them can be reinstated in their initial position, the dramatic requirement of the character of the Clown-Fool is no longer evident. In this character Shakespeare has shown the world that genuine friendship transcends the limitations posed by station difference between a King and an entertainer.

CHAPTER IV

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

"I WISH YOU ALL JOY OF THE WORM."

The clown in Antony and Cleopatra has received little attention from Shakespearean scholars. Such inattention has probably resulted from the general regard of Cleopatra as a "quean", insincere, "sporting" woman. We will demonstrate mainly by textual analysis substantiated by background information that Cleopatra is as sincere as any other Shakespearean woman famous for unquestioned devotion for her lover. Demonstration of this hypothesis will help us show that the Clown-Fool in this play is not merely a "simple peasant" but an Executioner-Priest who liberates Cleopatra, the "serpent-woman of old Nile," from her physical captivity and assists her soul to be united with that of her "Husband" Antony.

We have long overlooked the following lines in which Cleopatra describes the role of the Clown-Fool and focuses in few words the meaning of the Clown-Fool's position in relation to her magnanimous role:

> What poor an instrument
> May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.
> (V.ii.236-237)

Delving is not always necessary; but when the Egyptian queen expresses gratitude to the Clown-Fool in said manner, we the readers are obliged to examine what "liberty" and the "noble deed" may mean to the Queen in terms of her cultural values, and why Shakespeare may use such a "poor instrument" to perform the same. If we can ascertain beyond reasonable doubt the grave importance of the deed performed by the Clown-Fool, then only will we be able to understand his role as an Executioner-Priest.

Multifarious suggestions, expressions, and mythological terminology have led us to assume that the role of the Clown-Fool in this play might be of much more serious significance than was readily evident from a few readings. Also the fact remains that all Shakespearean critics, old and young, begin with assumptions about characters and episodes in the plays. Unquestionably though, if none can offer an absolute appraisal of the works because of reasons too obvious to reiterate at this point, then all we may do is to present yet another possible approach to the play in an analytically legitimate manner for consideration by the future readers. With this basic point of view, following merely the precedences set by authorities in this field, we will endeavour to prove our central hypothesis about the Clown-Fool. To build our approach on strong ground, we will make cross-references to other plays of Shakespeare where we may see similar characters behaving in similar manner; we

will introduce source material perhaps new to readers at large; and primarily we will analyze the text in a most elaborate manner only to emphasize that the assumption we make about the play is as valid as other existing ones. As the question in concern is a debatable one, we will make use of the method of logical deduction; for instance, if we can show the importance Cleopatra places on the meaning of death, if we can demonstrate the meaning of her role in relation to Antony in mythological terms, as seems demanded by the play, then in the following step we will be able to point out precisely the immeasurable contribution of the Clown-Fool to the meaningful end of Cleopatra, the Egyptian queen. To put it plainly, the recognition of the Clown-Fool's significant role will depend first on our acceptance of the fact that Cleopatra sincerely loves Antony, hence she can not remain separated from him; therefore, she decides to end her life and the Clown-Fool assists her in that. On the other hand, the mythological dimension of Cleopatra and Antony lead us to believe that Cleopatra is the representation of Isis, and Antony is that of Amon Ra and Osiris, who are recognized in the Egyptian pantheon as Isis's immortal lover and husband. Also, Anubis, the conveyor of death (the Clown-Fool in the play), is subserviant to her. Hence, by assisting the Queen of Egypt to die, this servant, the Clown-Fool in the play, performs the role of an Executioner-Priest who brings "immortal union" to Antony and Cleopatra. While

reading this chapter one has to bear in mind that the basic assumption about the Clown-Fool is interdependent on various clauses just mentioned. Hence, for functional purposes, we will refer to information (seemingly irrelevant) which has direct and pertinent bearing on the main issue. Having stated our purpose and method, we will now proceed to evaluate major existing appraisals of this play, because only a comparative study evaluates or determines the merit of the new approach.

In the diverse plays of Shakespeare it is seen that each and every character contributes something significant to the final meaning of the play. Removal or disregard of any member of the cast impedes the recreating of the total meaning which was put in the play by the dramatist. These characters vary from subhumans to supernaturals, from Calibans to Ariels. Despite their status, they are essentially sentient beings. They speak, act, and above all feel. Their existence in the plays (no matter how insignificant they may appear) is justified by the construction of the play itself. Shakespeare makes use of them meaningfully. Therefore, a reader is expected to recognize and examine fully the significance of such characters. In this particular case, the recognition of the true function of the Clown-Fool type may lead to a satisfactory resolution of problems of "paradox" and "ambiguity" in the characters of Cleopatra and Antony.

As noted previously, little has been said about the

Clown in Antony and Cleopatra except that he is a "joker,"[1] and that he is "foolish."[2] A. C. Bradley does not see anything of importance in the role of the "old peasant."[3] G. Wilson Knight is too enraptured by the "rhapsody" of "transcendental humanism" and "undistinguished emotionalism" to examine the character of the Clown carefully. His sole acknowledgment of the Clown in relation to Cleopatra is overwhelmingly romantic without proper evidence from the play. Knight believes that "it rests with the 'rural fellow' to bring Cleopatra the key to a wider empire, to speak her sailing orders as she puts out on the brighter seas of death."[4] A. P. Riemer regards the Clown as "Foolish-wise," and his conversation with the Queen of Egypt as "prattle."[5] Mark Van Doren sympathizes with the "rural fellow" at whose expense Cleopatra exhibits her vanity. He mentions the Clown merely in connection with denouncing Cleopatra. One may question the supposed presumptuousness on the part of a writer who with limited grasp of Shakespearean scholarship

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[1]Initiated by Warburton, this view has been maintained by Theobald, Malone, Ridley and Hudson.

[2]Brown, "Laughter in the Last Plays," p. 117.

[3]Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy, p. 310.

[4]G. Wilson Knight, The Imperial Theme (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1954), p. 315.

[5]A. P. Riemer, A Reading of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1968), p. 73.

dares comment on appraisals pronounced by authorities. However, the fact remains unchanged that a review of critical works helps to determine the merit of a new one. We intend to demonstrate that the Clown in Antony and Cleopatra is the personification of Executioner and Priest. In such capacity he frees Cleopatra from her suffering and thereby assists in bringing about her spiritual union with Antony. Taking this approach, as seems demanded by the text, we consider the previous appraisal of Cleopatra as a "strumpet" and a "quean" to be inaccurate. Misinterpretation of Cleopatra's character and her life began on the Elizabethan stage during Shakespeare's lifetime. It is as if to comment on the erroneous treatment of the Egyptian Queen and her life that Shakespeare wrote

> . . . Saucy lictors
> Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
> Ballad us out o' tune. The quick comedians
> Extemporally will stage us and present
> Our Alexandrian revels. Antony
> Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
> Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
> I' the posture of a whore.
> (V.ii.214-221)

It would seem as if Shakespeare had foreseen the manner in which critics would interpret Cleopatra. As one of the critics sees "Shakespeare has . . . gone out of his way to portray her in the posture of a whore."[1] A few sentences

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[1]Julian Markels, The Pillar of the World: Antony and Cleopatra in Shakespeare's Development (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1968), p. 6.

later this same critic comments

> Cleopatra surely raises whoring up to greatness, in the Aristotelian sense that every kind has its own excellence. But the lasting greatness for which we honor her is that she goes on to perform just the action one would least expect from a whore. She remains faithful to her lover after he dies, and in the act of affirming her greatness decides to kill herself in order to be reunited with him . . . the nobility of her act impresses by the sharp contrast between her constancy now and her old fickleness . . . . The deepest meaning of her greatness is that she has been in the posture of a whore.[1]

Strangely enough this critic, Julian Markels, along with many others believes that Cleopatra is a "whore." But the play reveals that Shakespeare portrays his Queen as truly Egyptian, not as a "whore." Markels and other important commentators begin with a basic fallacy when they judge an Egyptian Queen by Renaissance or Contemporary ethical values. As an Egyptian woman Cleopatra is expected to extend hospitality to her guest, be he a King or a soldier. Only in the case of Antony, Cleopatra feels more than a hostess, she is sincerely in love with him. Proper significance of the Clown is intertwined with the truly sincere love of Cleopatra for Antony. Also his contribution toward the eventual spiritual union of Antony and Cleopatra is deeply significant. Complete clarification of the position of Cleopatra and Antony, as they manifest representations of gods and goddesses of Egyptian mythology, is required, too.

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 7.

Mark Van Doren observes that one hardly can be certain "what her [Cleopatra's] intentions were with respect to the treasure she withheld from Caesar (V.ii.138-192), and whether her decision to die was inspired by loathing for Roman triumphs or for the 'husband' to whom death would bring her."[1] He notes, though, that "when the basket with the asp arrives, she announces to her people" that she is resolved and determined to take her own life, "from head to foot" she is "marble-constant" and that "the fleeting moon / no planet is" of hers. Yet Van Doren is puzzled because

> . . . her demeanor in dying has no marble in it. She is still all mercury and lightness, all silk and down. "I have immortal longings in me" is said with a smile at the expense of the rural fellow who has just gone out wishing her joy of the worm and insisting that its bite is "immortal"; she must have on her robe and crown before she feels the loving pinch of death; when Iras precedes her in death she pretends to worry lest Antony's first kiss in heaven be wasted on another woman; she saves enough breath to call Caesar "ass unpolicied," and spends the last of it in likening the immortal worm to a baby at her breast. . . . The scene is great and final, yet nothing in it seems to be serious; and the conversation between Caesar and his train when they come in concerns a spectacle that is pretty rather than painful. . . . Her greatness cannot be distinguished from her littleness, as water may not be defined in water.[2]

Perhaps it is an oversight on the part of Van Doren and of a majority of the other critics who do not see any sincerity in [Cleopatra's] love for Antony. Among others who

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[1]Mark Van Doren, "Antony and Cleopatra," Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. by Leonard F. Dean (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 358.

[2]*Ibid.*, pp. 358-359.

hold a similar view Markels comes out as a strong exponent. In the beginning of his study on Antony and Cleopatra he is primarily concerned with Cleopatra's supposed indulgence in her "private world" forsaking necessary regard to her "public world." Markels condemns her, saying

> She is a public figure whether she likes it or not; and like them, she takes a histrionic satisfaction in her role. But she refuses to honor by word or deed the expectations of the public world. She uses her public status simply as an instrument of her pleasure and an extension of her privacy.[1]

Markels is not satisfied with imposing his "value system" on the Egyptian Queen; he proceeds to evaluate her character. He believes that

> she is selfish and spoiled, and she overcomes all obstacles to her desire simply by making the world her oyster. For one thing, she needs the world as a large enough stage to support her Alexandrian revels.[2]

Like Van Doren, Markels judges the Queen of Egypt by Elizabethan, rather than Egyptian criteria. In other words, like Van Doren, he questions the Queen's sincerity at every step. Markels goes on:

> Her beauty and passion vanquish all other considerations, and the public world exists simply to show her off. Cleopatra recognizes as a condition of her grandeur that she must outwit the world and bend it to her purpose.[3]

Giving the reader an impression that Cleopatra works on

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 45.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

whims, and leaving the "purpose" of the Queen unexplained, Markels continues on his mission:

> She devotes her intelligence and energy to cultivating those wily arts by which she can impose her interests upon the world and twist its great men around her fingers.[1]

Here, in effect, Markels wants to mean that Cleopatra is a flirtatious woman. We will demonstrate conclusively by comparing her with some of the most well-known sincere lovers in different plays of Shakespeare that logically no one can condemn Cleopatra as an "insincere" queen. When one deals with a controversial issue, he is well advised to collect precedences and similar events to present a strong case. This is a legitimate method used by scholars young and old alike to drive a point home. For the present, we will examine the depth of "insincerity" of Cleopatra in the light of "sincere" women in Shakespeare's plays.

In order to prove the basic hypothesis that the Clown-Fool is an Executioner-Priest we will first show that Cleopatra loves Antony and hence can not remain separated from him. The Clown-Fool assists her in her union with Antony in the after-life. To make clear the depth of love as it exists for Cleopatra we will in the following pages (pp. 202-211) make cross references to Desdemona, Juliet, Queen of Richard II, Portia, and other Shakespearean women. This process will establish the logical fact that if these women are

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, pp. 45-46.

considered true in their love despite their frivolities, then one can not make derogatory judgments on Cleopatra's action. Hence one has to bear with the material treated extensively through the above-mentioned pages. Juliet, Desdemona, Brutus' wife, Portia, the Queen of Richard II, and Coriolanus' wife Virgilia, all of these women evidence unquestionable love for the men in their lives. Granting the different circumstances and conditions in the lives of these women, Cleopatra's intense feelings for Antony, her anxiety for him, and her passionate love for him do not differ from the feelings seen in the women just mentioned. Comparison between their reactions to their love with Cleopatra's expression of her feelings under different circumstances will demonstrate her sincerity. Some critics are reluctant to admit that Cleopatra is capable of true love and they ignore the ancient Egyptian cultural heritage and tradition of which Cleopatra is a regal representative. By disregarding Cleopatra's expression of her true love for Antony and by ignoring the ethical and religious tradition of ancient Egypt which the playwright has so masterfully blended into the plot of the play, some critics show a great loss of understanding and appreciation of the tragic experience of the characters.

Because Cleopatra's love for Antony is unquestionably true, the separation from him is simply unbearable for her. Through the course of the play and especially in the final scene, her longing for Antony is extremely meaningful when

we are capable of seeing and feeling her sincerity. When we can successfully recreate and demonstrate the sincerity of her feelings then the contribution of the Clown in the final scene becomes evident. Therefore, before we may proceed with the analysis of the role played by the Clown-Fool we must demonstrate, though briefly, the sincerity of Cleopatra's love for Antony.

Antony being away in Rome, life is meaningless to Cleopatra. She instructs Charmian, "Give me to drink mandragora" (I.v.4). Charmian asks, "Why, madam?" Cleopatra's answer explains her feelings at this time. She says

> That I might sleep out this great gap of time
> My Antony is away. (I.v.5-6)

Usually one wants to administer a sleep-inducing drug if and when one suffers from unbearable pain or sorrow. Antony's absence is painful for Cleopatra. Therefore, nothing in the incomparable riches of the Egyptian treasury can relieve her. Varieties of entertainments such as "music," "billiards," "fishing"--all fail to help her forget the forlorn moments. She remembers even a "trivial" moment spent with Antony. As she reminisces:

> That time--oh, times!--
> I laughed him out of patience, and that night
> I laughed him into patience. And next morn,
> Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed,
> Then put my tires and mantles on him whilst
> I wore his sword Philippan.
> (II.v.18-23)

The playful moments of love intensify the moments of separation and eagerly anticipate the news about Antony. In her

earnest desire to keep Antony informed of her continued love for him she decides that "He shall have every day a several greeting, / Or I'll unpeople Egypt" (I.v.77-78). This readily discernible gesture of Cleopatra is misinterpreted by Markels. He states

> The world must either be her plaything, as when she is ready to "unpeople" Egypt and fill the sea with messengers to express her passion for Antony, or it must be her enemy until it can be made her plaything.[1]

Markels obviously takes the literal meaning of the word "unpeople" which merely expresses Cleopatra's extreme exasperation at having been separated from Antony, whom she loves truly. In fact, here Cleopatra evidences her determination to keep her love for Antony unquestioned. As soon as she comes to know about the arrival of the messenger from "Italy" her impatience bursts out in an expression of natural anxiety and sincerity: "Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears, / That long time have been barren" (II.v.24-25). About these scenes, Markels remarks:

> . . . in these three marvelous scenes where she is busy missing Antony, when she shifts from dreams of mandragora to dreams of former lovers, and from music to billiards to fishing, she is trying to beguile herself; and without the discipline of any commitment to those public values that have separated Antony from her, she is as unsuccessful with herself as she was with him. . . In Cleopatra as in Octavius there is a surrender of human dignity, . . .[2]

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[1] Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 46.

[2] Ibid., p. 48.

If in trying to pass away the forlorn moments Cleopatra "surrenders" "human dignity" we wonder how we may judge Richard II's Queen and Desdemona because in their own way they also try to "beguile" themselves when they are separated from the men they love (Richard II, III.iv. 1-2; Othello II.i.123-125). If we now examine the Queen of Richard II as she feels barren and burdened by anxiety for her husband, Cleopatra's sincerity will seem more meaningful. As the famous "Garden scene" opens in Richard II we meet the Queen and two ladies. The Queen explains her feelings for the reader as she wonders:

> What sport shall we devise here in this garden
> To drive away the heavy thought of care?
> (Richard II, III.iv.1-2)

The ladies offer to "play at bowls," "dance," "tell tales," "sing," or even "weep" for the Queen to help her forget the immediate cares. But nothing can take the place of love. In this respect Cleopatra shows undisputed similarity to the Queen in Richard II.

As the messenger arrives from Rome, Cleopatra can not restrain her feelings. She is truly anxious to learn about Antony and evidences in this connection strong similarities with Juliet. Juliet can hardly bear the moments when the Nurse has gone to Romeo with her message. When the Nurse finally returns, Juliet is somewhat relieved but she is extremely anxious to see the Nurse dwell in matters which Juliet at this moment considers to be trivial. Hence

she urges,

> I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news.
> Nay, come, I pray thee, speak, good, good Nurse,
> speak.
> (Romeo and Juliet II.v.27-28)

The same kind of eagerness and impatience captivates Cleopatra when she is speaking with the Messenger from Rome. Love is mixed with apprehension of something being wrong. She wants to hear it all without tarrying a moment:

> Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
> The good and bad together.
> (Antony and Cleopatra II.v.54-55)

In her "salad days" when Cleopatra was "green in judgment" she entertained different men as an Eastern hostess. But none of them can compare to her true love, Antony. Cleopatra corrects Charmian in this matter when the latter hails Julius Caesar. The Queen of Egypt makes her intention clear:

> By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth
> If thou with Caesar paragon again
> My man of men.
> (Antony and Cleopatra I.v.70-72)

Cleopatra's intention and determination to be present at the scene of battle is triggered by her position as the Queen of Egypt and by her belief that a woman may prove a great source of strength for the man she loves. When Enobarbus tries to keep Cleopatra away from the battlefield, Cleopatra explains why she should be there. But as Cleopatra speaks we know that her main reason is Antony. Her reason is not what Markels believes it to be. He says

> At Actium she insists upon participating in the battle, against the advice of Enobarbus and others, "as the president of my kingdom. But it is clear from everything we have learned about her, and from her conduct at Actium, that the entire function of the president of her kingdom is to become the object of universal gaze and wonder.[1]

She explicitly states that she cares only for Antony:

> Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
> That speaks against us! A charge we bear i' the war,
> And as the president of my kingdom will
> Appear there for a man. Speak not against it,
> I will not stay behind.
> (III.vii.17-20)

It is not only in the capacity of the head of state but also as the source of inspiration "for a man" who is defending Egypt. He is none other than Antony. Cleopatra is no exception to the women in love who strongly believe that their place is beside their loved ones. In this context, she appears to hold quite similar convictions to those held by Desdemona and Brutus' wife, Portia. Portia wants to share the moments of her husband's anxiety. She wishes to be a part of it because she loves Brutus and believes firmly that her place is no where but by her husband's side. And Portia lets her feeling be known to Brutus:

> I grant I am a woman, but withal
> A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife.
> I grant I am a woman, but withal
> A woman well reputed, Cato's daughter.
> Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
> Being so fathered and so husbanded?
> (Julius Caesar II.i.292-297)

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 47.

From Rome we shift to Venice and hear a Venetian woman's belief and conviction as Desdemona speaks. She is not afraid to accompany her husband on his dangerous mission. Rather, she feels that it is her duty as a woman who sincerely loves her husband to be by his side always. She explains:

> That I did love the Moor to live with him,
> My downright violence and storm of fortunes
> May trumpet to the world. . . .
> . . . .
> And to his honors and his valiant parts
> Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
> So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
> A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
> The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
> And I a heavy interim shall support
> By his dear absence.
> (Othello I.iii.249-260)

Hence, she is resolved to go to Cyprus with Othello. Last, but not least, Cleopatra wishes to ascertain how much Antony values her love. Extraneous circumstances have stressed Antony's forebearance to the extreme and he has become extremely angry. Hence, Cleopatra heeds Charmian's advice as she urges the Queen to lock herself in the monument and send Antony the word that Cleopatra is dead. Cleopatra takes this opportunity to test Antony's love for her. She sends Mardian,

> . . . go tell him I have slain myself.
> Say that the last I spoke was "Antony,"
> And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mardian,
> And bring me how he takes my death. . . .
> (IV.xiii.7-10)

Markels considers this action as the "wiliness of Cleopatra's is surely aimed at saving her own skin, . . ."

and nothing else.[1] In this context if we examine Blanche's desire for testing her husband's love then we may find Markel's interpretation doubtful. In King John, Blanche begs Lewis not to take arms against her uncle, King John of England. She makes her point clear: "Now shall I see thy love. What motive may / Be stronger with thee than the name of wife?" (King John III.i.313-314). The circumstances differ in these two cases but the motive remains the same. The similarity between them strengthens our belief that Cleopatra is not motivated by the wish of "saving her own skin." From these various examples drawn from other plays of Shakespeare, we can see the striking similarities in the responses of the different women who are sincerely in love. Cleopatra does not seem at all different from them.

Cleopatra is true to her natural inclinations. Although her intention with regard to her presence in the battlefield is honourable and desirable, she is unable to control her natural fear of violence and of the vehemence of any passion. From the beginning of the play, we have been informed time and time again by Enobarbus and Cleopatra herself that she is timid by nature. She can not withstand excessive tension and she is inclined to be frightened and to faint under heavy stress. (I.ii.145-149; I.iii.13; III.xi.55; IV.xiv.120, 125). Even a Queen is

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 46.

susceptible to human limitations. Cleopatra's love and determination can not overcome her natural fear of stress and violence. This proves to be tragic. This is why she withdraws from the first battle at Actium. Markels believes that here "She flees apparently out of fear; but her flight is also consistent with the strategy of beguilement by which she has ever tried to keep Antony from taking his honour too seriously."[1] But contrary to Markels' observation the numerous references pointed out by us in this particular paragraph demonstrate that Cleopatra is naturally fearful, she is not using any "strategy of beguilement." Because of her fear, Antony suspects her of treachery when he loses the battle for the second time. Mostly this is why commentators doubt her love for Antony. But natural fear should not necessarily counteract true love. We may refer to Portia again. Although she is determined to be by the side of Brutus, yet she has some feeling of fear, too. Portia describes her limitations, "I have a man's mind, but a woman's might" (II.iv.8). Again she expresses her natural weakness, "Oh, I grow faint " (Julius Caesar II.iv.43). A renowned soldier's wife, Virgilia, though loving, sincere and faithful to Coriolanus, is not free from natural human limitations. She feels "faint" at the thought of violence and "bloody

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 46.

brow " (Coriolanus I.iii.41). Although Portia and Virgilia evidence a considerable amount of natural weakness we do not question their sincerity in love. Logically, then, we can not doubt the sincerity of Cleopatra's love for Antony. Admittedly, she falls prey to her nature, but she begs forgiveness from Antony, and that she receives. Also, their anguish and suffering at being separated from each other do provide strong evidence towards the conclusion that we can not question the depth of their love. Hoping that the preceding analysis of Cleopatra's love in comparison with a few of the important women in Shakespeare's plays has provided for the establishment of her sincerity, we may proceed now to demonstrate how utterly meaningless it is for Cleopatra to live in the world without Antony. As Cleopatra the "serpent-woman of old Nile" and as the personification of Isis and other snake-goddesses of Egypt, she can not remain separated from Antony. Hence she needs the assistance of the Clown-Fool.

In order to experience with Cleopatra the final moments of her life, it is indispensable that we take into account what the "rural fellow" represents to Cleopatra and why she accepts the asp brought by him. In the wide spectrum of Shakespeare's creations, varieties of Clown-Fools appear. They vary from minstrels, simple entertainers, grave-diggers, court-jesters, zany servants, bitter-mouthed fools and wise friends. But none of them

has been vested with as grave a responsibility as that placed on the Clown in Antony and Cleopatra.

On the surface we see that the Clown merely brings in the basket of figs, within which is hidden the asp. Like a rustic simpleton he comments on the "pretty worm." Taken literally, his speeches show that he warns Cleopatra to beware of the asp, because its "biting is immortal" (he means mortal) and that "there is no goodness in the worm." The rest of his speeches would seem to be comprised of just love of "long words without being too sure of their meanings," as Harrison notes, because the Clown is like "the usual with Shakespeare's humbler characters."[1] But a clear picture is needed of the depth of Cleopatra's love for Antony, the proper understanding of the characters of Antony and Cleopatra and what they represent in the play, because they have significant bearings on the character of the Clown. Examining the sources Shakespeare made use of and the possible changes or additions he made in them while creating Antony and Cleopatra can contribute immensely to a closer experience of the meaning of the play.

Geoffrey Bullough cites The Deeds of Caesar, Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans, Cleopatra, The Tragedie of Antonie, and The Tragedie of Cleopatra as possible sources

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[1]Shakespeare, The Complete Works, p. 1263.

used by Shakespeare.[2] What is important to see is that in the creation of any character, the playwright may use many other sources than those we can easily ascertain. None except the artist himself can positively point out all the sources used in the creation of any character. Shakespeare, as an artist, is a product of direct and vicarious learning. He is a receptacle of images and information absorbed from multifarious sources and experiences. Therefore, although we may not be absolutely positive about it, the portrayal of the Egyptian Queen leads us to conclude that Shakespeare was well-versed in Egyptian mythology, and portrayed it authentically. From long before the Renaissance there was an upsurge of Oriental motifs (as the West knew of the places which she called Orient) in art and literature. No one has yet been able to ascertain accurately all the channels through which the influx of Oriental motifs took place. But there are some possible courses suggested by different developments in the history of the West. The Crusades are believed to be most important of all possible sources. Translations by different Arabian scholars have carried some Oriental influences. Folk tales and stories of "wisdom" were propagated in the West through oral tradition. A collection of laughable stories of the East, compiled by a Syrian monk in the Thirteenth Century,

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[1]Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, V, 254-449.

instead of being of doubtful value, specifically points to the fact that these stories were commonly known. The stories collected by the Syrian monk, Mar Gregory John Bar-Hebraeus, were translated from Syriac text by E. A. Wallis Budge in London in 1897. While introducing the stories as The Laughable Stories, Wallis Budge had this to say about the Syrian compiler:

> . . . while his mind was closely occupied with history and philosophy, and with the writings of works on grammar and other different subjects, the enthusiastic churchman found time to jot down notes of the witty, cynical, amusing, edifying and didactic sayings and narratives which he came across during his perusal of the literature of the Jews and the Greeks, Arabs and Persians, Indians and Syrians.[1]

Budge explains the effect of Bar-Hebraeus' death in the immediate world:

> . . . it is evident that all the Christian world and the countries about deplores the loss of Bar-Hebraeus with sincere grief, . . . His knowledge of Greek and Arabic opened store-houses of learning which were closed to most of the Christian world, . . . eighteen years as bishop of various dioces, and twenty-two years as Maphrian he seems to have been able to master the philosophy of the Greeks and the Arabs, and to have made it available by his translations of their works . . . Philosophy, theology, natural science, history, medicine, the science of grammar, &c., were only a few of the subjects in the knowledge of which he excelled. . . . The service which he rendered to the Church and literature, and to his nation can hardly be overestimated, and the Western Scholars owe him a great debt of gratitude especially for his Universal History, his

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[1]E. A. Wallis Budge, ed. and trans., The Laughable Stories (London: Luzac and Co., 1897), p. viii.

Storehouse of Secrets, and his grammatical works.[1]

The information received from Wallis Budge about the interaction of knowledge between the East and the West as evidenced through the work of Bar-Hebraeus is unquestionably valuable for our present case. We may safely assume from the information gathered that the stories of Egypt were quite commonly known in the Western world. Therefore, it would follow that Shakespeare could have access to the myths and legends of the Egyptian world.

Speaking of sources, J. Dover Wilson points out that "the descriptive History of Africa" was accessible in English translation after 1600," and

> though there is no overflow in the stream of knowledge . . . yet, when all is said, no amount of learning could have given us more triumphantly a sense of Cleopatra's Egypt. Somehow Shakespeare . . . succeeded in building an imaginative monument for his pair of peerless lovers, more convincingly Egyptian than any Egyptologist could have compassed with a lifetime of study behind him.[2]

We may also take note of the fact that the East India Trading Company was formed in 1599 and by 1600 the trading with the East was already under way. The first twelve voyages that were made by the Company occurred

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[1] Budge, The Laughable Stories, p. xix.

[2] J. Dover Wilson, ed., Antony and Cleopatra, The New Shakespeare Series (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1968), p. xiv.

between 1601 and 1603. Shakespeare wrote Antony and Cleopatra in 1607 or 1608. The Company's ships could not reach Indian shores without passing by the African coast line. It would be safe to assume that the ships touched different ports of call on route to India around the Cape of Good Hope. By dint of such contact with the African continent English mariners must have had access to the legends and myths of Egypt. We also know that trade was established with the territories adjacent to the Persian Gulf. This is another possible source through which England came in contact with Arabian stories.

Wilson is quite correct in his realization that Shakespeare's Cleopatra in the play is authentically Egyptian. But he does not analyze and demonstrate the manner in which Shakespeare develops his main characters in the particular direction in the play. We may add to Wilson's observation that though the bodies of this "pair of peerless lovers" are entombed, yet their spirits are released from the physical captivity. In other words, the Egyptian Ka (meaning spirit) and Ba (meaning soul) of these two mortals are released only to be immortalized (in keeping with prevalent Egyptian belief) after death, and Cleopatra's dream of union is to be fulfilled in her restored state. The internal evidence from the text strongly suggests that Shakespeare was quite aware of the Egyptian concept of after-death and the cults

of Isis and Osiris. Cleopatra herself relates to the messenger from Rome about her belief: "we use / To say the dead are well" (II.v.32-33). Later she explicates her thought on the meaning of death as "death enlarge his confine" (III.v.13). The playwright's use of the concept of death in Egyptian belief leads us to think more strongly that he must have had deep knowledge of the matter. Moreover, the name Isis has been used in the play under so many various circumstances that it is easy to believe in the author's recognition of the various associations connected with that name of an Egyptian goddess.[1]

We should note that Shakespeare shows the Eastern Queen leaving her mortal existence in the manner which was recognized and accepted as normal custom in Egypt. He portrays Cleopatra true to her culture and conventions, religious and otherwise. Cleopatra proves herself to be a royal representative of the Oriental woman to whom life without love is meaningless; therefore, death is the most satisfactory consummation devoutly wished. And the rustic Clown is the chief artisan who assists her in the attainment of her goal by bringing in the asp.

In Egyptian belief the asp or uraeus was the animal sacred to the Sun-god Amon Ra. "In the hieroglyphic writing the figure of this snake was the determinative

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[1]I.ii.66, 71, 72, 77; I.v.70; III.vi.17.

sign for the word 'goddess.'"[1] Any persons killed by the

> serpent, . . . were considered by the people blessed, and removed to the company of gods. In the eyes of the Egyptian people Cleopatra could have found no more honourable death. Through the bite of the sacred snake, she, the last member not merely of the Ptolemic Dynasty, but of the age-old line of the Pharaos, returned to the Sun-god, the heavenly father; . . ."[2]

and because she was the representation of Isis, death to her meant the final union with her eternal lover and husband, Amon Ra-Osiris. Volkman continues:

> In terms of such notions Cleopatra's choice of this mode of death is perfectly comprehensive. If this interpretation is correct, the thoughts and feelings of the Greco-Macedonian queen were certainly far closer to those of the Egyptian world than we have so far assumed.[3]

The play suggests that in the garb of a Clown-Fool type, the Clown is actually performing the functions of an Executioner and a Priest. Examination of the text will now be helpful. As Van Doren seems to be echoing a representative voice of the critics in general,[4] we will refute his

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[1]Hans Volkmann, Cleopatra: A Study in Politics and Propaganda (London: Elck Books Ltd., 1953), p. 207.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Van Doren is treading the footsteps of Bradley, Ribner, Whitaker, Holloway, Markels, and many others who maintain that Antony and Cleopatra shows "the fall of a great general, betrayed by a treacherous strumpet." A. P. Riemer, A Reading of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, p. 82.

arguments and prove our initial hypothesis, which seems required for the adequate understanding of the play.

The main objection of Van Doren is that Cleopatra is frivolous and vain, she is insincere, she is ostentatious, and she completes her role-playing with a grand finale by "likening the immortal worm to a baby at her breast.[1] It would be enlightening to cite some pertinent information from an anonymous work published in the Thirteenth Century. The author of this work refers to Cleopatra's death and informs the reader that "she placed the snake to her left breast near her heart. And thus died Cleopatra, and this was her final end."[2] It is most significant to see that none of the other sources cited by Bullough portray Cleopatra as letting the asp suck her breast; rather, all the other sources indicate that she died by the venom inserted in her arm. It is natural then to enquire why Shakespeare would choose to portray the Eastern Queen as letting her life be extracted by death (asp) from her very heart. This particular change implemented by Shakespeare speaks significantly on Cleopatra's behalf of her ennobling end. Van Doren and others who denounce and deplore the Queen of Egypt, fail to take into account this important change made by Shakespeare with serious and grave

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[1]Van Doren, "Antony and Cleopatra," p. 358.

[2]Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, p. 343.

intention. Therefore, their appraisals of the Queen of Egypt become nullified by their initial oversight of an important structural change. Shakespeare's intentions with regard to Cleopatra are implicit in this "trivial" change. Shakespeare's efforts are directed toward the best possible authentic portrayal of Cleopatra, as the Queen of Egypt, the "serpent woman of old Nile" (I.v.25). A satisfactory understanding of the Clown-Fool type used in this play depends wholly upon the clarification of Cleopatra's position in the play. Therefore, we should point out that the elaborate discussion of many Shakespearean women in relation to Cleopatra and analyses of some source materials have been necessary to illustrate that the verdicts pronounced by old scholars on Cleopatra may not be absolutes and that there still remain possibilities of other valid viewpoints as well.

More than half a century ago, R. K. Root touched upon an important element in *Antony and Cleopatra* observing that, "In the series of great tragedies, classical mythology plays a quite significant part; but in *Antony* . . . it suddenly reasserts itself with a surprising vigor."[1] Root's suggestion opened up a whole new line of investigation, and critics such as Michael Lloyd, J. Leeds Barroll,

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[1]Raymond B. Waddington, "*Antony and Cleopatra*: 'what Venus did with Mars,'" *Shakespeare Studies*, II (The University of Cincinnati Press, 1966), 210.

and Eugene M. Waith added to the volumes of criticism on this play. Unfortunately though, their explorations into the play's use of mythology "seeking a thematic as well as rhetorical function have produced interesting if contradictory results."[1] These critics have examined the use of mythology in the imageries used in the play. But they have not considered to the fullest extent the implications of these allusions in the play organically, functionally or otherwise. Mythological dimension does not only enhance the beauty on the surface of the play, but it enriches the underlying meaning. Shakespeare uses imagery more for dramatic function than for sheer poetic expression. And mere surface analysis of these allusions and images fails to achieve the total meaning. Raymond B. Waddington voices this particular failure in a few words. He says:

> Michael Lloyd has elucidated the identification of Cleopatra with Isis, concluding that the "divine humanity" of Cleopatra is the subject of the play. J. Leeds Barroll and Eugene M. Waith, approaching Antony through his Herculean ancestry, emphasize the hero's tragedy in radically different ways, which serve effectively to reveal the complexity of the mythological traditions that can run concurrently in the Renaissance and merge in the play. Waith relates Antony to the mythic, suprahuman _Virtus Heroica_, a dramatic protagonist whose character may be flawed but whose deeds, passions, and magnanimity so far transcend the capacities of the ordinary man that moral judgment is irrelevant. Barroll reads the Hercules allusions strictly in terms of the medieval,

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[1]Waddington, "_Antony and Cleopatra_: 'what Venus did with Mars,'" p. 210.

> moralistic tradition, linking Antony's choice between Octavia and Cleopatra with the commonplace "Hercules at the crossroads" iconographic motif. Thus two interesting but partial applications of mythic tradition--for want of more precise contextual discrimination--vanish into the Empedoclean strife of opposites that has so long afflicted the play's critics.[1]

By focusing their attention on just one strand of mythological allusions these critics come to a conclusion about the characters in isolation, as if they are not integral parts of the play itself. There is no doubt that there are a few allusions in the play which associate Antony with Hercules and Bacchus. Antony's love for wine, his apparel to a certain extent, and his subjection to a woman--may show similarity to Hercules-Omphale story. But it "is only an analogous situation."[2] Similarly commentators have seen strong likeness with Venus's victory over Mars and/or Adonis with that of Cleopatra over Antony. We share one opinion of Waddington and support it as being accurate:

> The resemblance is one of role and situation; the participants are identified by the attributes--lion skin, club, distaff for Hercules-Omphale, armor, sword or lance for Mars-Venus.[3]

In Plutarch's description of Cleopatra, Shakespeare

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[1]Waddington, "*Antony and Cleopatra*: 'what Venus did with Mars,'" p. 210.

[2]*Ibid*., p. 214.

[3]*Ibid*., p. 215.

found dual associations of Cleopatra with Venus and Isis.

Plutarch describes the Queen as follows:

> Now, for Cleopatra, she did not onely weare at that time (but at all times els when she came abroad) the apparell of the goddesse Isis, and so gave audience unto all subjects, as a new Isis.[1]

This description becomes incorporated into the play in the form of Octavius's remark about Cleopatra:

> She
> In the habiliments of the goddess Isis
> That day appeared and oft before gave audience,
> As 'tis reported, so.
> (Antony and Cleopatra III.vi.16-19)

And Enobarbus's description of the Queen in her barge at Cydnus

> For her own person,
> It beggared all description. She did lie
> In her pavilion, cloth of gold of tissue,
> O'er picturing that Venus where we see
> The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
> Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
> With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
> And what they undid did.
> (II.ii.202-210)

is based on Plutarch's following observation:

> she was layed under a pavillion of cloth of gold of tissue, apparelled and attired like the goddesse Venus, commonly drawn in picture: and hard by her on either hand of her, pretie faire boyes apparelled as painters doe set forth god Cupide, with little fannes in their hands, with the which they fanned wind upon her. Her ladies and gentlewomen also, the fairest of them were apparelled like the

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[1]Waddington, "Antony and Cleopatra: 'what Venus did with Mars,'" p. 210.

[2]Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, p. 274.

> nymphes Nereides (which are the mermaids of the waters) and like the Graces . . . and there went a rumor in the people's mouthes, that the goddesse Venus was come to play with the god Bacchus.[1]

Plutarch portrays Cleopatra as only "apparelled and attired" like the goddess. But Shakespeare, as we have quoted earlier, sees Cleopatra as "O'er picturing that Venus where we see / The fancy outwork nature" (II.ii.205-206). And at the time of her death she is referred to as the "Eastern star!" (V.ii.312). Waddington takes references like these and asserts that

> Antony and Cleopatra, as I will argue, is a romance [sic] which is designed to evoke primarily the mythical and cosmological affairs of Mars and Venus, rather than the unrelated characters of Hercules and Isis--though the latter are subsumed typographically by Mars and Venus.[2]

Having criticized his predecessors for being partial in their judgments, Waddington himself falls prey to the same by pre-scribing his own point of view on the play rather than describing the play for what it is. Waddington wishes us to accept that in the preceding quotations (II.ii. 202-210; V.ii.312) Shakespeare merely takes the images of Venus. It would seem from thorough reading of the whole play that the playwright is portraying a true Egyptian Queen and that the address "Eastern star" signifies the

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[1]Waddington, "Antony and Cleopatra: 'what Venus did with Mars,'" p. 210.

[2]Ibid., p. 215.

Queen of the East. The detailed analysis of this will be done a little later in the chapter. For now, it will suffice to say that if one should consider the whole meaning of the Venus and Mars legend and apply that to the play, the analogy would not hold. On the other hand, Cleopatra, as Isis, fits the total meaning of the play extremely well. Cleopatra has a "two-fold association" with Venus and Isis, and in our estimation it seems that Shakespeare intensifies the Isis image much more meaningfully and functionally than that of Venus. It would be strange now to have Waddington on our side, if for a short time. He says

> Shakespeare expands, too, the references to Isis from those which occur in Plutarch. Most of them are incidental, but they are frequent enough to fix firmly the association with Cleopatra.[1]

It may seem from Waddington's treatment of the Venus and Isis legend that he would consider them as conflicting. But he surprises the reader by the following observation:

> The reason that Shakespeare intensifies the two-fold associations he found in Plutarch, rather than eliminating one as he did with Antony and Bacchus, is that there is no conflict between them[2].

In Apuleius's tale of metamorphosis known as _The Golden Ass_, goddess Venus appears and relates her various

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[1]Waddington, "_Antony and Cleopatra:_ 'what Venus did with Mars,'" p. 215.

[2]_Ibid._, p. 215.

identities to Lucius, the main male character:

> My name, my divinity is adored throughout all the world in divers manners, in variable customes and in many names, for the Phrygians call me the mother of Gods: the Athenians, Minerva; the Cyprians, Venus; the Candians, Diana; the Sicilians, Prosperina; the Elusians, Ceres; some Juno, others Bellona, others Hecate; and principally the Egyptians which are excellent in all kinds of ancient doctrine, and by their proper ceremonies accustome to worship mee, doe call me Queene Isis.[1]

This identification sheds important light on the non-existent conflict between Venus and Isis image. In this light, Waddington makes a conclusive statement by leaves it unelaborated:

> Isis, then, is Venus in her local habitat; Shakespeare retains the Isis analogy because it is literally appropriate to the Egyptian Queen and thus integrates perfectly with the extensive symbolic nexus that he develops from the Egyptian scene and character.[2]

We intend to show that Shakespeare uses the "Isis analogy" not only "because it is literally appropriate to the Egyptian Queen" but because in the play's final culmination in accordance with the main theme, the Isis image is most befitting Cleopatra, the Egyptian Queen. As Venus-figure some of Cleopatra's actions remain baffling and perturbing. But when examined from the point of view of Isis legend, as demanded by the play, Cleopatra does not remain a mystery and her position is clarified. Mythological meaning lies behind Antony's role.

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[1]Lucius Apuleius, The Golden Ass, trans. by William Adlington, Tudor Translations (New York: AMS Press, 1967), pp. 232-233.

[2]Waddington, "Antony and Cleopatra: 'What Venus did with Mars,'" p. 216.

In Egyptian mythology an asp is the symbol of the sun-god, Amon Ra. Amon Ra is considered to be the "king of gods," the great divinity of the whole country. "He was the god of fertility, and we see the king in presence, sowing grain and cutting the first sheaf."[1] Also, we see him giving victory over the enemies of those who worshipped him. The general image of Amon Ra was that of the creator of mankind and benefactor of the world, issuing not only the light of day but also "illuminating the underworld"[2] during the twelve hours of night.

Next to Amon Ra, Osiris is an influential god figure in the Egyptian pantheon. He forms a trinity with Isis and Horus, the child. The name Osiris is the Greek form of Egyptian Us-Yri, meaning "occupier of the throne," that is, the king. At first he was chiefly an agricultural deity who contributed to the fertility of the crops. Osiris later came to be identified as the god (judge) of the dead, and this is his best known role. Osiris is also remembered for his benevolent nature by which he easily conquered people's hearts. Not satisfied with having civilized Egypt, Osiris wished to spread the benefits of his rule throughout the whole world. He left his rule of his state to Isis, his wife. On his return he found his

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[1] Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology (New York: Prometheus Press, 1960), p. 31.

[2] Ibid.

kingdom in good order; but it was not long before he fell prey to a plot of jealousy set up by his brother, Set. Osiris lost his life in this plot, but Isis revived him to life by her magical power. Resurrected, Osiris retired from this earth and lived in the "Elysian Fields" where he warmly welcomed the souls of the just and reigned over the dead.

Let us now examine Antony as seen by Cleopatra in the play, in the light of the characteristics and functions of Amon Ra and Osiris. The Queen addresses and greets Antony as the "Lord of lords!" and as the "infinite virtue" (IV,viii.16-17). The first epithet "Lord of lords" refers to god of all gods--meaning Amon Ra, the sun-god. And the "infinite virtue" indicates the infinite quality of the sun-god, the high power in the Egyptian pantheon. Though Cleopatra is the Queen of Egypt, Antony has been vested with infinite power to defend Egypt against Caesar's attack. Hence, in his function, Antony is personifying the characteristic of the sun-god Amon Ra, who annihilates enemies of those who worship him. When wounded Antony is borne in by the Guard, Cleopatra realizes that total darkness will overcome the "shore o' the world." She exclaims, as if to plead that her "sun" may illuminate the world indefinitely:

> O sun,
> Burn the great sphere thou movest in! . . .
> (IV.xv.9-10)

One of the major functions of the sun-god Amon Ra is

that he not only lights the world during the day, he also illuminates during the twelve hours of the night. With the knowledge of the imminent death of Antony, the personification of Amon Ra, Cleopatra visualizes darkness to overwhelm the world. As Antony dies, Cleopatra's apprehension finds expression:

> The crown o' the earth doth melt. My lord!
> Oh, withered is the garland of the war,
> The soldier's pole is fall'n. . . .
> (IV.xv.63-65)

These lines portray Antony as another personification of the sun-god, Amon Ra. The Sun as it shines over the earth, appears as the celestial, lustrous, diadem on a crown. Antony's death signifies the gradual diminution of the radiance and eventual onset of total darkness--"the crown o' the earth doth melt." As the annihilator of enemies Amon Ra stands as the "soldier's pole," the guiding star, the commander-in-chief. Cleopatra sees in Antony's death the fall of the "soldier's pole," meaning the fall of Amon Ra in his function as annihilator. In her grief Cleopatra again visualizes Antony as the sun-god--the "king of gods, the great divinity of whole country," as she mourns that

> . . . this world did equal theirs
> Till they had stol'n our jewel. . . .
> (IV.xv.77-78)

The only "jewel" which radiates on both the gods and the earth is the sun-god, Amon Ra. Hence, Antony is the representation of certain qualities of Amon Ra, the sun-god of Egyptian mythology. Cleopatra's definitive statement about

Antony as the representation of Amon Ra is "Our lamp is spent, it's out!" (IV.xv.85). These addresses and epithets may be declared as inconsequential, as they may appear as overly exaggerated expression of intense loss incurred by a woman. But we may not forget that Cleopatra is the Queen of Egypt and the eulogistic expressions uttered by her will necessarily be built on everything exquisite in beauty, incomparable in virtue, unsurpassable in quality, but plausible, as considered in Egypt according to ancient beliefs and tradition. Cleopatra is not a woman of the Renaissance merely relating her knowledge in "Renaissance Humanism," but she is the Queen of Egypt, a product of her own culture. She is not imposing qualities and functions of the sun-god indiscriminately on Antony; rather, the similar characteristics and qualities in Antony cause her to equate him with none other than Amon Ra, the supreme power in the Egyptian faith at that time.

As we have seen many times, in the plays of Shakespeare, grief makes a person more "sensible" than one usually is. Constance in King John, the Prince of Denmark in Hamlet, and the King in King Lear are but a few examples of this observation. Cleopatra, too, in her intense grief shows more awareness of Antony's greatness and magnanimity than she has known before. In her requiem and eulogy, offered for Antony, we see Antony in totality; Cleopatra speaks with Dolabella:

Cleo. His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course and lighted
The little O, the earth.
Dol. Most sovereign creature--
Cleo. His legs bestrid the ocean. His reared arm
Crested the world. His voice was propertied
As all the tunèd spheres, and that to friends.
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in 't, an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping. His delights
Were dolphinlike, they showed his back above
The element they lived in. In his livery
Walked crowns and crownets, realms and islands were
As plates dropped from his pocket.
(V.ii.78-92)

We agree that the above quoted passage forms a eulogy offered for Antony by Cleopatra. But it is not like the usual eulogies offered to prominent men, eulogies which endow qualities on the deceased which they never had when alive. This eulogy describes Antony exactly as he was understood and loved by the Queen of Egypt. It gives true expression to her awareness of Antony's identity as the representation of sun-god and Osiris combined. She is able to draw extremely suitable metaphors from her own belief. Nothing is enough to express her deep and sincere love, unsurpassable, incomparable in history--mere words are not sufficient to describe such love--between the "serpent of Old Nile" (I.v.25) and the "Lord of lords," the "crown o' the earth" (IV.viii.16; IV.xv.63).

Shakespeare's portrayal of Antony in these lines, as close representation of Amon Ra and Osiris, makes him

come to life. John Middleton Murry agrees with us:

> In those lines, simply and strangely, Antony is made incorporate with Nature, with the riches of harvest, and the golden splendor of a stubble-field; but no less than with this quiet opulence, incorporate also with the gleam and flash and strong impetuosity of the dolphin. All this we feel to be true. This is Antony. It is as though his essence had been made plain, his secret revealed to Cleopatra in her vision. And this again is true to the deeps of human experience: we do know those we have loved better after death than we knew them while they lived; and sometimes the deepening of knowledge is so profound that we could almost say that, in comparison with the knowledge we now possess, our former knowledge was ignorance.[1]

In her eulogy Cleopatra visualizes Antony's face as the "heavens" where the sun and the moon keep their course and light the little earth. According to Egyptian mythology, the sun-god Amon Ra is their creator ("the heavens") of mankind, and benefactor ("the heavens") of the world, he gave his worshippers "victory over enemies." As a friend and benefactor Antony has fulfilled these duties for Egypt. In his role as a benefactor, Antony has absorbed qualities of Osiris, too. Osiris, by his benevolence and gentleness, conquered country after country, "winning and disarming their inhabitants by sons and the playing of various musical instruments."[2] As the sun and the moon, that is,

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[1]John Middleton Murry, "Antony and Cleopatra," Shakespeare: Antony and Cleopatra, ed. by John Russell Brown (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1968), p. 131.

[2]Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology, p. 16.

"enthroned in the sun's boat, and during the twelve hours of night, illuminating the underworld." When Cleopatra sighs at the death of Antony saying the "lamp is out," she means to convey that the functions served by Antony as the representation of Amon Ra have come to an end. Dolabella refers to Antony as the "Most sovereign creature." Apart from being the most suitable epithet, the word "sovereign" is used in another important meaning. Larousse tells us that "Ra, which signifies 'creator,' is the name of the sun, sovereign lord of the sky."[1] Nothing but the sun in all its splendor, glory, and radiance can be sufficient to describe Antony's services rendered to Egypt, Hence, Dolabella most accurately refers to Antony as "sovereign." The sun radiates and illumines the length and the breadth of the world--so does Antony in his reputation and fame as one of the most valiant Romans ever born. Cleopatra observes, "His legs bestrid the ocean" (V.ii.82). We gather from Larousse that, "According to the priests of Heliopolis, the sun-god reposed, . . . in the bosom of Nun, the primordial ocean."[2] From this one can imagine the portrait of a colossal figure of Antony, as sun-god, reposing with his legs bestriding the ocean. The picture as such supports the vision of Antony's greatness. In her vision, Cleopatra

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[1] Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology, p. 12.

[2] Ibid., p. 13.

saw Antony as his "reared arm / Crested the world." This description certainly places Antony on the throne of Amon Ra. Our knowledge comes from Larousse:

> Amon normally appears with bronzed human features wearing as head-dress a kind of crown which supports two straight tall parallel plumes. Sometimes he is seated majestically on the throne.[1]

When annoyed, Antony's voice is like thunder born in the sky--the axis of the sun. Therefore, he is again associated with and indebted to the sun-god. Implicit also is the mystical quality of the distant and the far-away. Antony takes on the appearance of thunder when he is moved by displeasure or anger. Speaking of Antony's generosity and benevolence, Cleopatra chooses to portray him as Amon Ra in his representation as the "god of fertility," contributing to rejuvenation and regeneration. He has the gentle qualities of Osiris, too. As Osiris is chiefly an agricultural deity, he has power over fertility of crops. Antony's bounty is like this, as seen in Amon Ra and Osiris--"an autumn 'twas / That grew the more by reaping." Some commentators recognize the word "autumn" in this line as an error from the First Folio and they consider that the word should be "Antony" instead.[2] But this interpretation lessens the depth of the meaning. These images of the

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[1]Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology, p. 30.

[2]Theobald, Hudson, Herford, Gollancz, Thirlby and many other editors are of this opinion.

harvest, combined with the characteristics of Amon Ra and Osiris, make Antony the most suitable lover for Cleopatra--who herself is the supreme image of vitality. Generosity shown towards Enobarbus by sending back his treasures is another evidence of Antony's benevolent and bountiful nature. Amon Ra became pre-eminently the national god to the Egyptians. His immense fortune and omnipotence caused jealousy and reaction among the priests of Heliopolis. Under a new name Ra-Harakhte, Amon received new importance. His power gained such control that he was sometimes looked upon as Zeus--his new name Ra-Harakhte meant "the solar disc whence issue the light of day,"[1] and his power was so nourishing and vitalizing to the realm that the kings and rulers would pay tribute to him and submit to him voluntarily. Such is the image of Antony drawn by Cleopatra as the "sun-like" "sovereign creature" to whom bowed the "crowns and crownets." He conquered "realms and islands" as the sun-god who "spat forth flame" ("As Plates dropped from his pocket," V.ii.92) and annihilated all his enemies.[2] And those who came under his sovereignty he inspirited with healthy growth and vitality (another function of Amon Ra). All these images are built on the fusion of many and diversified characteristics and functions of Amon Ra and Osiris,

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[1] <u>Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology</u>, p. 43.

[2] <u>Ibid</u>.

as the Egyptians saw and believed in them. Failure to consider these images may lead to the apparent confusion with regard to Cleopatra's character, her surface "vanity," "coquettishness," "insincerity," and "inconstancies." Proper examination and understanding of these images bear important significance on Cleopatra's decision to end her life in the manner shown in the play.

The excursion into Egyptian mythology is not made to provide mere interesting sidelights but to point out to the reader that the Clown-Fool in this play is indeed an Executioner-Priest and we must clearly show the necessity of such a role. We believe that if we can demonstrate the mythological meanings of Antony and Cleopatra, what they mean to each other in Egyptian terms, then it would follow that to reunite their separated souls, the Clown-Fool does perform a truly noble deed indeed! Symbolically, Cleopatra consecrates her heart and soul to Antony, her sun-god, whose symbol is the asp; the asp takes Cleopatra's life and thereby the soul of Cleopatra is united with that of Antony in after-life. The following explanation will provide satisfactory substantiation from the text to validate our claim. Herein will also lie the validity of our initial hypothesis, that the Clown in this play is the Executioner and the Priest who helps to release Cleopatra's life and assists her soul (regal bride) to be united with her "bridegroom," Antony, the spirit and

personification of Amon Ra and Osiris.

Cleopatra is dressed as the Egyptian goddess Isis (III.vi.16-17), as Caesar describes her. The original meaning of Isis is "throne woman," meaning the Queen. In ancient Egypt the continuance of the monarchy was strictly matrilineal; the king became king only by right of marriage with the Queen, "who as a royal ruler was worshipped as a goddess."[1] Isis, the wife of Osiris, gained fame by reviving Osiris from death. Her main function is that of a "great enchantress, whose power transcended that of all other deities, even that of sun-god himself."[2] Her function as a mother was not specially important till the New Empire, for motherhood, was one of the functions of all goddesses. . . ."[3] Michael Lloyd in equating Cleopatra with Isis misinterprets the characteristics and functions of Isis and prematurely endows her with the maternal qualities. He fails to see Cleopatra, the Queen, as goddess Isis, as regarded by the Egyptians, and ignores the Isis-Osiris legend. Ignoring her enchantress nature, Lloyd minimizes the importance and effectiveness of the use of the Isis image in the play.[4] It is vitally important that we

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[1]Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, p. 18.

[2]Ibid, p. 19.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Michael Lloyd, "Cleopatra as Isis," Shakespeare Survey, XIII, 1962, 88-94.

do take into account the legend of Isis as Queen, as wife, as goddess with magical power to revive the dead. It is equally important to note that Anubis, the god of death, was subject to Isis. This prefigures the obedience of the rustic Clown as carrier of death--thereby becoming the Executioner. But this will be discussed in detail later in the chapter, in the light of Cleopatra's true identity and firm intention.

Cleopatra wears on her headdress a snake or three snake's heads; she is the fusion of Buto the snake-goddess, ancient protectress, "often represented in the form of a cobra, sometimes winged, sometimes crowned."[1] As the "serpent woman of the Old Nile" Cleopatra also evidences some qualities of Mertseger (Merseger), another snake-goddess, "although she was benevolent she also could punish."[2] As Renet, the snake-headed goddess, Cleopatra has the qualities of a "nursing goddess," "symbolising nourishment in general and sometimes appears as a harvest goddess."[3] She presides over a baby's suckling to nourish him. The "serpent woman of the old Nile," the Queen (Isis), fuses characteristics and functions of the different snake-goddesses of Egyptian mythology.

Cleopatra is a protectress; she is benevolent as

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[1]Lloyd, "Cleopatra as Isis," p. 28.

[2]Ibid., p. 41.

[3]Ibid.,

well as retributive. She nourishes not only her subjects as a ruler, but also inspirits her lover by youthful, vibrant, enchanting and passionate spirit (Cleopatra nourishes her lover in death, too, as will be shown later). The queen of Egypt, Cleopatra, is now satisfactorily shown as a mythological goddess figure. We are not alone in such appraisal of her. Though he does not provide us with an extensive analysis of Cleopatra's nature, yet S. L. Bethell at least notices the deity-like qualities in the Egyptian Queen. Based on the following references in the play, I.ii.34; I.ii.150 and I.v.28, Bethell's comments are:

> . . . she has the mystery of divinity, . . . Cleoptara is herself a goddess . . . she is an immortal lover of the sun-god. . . .[1]

Octavius Caesar may try to keep Antony and Cleopatra apart, he may wish to make a grand exhibition of his priceless captive, the Queen of Egypt (III.xii.26-32; V.i.61-66), but the Queen has a better resolution in mind. If Osiris and Amon Ra, as fused in Antony, are gone, then her life as Isis on earth is meaningless. Isis, the queen-goddess, can not and should not stay behind to be humiliated by Caesar. This is her intention as she explains to wounded Antony her reasons for not coming out of the tomb and caressing him. She begs:

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[1]S. L. Bethell, "Antony and Cleopatra," _Shakespeare: The Tragedies_, ed. by Alfred Harbage (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 163-165.

I dare not, dear,
Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not,
Lest I be taken. Not the imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall
Be brooched with me. If knife, drugs, serpents, have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.
(IV.xv.22-26)

As the Isis figure and as the representation of the fusion of the different snake-goddesses Cleopatra can not be expected to think of staying alive and enduring the humility. She is "safe" as long as she knows that there are various ways by which she can prevent her possible ignominous end. With this certainty she is "safe" also to anticipate union with Antony after death. She can not possibly jeopardise the situation by coming out of her monument to "kiss" Antony. She must wait in the monument to have Antony brought up to her so that she may attend to her immortal lovers, Osiris and Amon Ra, fused in Antony. It is not selfish fear that leads her to stay in the monument. It is a precautionary measure taken by the Queen, representation of the goddess Isis and other snake-goddesses. The reasons for such a step are explained in the preceding passage and hopefully demonstrated by our analysis of the text in the light of the information gathered about the Egyptian mythology.

Keeping in consonance with her intention as expressed in the passage just quoted, Cleopatra later resolves to

nurse the asp,[1] the symbol of the sun-god, Amon Ra,[2] to be vitalized in death by her devoutly sacrificed heart and soul. So she announces with determination, "Husband, I come!" Here Antony becomes the weapon (asp) brought in by the Executioner, the Clown. This is no spectacle as Van Doren and others see it. Rather, it is, as should be expected of her, the Queen Cleopatra (Isis) in her total regality proceeding in majestic grandeur on the spiritual wedding march--to be wedded to her immortal lover, Antony,[3] with whom union could not be attained in this world. The Roman code of honour and the Egyptian splendour of love could not be reconciled. The spiritual union is achieved only after death; death is voluntarily accepted as the only means to reach Antony in his spiritual state. The Clown-Fool obeys the Queen, brings in the means to death, the asp, and becomes the Executioner. Also, by consenting to obey her the Clown indirectly assists in the release of Cleopatra's soul to be united with Antony's. Therefore, the rustic Clown-Fool became the priest figure, too. This is a sacred rite and none but the Priest may perform it. Necessarily, it follows then that the Clown-Fool is the

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[1]Anubis, god of death, is subject to Isis.

[2]Whose embodiment is Antony.

[3]Human personification of the fusion of qualities of Amon Ra and Osiris, as shown previously.

personification of an Executioner-Priest in a Clown's attire. To be able to appreciate the immeasurable importance of the Clown-Fool, one should know the funerary customs and arrangements for "After-life." In ancient Egypt the conscious activities of man were referred to as the Ba (or soul) conceived as an invisible and immortal entity. The man's separable self, the Ka (his image or double) acted as a kind of protective genius during life that left him at death but afterward returned. So provisions for its sustenance had to be made in the tomb. James Henry Breasted explains:

> The early belief that the dead lived in or at the tomb, which must therefore be equipped to furnish his necessities in the hereafter, was from which the Egyptian has never escaped entirely. . . .[1]

Because the Egyptians believed that life continued after death (after the rites of restoration were performed), their custom was to bury bodies of kings with regal attires, treasures, retinues and various means of sustenance. The ruling image of the monarch or a dignitary was not to be altered at all. Permanence had to be assured by artificial mummification as well as by the use of effigies. The effigy was "brought to life" by the ceremonial of the "opening of the mouth," and made the object of regular mortuary rituals.

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[1]James Henry Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1959), p. 51.

"The mortuary priest whose duty it was to supply the needs of the deceased in the hereafter was for this reason called 'servant of the Ka'."[1] With the development of the worship of Osiris the rituals became assimilated in the myth of death; the dead man's body was reconstituted and his spiritual or the vital essences, the Ba (soul) and the Ka (image), restored to him. This rebirth to immortality or "After-life" or "Osirification"was at first the privilege of the king--himself divine. Later it came accessible to nobles and even to the commoners.[2]

These particulars about the Egyptian funerary customs and their concept of after-life should well signify to an unaware reader the importance Cleopatra places on death. Her longing for "imortality," instead of showing her vaingloriousness, reveals the exact desire of the Egyptian Queen, true to her custom and belief. It seems only natural that she should take such a decision. She knows that her vital essences will be restored to her after death and the same will happen to Antony. Entombed they will rest in permanent wedlock, without experiencing any spiritual loss or any physical decay. Death and after-life is then so much more meaningful to the Egyptian Queen than any of us as readers

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[1]Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, p. 53.

[2]Rudolf Steiner, Egyptian Myths and Mysteries (London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., 1933), p. 37.

or critics may realize unless we acknowledge these important facts concerning the rites and beliefs with regard to her death. With this information available to us, the character of the Clown-Fool becomes more significant than in the beginning. He is literally and definitely the means through whom the Queen attains death. He is then the Executioner who brings in death and the Priest who assists in the way toward their union in after-life.

Why is a Clown-Fool needed to perform the tasks just mentioned? Why cannot Shakespeare use Priest and Executioner in their true identity, if the custom is so commonly known in Cleopatra's world? What can be the obstacle? The answers to these questions lie within the dramatic construction of the play itself. Cleopatra is under surveillance of Caesar's guards. Previously they have prevented her from taking her own life and thereby from ending her misery then (V.ii.39). The watch is alert now to see that the attempt is not repeated. At this critical juncture, to introduce a Priest would surely arouse suspicion and could mar her noble purpose and deserved end. Who could be more suited here, and not be suspected at all, than a Clown-Fool, who, by virtue of his traditional position, can manipulate himself into any situation and get himself out of all sorts of complications quite easily? He can be either licentious or ambiguous in his speech. He can be shrewd or a simpleton. He may pose to be quite

knowledgeable or totally unscrupulous. His speeches may vary from rhetoric to colloquial slang. A Clown-Fool is the best choice that Shakespeare can make. Anyone could come in the guise of a Clown-Fool and function successfully. As it has been noted before,

> . . . freedom to indulge in parody and unexpected truthtelling, and the additional freedom to be wantonly licentious without incurring blame are the two privileges of the fool which made it worth the while of normal man occasionally to assume his role.[1]

We are also informed that

> During the years when the term "Fool" was a popular metaphor standing for "indiscreet," "sinful," "innocent," or "carefree," these genuine defectives, or other sane people masquerading as fools, were however really visible. . . .[2]

Also putting on a disguise to attain an objective is not a new device in Shakespeare's plays. Kent in King Lear, the Duke in Measure for Measure, Rosalind in As You Like It Viola in Twelfth Night, are only a few successfully wrought disguises. Therefore, Shakespeare used an accepted, conventional device to function in more unconventional situation. To the Renaissance audience, the manner of Cleopatra's death is not commonplace. Hence the appearance of a conventional character in an unconventional scene is significantly striking.

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[1]Swain, Fools and Folly, p. 63.

[2]Ibid., p. 53.

The Guard announces to Cleopatra,

> Here is a rural fellow
> That will not be denied your Highness' presence.
> He brings you figs.
> (V.ii.233-235)

Cleopatra commands the Guard to let him come in, and she then observes:

> What poor an instrument
> May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.
> My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
> Of woman in me. Now from head to foot
> I am marble-constant, now the fleeting moon
> No planet is of mine.
> (V.ii.236-241)

In this monologue Cleopatra fully reveals her noble intention and expresses her determination to carry out her decision. The "rural fellow" poorly attired and unassumingly disposed, impresses the Queen immensely. The idea of so "poor an instrument" bringing her "liberty" captivates her thoughts. Being an Egyptian woman she is particularly aware what this "liberty" will mean to her in terms of her own belief and customs. This will not only bring her "liberty" from physical captivity and ignominy, but also "liberty" from spiritual agony, torment, and suffering ensuing from the separation from her husband, personified by Antony. Cleopatra is the representation of Isis and other snake-goddesses. As Isis her husband and immortal lover are Amon Ra and Osiris. In Antony we have seen the spirits of Amon Ra and Osiris fused. Naturally, Antony as the human representation of Amon Ra and Osiris is the "Husband" of Cleopatra-Isis. Antony chose to be "A bride-

groom in my [his] death, and run into 't / As to a lover's bed. . . ." (IV.xiv.99-101). If Antony decides to procure love and solace in the cool and peaceful abode of death, why should Cleopatra, mythologically his wife, stay behind to suffer an ignominious end? She is the woman of the East --who traditionally looks at life without her lover as a mere meaningless living. In ancient times the woman of the East has chosen to accompany her husband in death. All along Markels has noticed a "recklessness" in Cleopatra's actions which has finally become "self-destructive."[1] He fails to see in the final scene of the play Cleopatra's efforts devoted towards her reunion with Antony in after-life. She destroys her physical being not because she is "reckless" but because that is her only means to be united with Antony spiritually. Cleopatra remains true to the authentic image of the Eastern woman, when she chooses to embrace death:

> What say I? Where am I? O Cleopatra,
> Poore Cleopatra, grief thy reason reaves.
> No, no most happie in this hapless case,
> To die with them, and dieing embrace;
> My bodie joynde with thine, my mouth with thine,
> My mouth, whose moisture burning sighes have dried
> To be in one selfe tombe, and one self chest,
> And wrapt with thee in one self sheet to rest.
> (The Tragedie of Antonie II.1961-1968)[2]

The Executioner and Priest in the guise of a Clown-Fool is

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[1]Markels, The Pillar of the World, p. 48.

[2]Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Souces, p. 405.

the chief instrument to the fulfillment of her declared noble ending. Hence the Clown's importance in this play is immeasurable.

The Clown enters with a basket of figs within which the asp is hidden. He seems unassuming, pretending not to be aware of the grave purpose the Queen has in mind with regard to the asp. When Cleopatra asks him about the asp the Clown answers in a tone as if to say that he would not be the one held responsible for the Queen's death:

> . . . I would not be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal. Those that do die of it do seldom or never recover.
> (V.ii.245-248)

The literal meaning of this speech has been noted above. But examined carefully, these lines show qualities of such speech usually adopted by Clown-Fool types. The Clown is using simple evasion of the pertinent matter in discussion. While pretending not to be a part of this plan, he actually directs the speech towards Cleopatra's original question, and she is able to grasp the message she is anxiously waiting for. Although no one would touch the asp under normal circumstances, the Priest-Executioner being under command of Cleopatra (Isis) is bound to carry out her wish and assure her the satisfaction. We have noted earlier that even death, Anubis, and the sun-god, symbolized in the asp, are subordinate to Isis. Therefore, the Clown as carrier of death is bound by Cleopatra-Isis. Hence the part of the speech, "I would not be the party," is actually

to convey to Cleopatra that the action of the asp is guaranteed. Its mortal sting will mean certain death, and that is the answer to Cleopatra's main query. Here again there may be an objection pointing to the fact that the Guardsman has left the room within which Cleopatra's movements are restricted and here she is alone having the encounter with the Clown-Fool. Then why does he not present his message explicitly and why does not the Queen take him into her confidence? The probable answer to this objection may lie in the following. First, the use of the Clown-Fool in this tragic situation intensifies the depth of suffering in Cleopatra separated from Antony. The comic nature on the surface only deepens the graveness of the matter in the Queen's thought. Second, as we have noted earlier, the Clown-Fool by dint of his traditional privileges may serve the playwright's purpose most effectively. Furthermore, although the stage direction is not clear at this point, we assume that the Guardsman may remain within a close distance to be able to overhear the conversation. Considering all these, we do contend that by selecting the Clown-Fool to serve as the Executioner-Priest Shakespeare has increased the effectiveness of the whole scene. Our observation will be clarified by the following analysis of the prose style used traditionally in the speech of a Clown-Fool type.

In thedevelopment of the Clown-Fool character, the speeches used are seen to be mixtures of inversions, repe-

titions, evasions, slip of tongue, pretense of misunderstanding, twisting of facts, and light-hearted remarks on women without any deep philosophical observation. His speech is a curious mixture of grand eloquence and proverbial slang, insensible ambiguities. He is known to use all or few of these devices in his speech without always knowing their significance.[1] The author prepares the audience to see and apprehend what he intends to achieve by the use of the Clown-Fool. The apparently evasive first speech of the Clown in Antony and Cleopatra thus conveys the exact information Cleopatra seeks to know: "Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there / That kills and pains not?" (V.ii.243-244). The Clown's answer assures her. The "pretty" worm of the Nile does suck blood and insert venom in to the bloodstream. It kills and does not let the victim suffer. Death brought on by the asp does most certainly end the suffering ("his biting is immortal"--meaning mortal).[2] This assurance of the effectiveness of the asp builds up the Queen's hope that her soul will be released from spiritual agony and will be immortalized to be united with that

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[1]See Chapter I, Section A, for detailed discussion of traditional qualities in Clown-Fool types.

[2]In the courts of the East, people had at all times been familiar with poisons and their effects. Attalus III of Pergamon had a special garden of poisonous plants, whose effects he tested on criminals convicted of capital crimes. Hans Volkmann, Cleopatra, p. 193.

of Antony in after-life. The serpent-woman of the Nile, the Queen of the goddesses and the immortal wife of Osiris and Amon Ra, seeks reunion with her beloved through the manner intended, and the Clown is her chief artisan. He substantiates the effectiveness of the mortal bite of the asp by referring to an example of a "very honest woman" who died by the same process. The effect of the worm's sting in this case has proven to be "most fallible," meaning infallible. The playwright is using the conventional devices to make the Clown's speech intensify the seriousness of the scene, by making him use words the meaning of which he is unaware. Using the traditional repetition device the Executioner-Priest lets Cleopatra know that she has no reason to doubt. She will most assuredly be saved from any possible humility planned by Caesar, and her soul will be reunited with that of Antony. Then he wishes her "all the joy of the worm" (V.ii.261). Van Doren and commentators in general consider it as lightheartedness which is the essence of the Queen's vainglorious show in the whole scene. But this part of the Clown's speech is probably constructed with the few most significant words spoken by a Clown-Fool. Lear's Fool speaks critically with the privilege of a friend, Thersites is given to "rail" biting satire in Troilus and Cressida, Feste in Twelfth Night is "not altogether a fool." But none sets a precedence for the position the Clown takes in Antony and Cleopatra. None of

them perform such a "noble deed." Here he wishes the Queen of Egypt eternal joy of the after-life effected by the asp's mortal bite. Who else but the Executioner or Priest is in a position to wish such benediction? According to Egyptian faith, the human soul captivated in bodily anguish finds joy in the release from it in the positive hope that the vital essences of the body will be restored to the dead and hence a permanent blessedness will be bestowed in after-life, in the tomb. And this is the message and wish the Clown-Fool conveys to Cleopatra in his "foolish" manner. The initial intention of the Queen gains more sacred meaning by these few words of the Clown-Fool: "I wish you all joy of the worm" to mean "I wish you the blessedness of immortality for your soul, now to be liberated from the physical imprisonment to protect you from any possible injury and to reunite you with your immortal love." This is but a logical derivation from the conditions in the play and the Egyptian customs and conventions absorbed within the characters. Disregarding the basic premises about the Queen and her inherent belief would lead to the disregard for the closest possible recreation of meaning which the playwright has woven in the structure of the play. Without the proper acknowledgment of these premises and background information the famous lines of the Queen of Egypt resolving to die seem "vain" and "lighthearted." Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, commands:

> Give me my robe, put on my crown. I have
> Immortal longings in me. Now no more
> The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.
> Yare, yare, good Iras, quick. Methinks I hear
> Antony call. I see him rouse himself
> To praise my noble act, I hear him mock
> The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
> To excuse their afterwrath. Husband, I come.
> Now to that name my courage prove my title!
> I am fire and air. My other elements
> I give to baser life. . . .
> (V.ii.283-293)

Cleopatra is exhilarated by the thought of joyous union with Antony. The assurance of this "joy" is given by the Executioner-Priest figure as the Clown-Fool. Before he left Cleopatra, he repeated, "I wish you joy o' the worm." His assurance leads the Queen to decide definitely and with proper assurance of successful union, and for the first time she calls, "Husband, I come." We agree that the Clown's speeches are mingled with foolish observations, reiterations, nonsensical and proverbial comments, but they are meant to divert the natural suspicion, and to serve a grave purpose which they successfully accomplish. Cleopatra takes her cue from the apparently "foolish" speech of the Clown: "Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people, for indeed there is no goodness in the worm" (V.ii.266-268). The literal meaning of the lines is obvious, but beneath the surface is the latent meaning pertaining to the mortal effectiveness of the asp. Receiving the information she sought to know, Cleopatra relieves the Executioner-Priest, the Clown-Fool, from his duty and obligation to her. Now she knows her

destination and the means. The manner in which she brings an end to her life is most befitting to the Queen of Egypt. And the contribution of the Clown-Fool is equally significant.

Love that begins passionately and sensuously passes through many tragic moments of natural misunderstanding, jealousy, fear, insecurity. It grows from the mere experience on the physical level, develops beyond the sole enchantment of the fleshly nature, and reaches the spiritual state to be canonized as a "pair of peerless lovers." Cleopatra and Antony were "peerless" from the beginning, as Antony described themselves:

> Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
> Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space.
> Kingdoms are clay. Our dungy earth alike
> Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
> Is to do thus, when such a mutual pair
> [Embracing]
> And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
> On pain of punishment, the world to weet
> We stand up peerless.
> (I.i.33-40)

The souls of these two lovers, free from worldly bondage, meet with each other on a higher plane. And without the most significant part played by the Clown-Fool, Cleopatra's "immortal longings" would remain in the state of "wish" only. Without the assistance of the "rural fellow" Cleopatra-Isis would have been forced to remain separated from her lover, immortal Amon Ra and Osiris, fused in Antony. To remain on the "dungy earth" when Antony is on the heavenly plane, that would be tragic for Cleopatra-

Isis indeed. The Clown-Fool has brought her the most effective means to go to "sleep." In the final moments Cleopatra commands Charmian to be quiet:

> Cleo. Peace, peace!
> Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
> That sucks the nurse asleep?
> (V.ii.311-313)

It is quite possible for a scholar of the Judeo-Christian orientation to overlook the fine nuances of Egyptian culture and belief which are embedded in these lines. "Death" is "sleep" for Cleopatra; and in the belief of this Eastern queen death means eternal joy of after-life (III.v.13). These basic facts of Egyptian belief as used by Shakespeare, lead the reader to comprehend the indispensable nature of the role played by the Clown-Fool in this play. Long overlooked by readers and scholars alike, the Clown-Fool proves himself to be worthy of serious consideration in relation to the tragic experience of Cleopatra, the "Eastern Star."

CHAPTER V

KĀLIDĀSA AND SHAKESPEARE

"I NAME THEE, O ŚAKUNTALĀ, AND ALL AT ONCE IS SAID."

Bhavabhuti, a renowned dramatist after Kālidāsa, writes in his work Uttararāmacharita, "Of all the forms of poetry, drama is the most charming, among dramas the Śakuntalā."[1] In this statement all is said about Śakuntalā. But, few centuries later, Sir Monier Williams explicates fully why Kālidāsa's work has perpetuated itself through time. Williams says:

> No composition of Kālidāsa displays more the richness of his poetical genius, the exuberance of his imagination, the warmth and the play of his fancy, his profound knowledge of the human heart, his delicate appreciation of its most refined and tender emotions, his familiarity with the workings and counter-workings of its conflicting feelings --in short, more entitles him to rank as the Shakespeare of India.[2]

We are in no position to examine and determine the validity of the last three words of praise spoken by Williams, but at the same time we may note that by merit of its own excellence in portraying human problems in universal terms,

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[1] S. K. De, Studies in the History of Sanskrit Poetics (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923), p. 19.

[2] G. C. Jhala, Kālidāsa: A Study (Bombay: Padma Publications, 1943), p. 138.

Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā has gained universal recognition and appreciation. Like some of the works of Shakespeare, Śakuntalā has stood the test of time.

In the history of Sanskrit literature, Kālidāsa's importance lies in the fact that he has elevated Sanskrit poetry to the highest level of elegance and refinement. He faithfully follows the strict rules of dramaturgy, but the more important element in his drama is not his conformity to the rules of aesthetics, but his power of poetry, his keen insight and sharp delineation of character. The chastity and restraint of this poet's imagination, the precision and energy of his phrasing and the discipline of his artistic vigilance save him from mere sensuous indulgence and they set him apart from his predecessors who tried their art in drama. "He belongs to a tradition which insists upon literature being a learned pursuit, but he is one of the great limpid writers who can be approached with the minimum of critical apparatus and commentorial lucubrations."[1]

Kālidāsa always proclaimed that Kāma (passion) should never take predominance over Dharma (moral law of life). He refused to acknowledge passion as the supreme glory of life; he advocated virtuous end and moral ennobling as the final goal of love. The main theme in

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[1]Dasgupta, A History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 118.

Śakuntalā, rather the main Rasa (sentiment) in it is Śringāra (love). In giving a captivating dramatic expression of this sentiment Kālidāsa makes a remarkable use of the Clown-Fool character, Mādhavya. The principal characters in love are shown in right relation to the family; the family is shown in right relation to the state; and the social life is shown in right relation to the moral life. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri synthesizes the whole observation. He states that the "supremacy of the ethical life is asserted and vindicated throughout the play."[1] And Mādhavya,[2] the Vidushaka's role is inseparably interwoven with this profound plot. Vidushaka, the Clown-Fool character, plays an indispensable role for the demonstration of the main sentiment, its progression, and desirable culmination of it. The role of the Vidushaka varies from poet to poet. But in most cases his significance has barely gone much beyond that of a comic companion of the noble character, providing comic moments in the play by his idiotic remarks or coarse gestures; and in the majority of the early plays he has been used only for his deformity. His dwarf stature, bald head, tuft of hair, and protruding

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[1]K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Kālidāsa: His Period, Personality and Poetry (Srirangam: Vani Vilas Press, 1933), I, 284.

[2]In this study we will refer to him as Vidushaka only.

teeth, altogether an ugly appearance, would evoke laughter spontaneously in the audience. But like Shakespeare, who elevated and liberated these stock types from stereotyped roles, Kālidāsa altered the rule and used these apparently insignificant characters for significant dramatic purposes. Jhālā points out clearly what we are about to demonstrate. He says that

> The Vidushaka appears in this drama in sharper outline than in other plays of Kālidāsa. He is the confidant of the King and on many occasions reveals his wisdom on matters of ethics.[1]

Though, because of obvious and inevitable differences we may not compare the form and substance of the plays of Shakespeare and Kālidāsa, we hope that the comparison and contrast between the use of Clown-Fools by these two representative writers of two different cultures may lead us to acknowledge the basic ethical bonds which bind all mankind.

The plot of *Śakuntalā* may not be commonly known to Western audiences. The insertion of the main plot is necessary so that the meaningful use of the Clown-Fool, Vidushaka, in this play may be more appreciated. Kālidāsa takes for his main theme a story from one of the two national epics of India, the *Mahābhārata*. While on a hunting expedition, King Dushyanta happens to see Śakuntalā, and struck by her unsurpassed beauty, he decides to put

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[1]Jhālā, *Kālidāsa*, p. 167.

aside his regal duties for the time being. Opportunities arise for the King to remain in the forest a little longer than he had planned earlier. During his stay he becomes closely acquainted with Śakuntalā. He rationalizes his desire to attain Śakuntalā's love with the fact that providence has not blessed him with a son who can continue his race. And at this time he explains his impetuosity as the earnest craving for progeny and nothing else. Being a royal guest in the hermitage, he becomes the object of the best of hospitality and care. Though he tries to hide his true identity from the simple and plain ascetics, his secret is uncovered and the companions of Śakuntalā do not find any objection to the union of Dushyanta, the King of unparalleled reputation, with Śakuntalā. Śakuntalā has fallen in love with the King, too. Though they are in love and long for each other, both show some concern for the proper way of consummating their love. The lovers unite in love-marriage (*Gandharva-Vivāha*)[1] after ascertaining their mutual love and exhibiting gradual development of love culminating in marriage. Dushyanta then leaves for his capital.

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[1]One of the eight forms of marriage. It is a marriage which is entirely the outcome of love or mutual inclination of a youth and maiden concluded without any ceremony and even without the consent of the relatives. Such a marriage was valid in the case of Kings, warriors, and nobles, provided it was done in good faith, i.e., with a due sense of the responsibilities attaching to a formal marriage. This information derived from *Śakuntalā*, M. R. Kale, ed., (Bombay: Booksellers' Publishing House, 1961), p. 85.

He gives Śakuntalā a ring with his name engraved on it and assures her that by the time she will have read all the letters in the name an escort will come to take her to Dushyanta's court. Separated from her husband and alone in the hermitage, Śakuntalā becomes totally absorbed in the thought of the King and she fails to respond and extend hospitality to the call of a choleric sage Durvāsa, a guest in the hermitage. The quick-tempered sage curses her for being so absent-minded and for neglecting her duties. His harsh words follow in this manner, "He of whom thou are thinking, neglecting to receive me properly as a guest--he will not remember thee even when reminded by thee!" Overhearing the curse, one of Śakuntalā's companions pleads with the sage and obtains some allowance for Śakuntalā. The sage cannot alter the curse, but he says that it would end at the sight of some token of recognition. Śakuntalā remains totally unaware of this unfortunate happening. Her foster father returns home from his pilgrimage and he is happy to hear about Śakuntalā's marriage to such an eminent person as Dushyanta. Becoming aware of Śakuntalā's pregnant condition, he makes arrangements for her departure for the King's capital. In the meantime, the curse has started to operate on the King. But totally unsuspicious of this, Sakuntala arrives at Dushyanta's Court. The King, being under the spell of Durvāsa, fails to recognize Śakuntalā. When all attempts by her companions fail to assist in any

manner, the lady from the hermitage, Śakuntalā, looks for the ring the King had placed on her finger. But to her dismay, Śakuntalā finds that the ring has somehow been misplaced. The only person, Vidushaka, who can possibly identify her, is absent, performing some task given to him long before Śakuntalā has arrived at the court. As Śakuntalā bemoans her fate, a celestial lady descends from heaven and carries her away.[1] The ring is found eventually by a fisherman and the memory of the King is revived. Realizing the graveness of the injustice done to Śakuntalā, the King is remorseful. Though he did not have any control over the incidents, the King feels deeply responsible. Even Vidushaka, the Clown-Fool, can not entertain him. In the meantime, annoyed by the constant disturbance caused by the demons, the King of the sky, Indra,[2] sends for Dushyanta to come and relieve them of the undesirable invasions. The King, after fulfilling his mission, is on his way towards his capital when by divine assistance he is brought

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[1] Śakuntalā's mother was a heavenly person but her father was a mortal. In the course of developing his art, Kālidāsa has endeavoured to eliminate gradually the mythological or accidental divinity of birth from his characters. And in Śakuntalā he attempts successfully to show the true spiritual nature innate in man which is realized after a long period of penance observed by both Dushyanta and Śakuntalā. Kālidāsa's belief is revealed in this play that the human being has within him a spiritual strain which needs to be developed in the interests both of the individual and of the society.

[2] Comparable to Zeus.

together with his wife, Śakuntalā, and happily surprised by seeing his son. King Dushyanta is relieved to know that his repudiation of Śakuntalā was not his fault after all. However, both come to the understanding of the requirement of the curse. Though both of them progress restrainedly in the matter of love, both commit grave mistakes. Engrossed in the thought of her husband, Śakuntalā failed to notice the reverend guest at her door, and she did not feel the necessity of waiting for her foster father to return from the pilgrimage and ask his blessings for her wedding. Love made her blind to her duties and obligations toward the world around her. Dushyanta, too anxious to marry Śakuntalā, neglected to perform what he came for originally--to enquire about the well-being of Kanva, Śakuntalā's foster father. It was his ethical duty to wait for Kanva and ask for his blessings. He should have consulted the chief matron of the hermitage, in the absence of Kanva. In his impetuosity and infatuation he forgot all ethical obligations and everyone except Śakuntalā. Therefore, though they were married, the love had to be tested through the trials of purification. And a curse was exactly what could provide for a meaningful separation accepted by the audience, after which the union would prove permanent and most satisfactory. Goethe describes the meaning of this separation beautifully:

> In her earlier forest home, Śakuntalā had her awakenment of life in the restlessness of youth.

> In the later hermitage, she attained the fulfilment of her life.[1]

Now, what does Vidushaka, the Clown-Fool, contribute to this play? He is an important character by whose direct and indirect assistance the couple in this play come to the realization of the meaning of true and pure love. In the next few pages, we will analyze the role of Vidushaka in comparison with some of the Clown-Fools seen in the plays of Shakespeare.

Dushyanta's Vidushaka is more than just a privileged jester. Our encounter with him takes place quite early in the play. He evidences many of the major characteristics of the Clown-Fool type as demonstrated previously in this study in the characters of Shakespeare's plays. He dislikes physical discomfort and seeks leisure:

> Ah, my fate! I am wearied by the companionship of the sport-loving king! From one forest to another we roam, even at mid-day, through long forest-tracts where there is very little shade on account of summer, . . .
> (Act II)

Vidushaka is particular about his food and drink and displeased about the irregularities he has to put up with. He explains:

> We drink the water of mountain-streams which is tepid and bitter on account of the leaves of trees petrifying in it. At irregular hours we eat our meals which are mostly contained of flesh half-roasted on a spit.
> (Act II)

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[1]Cited in K. S. Sastri, Kālidāsa: His Period, p.283.

Again he complains of the lack of comfort:

> I do not get sufficient rest even at night, my joints being bruised by following the chase on horseback. Then very early in the morning I am awakened by the bastards of huntsmen, with their wild echo, while surrounding the forest.
> (Act II)

We may notice that the language used by Vidushaka is not refined. One explanation for this is that in Sanskrit drama, women and minor characters speak Prakrit, a degenerated form of Sanskrit. Also, the use of vulgarity and slang by Vidushaka is his prerogative. He may be abusive and may use obscene words without incurring any blame.[1]

Vidushaka also displays pretentiousness and mock-learning. He intends to say that as if all these discomforts and disadvantages were not enough, to add to them the King has now fallen in love with Śakuntalā. And the King rationalizes his passionate love for Śakuntalā by explaining it as his duty to bring progeny to this world. It is universally recognized as important to perpetuate life. K. S. Sastri explains this ethical obligation to us from an Indian point of view:

> Having received the gift of life and culture from our forefathers, we can discharge our debt to them only by handing on the heritage,--undiminished and if possible augmented--to those who are to be,our successors and theirs as well. . . . In Sakuntalā, the King mourns that his ancestors would be grief-stricken

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[1]For detailed analysis of the use of Vidushaka's language, see Chapter I, Section B, of this study.

at the failure of this line.[1]

Dushyanta makes Vidushaka convinced that his decision to stay in the forest is effected by his desire to perpetuate his ancestry. The King's decision means more delay in going back to the comforts of the palace, where Vidushaka can indulge in relaxation. Vidushaka expresses this distress with the metaphors of medicine and physical disorder:

> With so much, misfortune will not leave me even now; but then a pimple has grown upon the ulcer. Yesterday, . . . ill-luck presented Śakuntalā . . .
> (Act II)

These qualities, such as dislike of physical discomfort, fondness of leisure, food, and drink are seen in the character of Falstaff, whom we have seen in detail in Chapter II. Similar characteristics manifest in Vidushaka will be compared to those of Falstaff. Falstaff exhibits intense dislike of physical labour in the Gadshill scene. He is annoyed with Poins because that "rascal" has removed Falstaff's "horse" knowing that if Falstaff travels "but four foot by the squier further afoot," he will "break" his "wind" (I Henry IV, II.ii.11-13). Again Falstaff himself tells us why he loathes walking:

> . . . Eight yards of uneven ground is threescore and ten miles afoot with me, and the stony-hearted villains know it well enough. . . .
> (I Henry IV, II.ii.26-29)

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[1]K. S. Sastri, Kālidāsa: His Period, p. 187.

A same kind of longing as seen in Vidushaka for good food and drink may be observed profusely in the role of Falstaff. Prince Hal refers to them many times as he does in the beginning of the play:

> Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack and unbuttoning thee after supper . . . What a devil hast thou to do with the time of day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, . . . I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of day.
>
> (I Henry IV, I.ii.2-13)

Falstaff's love for food and drink is expressed in the Eastcheap scenes, and the bill of different items found in his pocket is another example of Falstaff's weakness for food and drink (I Henry IV, II.iv.586-590). Falstaff's language is bawdy and vulgar during most of the play. His pretentious use of knowledge pertaining to health and medicine may be seen in his conversation with the Lord Chief Justice about the illness of Henry IV (II Henry IV, I.ii. 108-134) and in his observation about the lean stature of Prince Hal (II Henry IV, IV.iv.126-132).

Vidushaka pretends to be fatally wounded in order to be excused from any further physical exhaustion:

> . . . Well, I shall stand here, languid as it were, on account of the breakdown of my limbs. Perchance in this way at least, I may get some rest.
>
> (Act II)

In the battle of Shrewsbury, Falstaff pretends to be "dead" in order to save himself from possible real death (I Henry IV, V.iv.76-131). The secrets of both Vidushaka and

Falstaff are discovered. Vidushaka's pretence results in nothing. The King is too absorbed in his thoughts about Śakuntalā to give any attention to Vidushaka's real or feigned infirmity. And Falstaff receives rebuke from Prince Hal.

King Dushyanta may not pay any attention to Vidushaka's discomfort, but Vidushaka makes the King feel quite ill-at-ease. He abuses the King for staying away from the capital for so long. According to Indian philosophy

> Only when individual life is noble and when economic interrelatedness is harmonious, can there be happy social life. Given an individual life dominated by reckless desires and an economic life based on superficial success and hence constant struggle for it, the construction of a blissful political social life is an absolute impossibility.[1]

Individual consciousness of duty and obligation has to contribute immensely to the family, thereby to social harmony and peace. And the King, being the symbolic head of the family-at-large, his sense of obligation and duty must be very deep. The Indian Clown-Fool is well-versed in the laws of polity. His rebuke of the King indicates that he is well aware of what the King himself is about to ignore:

> . . . that the King must follow the law himself and make his subjects follow it. His subjects like the wheels of a chariot moving in the direction of the charioteer's will should not

[1]Kautilya, Arthasāstra, ed. by T. Ganapati Sastri (Trivendrum: Sanskrit Series, 1909), p. xxix. The verses of Kautilya are translated by the present writer.

> swerve an inch from the well-beaten track of life laid out by Manu, the ancient Economist.[1]

Of course, one may argue that the Vidushaka's rebuke is merely his effort to manipulate a quick return to the comforts of the royal place. But we believe that he is sincerely concerned about the welfare of the kingdom, and he expresses it with the mode of Clown-Fool's speech:

> That you should be thus leading the life of a forester in this region haunted by the wild beasts, having given up the affairs of the state! Fie, fie . . . .
> (Act II)

The end of this rebuke is accented with a longing for rest:

> . . . so favor me and relieve me that I may take rest just for a day.
> (Act II)

Vidushaka reminds the King of his responsibilities and obligations to the state. Bhat in his study of the Vidushaka describes other Clown-Fools of Kālidāsa as critics but he does not include the Vidushaka in _Śakuntalā_ in this category. It is surprising that Bhat should overlook this particular scene and many more in Act VI where the Vidushaka criticizes the King vehemently for his unregal manner and behaviour. Bhat discounts the Vidushaka in this play as merely having provided "comic relief" to maintain the "necessary emotional equilibrium."[2] But in our study we

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[1]Sastri, _Kālidāsa: His Period_, p. 263.

[2]Bhat, _The Vidushaka_, p. 141.

will demonstrate that Vidushaka in <u>Śakuntalā</u> serves as a more important functional and significant character than Bhat gives him credit for. Lear's Fool rebukes the King on many occasions for giving away the control of the kingdom to his daughters. Both of these Clown-Fools use the freedom of speech and insight gained into the affairs of their Kings by dint of their long association.

King Dushyanta seeks his jester's assistance:

> After you have enjoyed your repose, you should help me in an affair involving no trouble to you.
> (Act II)

The Clown-Fool Vidushaka misinterprets the words and shows his love for food:

> What, in eating sweetmeats? Then I gladly welcome the invitation.
> (Act II)

Viola in <u>Twelfth Night</u> asks Feste: "Dost thou live by thy tabor?" (III.i.1-2). Feste answers in the negative. He points out that he lives by the church (III.i.3). Both Vidushaka and Feste misinterpret and corrupt words. This similarity is due to the fact that both are creations of similar social and literary concepts of a jester.

As the commander of the army enters and encourages the King to get on with more hunting expeditions, Vidushaka rails at him:

> Away, you inciter of exertion. His Majesty has returned to his former nature meaning he has remembered his royal duties . As for you, you will fall into the jaws of some old bear longing to have a bite of a general's nose, while roving from forest to forest.
> (Act II)

Vidushaka rails, but his is in no way a comparison to the railing and scurrilous language of Thersites in Shakespeare's _Troilus and Cressida_. An example will show the difference: Patroclus is the target of Thersites' venom:

> No! Why art thou then exasperate, thou idle immaterial skein of sleave silk, thou green sarcenet flap for a sore eye, thou tassel of a prodigal's purse thou? Ah, how the poor world is pestered with such water flies, diminutives of nature!
>
> (_Troilus and Cressida_ V.i.34-39)

Vidushaka exercises his power to reproach the King and remind him of proper ethical conduct expected from a maiden brought up in a hermitage. In the idyllic and serene surrounding of the unspoilt and innocent pastoral asmosphere, King Dushyanta is captured by the ravishing beauty of Śakuntalā, but he is disappointed by the fact that she is too bashful. His Clown-Fool is aware of the nature of a maiden brought up in such quarters. Her ascetic training and overpowering sense of maidenly propriety are combined to make her so modest. But Dushyanta does not understand it. So Vidushaka explains to him:

> Surely she could not come and sit on your lap at first sight!
>
> (Act II)

As the Clown-Fool of _Śakuntalā_ realizes the nature of the King's deeply passionate love for Śakuntalā, he comments in a tone of judgment:

> Oh! I see that you have transformed this grove of penance into a pleasure-orchard!
>
> (Act II)

This signifies his disapproval of the King's action. Feste disapproves of Olivia's affected show of mourning. In his "foolish" manner he lets his thought be expressed. He asks Olivia:

> Clown. Good Madonna, why mournest thou?
> Oliv. Good fool, for my brother's death.
> Clown. I think his soul is in Hell, madonna.
> Oliv. I know his soul is in Heaven, fool.
> Clown. The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in Heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.
> (*Twelfth Night* I.v.72-78)

Vidushaka can not change the interest and determination of the King to attain Śakuntalā's love. But he tries in his own manner to change the King's course of action and somehow divert him from the hermitage. So he continues to scold the King, hoping that his sarcastic comments will act as antidotes for Dushyanta's impetuous attraction for Śakuntalā. This time he directs his approach towards the well-known fact of the King's prerogatives of levying taxes or demanding revenues for no valid reasons. As the King is seeking a pretext under which he may visit the hermitage and hence visit Sakuntala, the Clown-Fool grins:

> How else? You are a king. Go and ask for a sixth part of the wild rice.
> (Act II)[1]

Receiving the message, Dushyanta responds humorously. He takes in stride the comment made on the misuse of power by

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[1]Sixth part of the annual yield of crop was an accepted form of tribute.

royal personages. In return he gives the Clown-Fool a piece of wisdom:

> O fool, quite a different kind of tribute do these ascetics pay, which is valued beyond heaps of priceless jewels.
> The yield that accrues to kings from the four classes of people is perishable; whereas the ascetics offer us one-sixth of the merit from their penance which is imperishable.
> (Act II)

Cowardice and love for life are two common characteristics of Clown-Fools. Vidushaka demonstrates both of these qualities at the same time. The chief hermit and perceptor being away, evil in the shape of demons attempts to overthrow the quiet purity and sanctity of the hermitage where Śakuntalā resides. So the ascetics seek their protection of Dushyanta. He agrees to extend all his help to them. Having agreed to this request, outwardly the King fulfils one of his obligations, namely to protect his subjects. In truth, he avails himself of the opportunity to remain near Śakuntalā. He asks Vidushaka if he wishes to see Śakuntalā. The fool declines:

> At first I had uncontrollable, overflowing desire to see her. But not even a drop is left now, it is disappeared at the mention of the demons.
> (Act II)

Vidushaka's speech evidences love for long and impressive words. Although it seems that his fear has the control over his "uncontrollable" and "overflowing" desire to use rhetoric. The King assures the fool that he has nothing to fear because the King himself will lead Vidushaka to the

orchard. Vidushaka replies in relief: "Then I am saved from the demons!" (Act II). His remark does not merely refer to the King's generous offer to protect him. It also points to his observation that the demons will not devour an unworthy person such as the fool when they have the choice of a "royal dish." In Vidushaka's opinion, King Dushyanta is a fool to forsake his real duties and to chase blindly after the fulfillment of his passionate desire. So many times in the play Vidushaka vocalizes Kālidāsa's philosophy of true love. The King has reversed the order of the priorities given to different stages of life. Instead of taking the path of temperance, he has let passion rule his vision and judgment. Instead of Dharma (moral way) he has adopted the Kāma (passionate way). Dushyanta's rational faculties are overcome by excess of desire for Śakuntalā. He is led by subjective emotion rather than on objective vision. His decision to prevail upon the ascetics in order to procure the love of Śakuntalā is foolish in the eyes of Vidushaka. Therefore, we find him criticizing the King, without restraint, in the manner similar to Lear's Fool.[1]

News arrives from the Capital that King Dushyanta is needed by his mother for the fulfilment of some religious custom that she observes. Now the King is caught

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[1]See Chapter III in this study.

between two duties. As a ruler of the land he is the protector. Therefore, he has certain obligations to the ascetics, who are in desperate need of his protection in order to be able to carry on with their peaceful penances for the benefit of humanity. On the other hand is the request of a reverend parent. An Indian mind believes that "mother and the native land are far superior to heaven." Therefore the King can not decline his mother's request. How does he solve this problem? The Fool answers with an improper application of a proverbial piece of sound wisdom. He communicates to the King: "Remain in the mid-way like _Trisanku_" (Act II). Though the feeling of hanging in the "mid-way" may be applicable to the King's condition, the myth itself is far from similar to the experience of the King. Here is the reference to a legend of a mortal who presumptuously aspired to be godlike. He became an outcast on the earth and could not enter through the gates of heaven. Hence he remained the rest of his mortal life hanging in between the heaven and the earth. The word _Trisanku_ refers to this unfortunate man's lopsided condition. This speech of Vidushaka demonstrates how the Sanskrit counterparts of the Clown-Fools in Shakespeare use "knowledge" pretentiously. Vidushaka uses a word without knowing the real meaning of it. Among others Feste and

Falstaff use "knowledge" in the same way.[1]

The King finds a right solution to his problem. He tells Vidushaka:

> Friend, you have been regarded as a son by my mother. So you can return home and perform the duties as a son.
>
> (Act II)

Vidushaka does not mind returning home because he is tired of physical exertion. But he wants to make sure that the King will not think him "afraid of the demons." His defensive attitude towards his courage is parallel to that of Falstaff in the _Henry IV_ play. After the Gadshill incident Prince Hal and Poins challenge Falstaff with his "cowardice." Falstaff goes to any length to convince them that he is not a coward. The story of the men in buckram is well known (_I Henry IV_, II.iv.185-255).

Falstaff and Vidushaka show a certain kinship in their presumptuousness. As King Dushyanta assures Vidushaka that he will not take the fool as a coward, Vidushaka becomes inflated with the thought of being regarded as "a son" by the Queen Mother. Pompously he declares: "I shall go with the pomp of younger brother of the King!" He swells more with the King's following remark: "Indeed, I shall send all my followers with you, as there should be little of any worldly disturbance in this penance orchard"

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[1] _Twelfth Night_ I.v.15-16; I.v.47-59, etc.; _II Henry IV_, IV.iii.92-135, the speech on "sack."

(Act II). The Clown-Fool interprets this remark to his liking. In the King's followers coming home with him, Vidushaka visualizes the glory of having retinues. He exclaims with pride and presumptuousness:

> Then, indeed, have I now become the heir-apparent.
> (Act II)[1]

It is curious to see so much similarity in the artistic representation of a social character representing two apparently different cultures. One depicts the society of the Sixth Century in India and the other reflects the social attitude as it was in the Renaissance in England. As soon as Falstaff receives the news of Prince Hal's coronation, he has a glorious vision of the future. He prematurely and quite flippantly gives out lucrative positions to Shallow and Pistol:

> . . . Master Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine. Pistol, I will double-charge thee with dignities.
> (II Henry IV, V.iii.128-131)

Possibly the ruler of a realm requires such contrasting characters beside him not only to serve him with entertainment but also to remind him constantly of his human weaknesses and shortcomings.

King Dushyanta is apprehensive about the fool's talkative and boisterous nature. So he tries to eradicate the impression of his love for Śakuntalā from the fool's

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[1]See discussion on heir-apparent (yuvarāja) in Chapter I, Section B.

mind. Vidushaka may speak unintentionally and give out the King's secret adventure to his other wives.[1] This may be disastrous in his relationship with the queens. They may sharpen their tongues especially to welcome the King to his own palace. So the King tries to put a different picture in Vidushaka's mind. He says:

> Friend, I remain in the hermitage on account of my reverence for the sages. Certainly, I have no desire for the daughter of Kanva. . . . O my friend, let not the words uttered in jest by me be taken in earnest.
>
> (Act II)

The shrewd and clever Fool realizes the truth of the matter and plays with the King's words: "Just so" says he in "earnest." With this amusing scene the Second Act comes to an end. Contrary to Bhat's impression of the Vidushaka in this play, the Clown-Fool created by Kālidāsa shows more significance than that of a plain idiot or a simpleton. Bhat believes that Vidushaka in Śakuntalā is an idiot, and that Kālidāsa uses "the Vidushaka's idiocy for bringing about certain developments in the play."[2] Referring to this "mission to the Capital incident," Bhat observes that

> Through this stupid behaviour of the Vidushaka, Kālidāsa suggests that Dushyanta is childless; and simultaneously succeeds in keeping Dushyanta

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[1]Polygamy was considered legal and was encouraged then in noble families.

[2]Bhat, The Vidushaka, p.137.

unencumbered and free to pursue his love-affair.[1] But we know much earlier in the text (in the beginning of Act II) that Dushyanta is childless, when he rationalizes his desire to marry Śakuntalā. Dushyanta does not send Vidushaka away to the Capital to become "unencumbered" but to make his defence ready in case his other wives become suspicious of his activities. Also, it is most vital at this point for Vidushaka to be away for he must prove himself capable of carrying out important missions because later in a crucial moment, as we will show, he will be sent away in the harem as his presence in the court will lead to the revelation of Śakuntalā's identity prematurely to Dushyanta before they are purified by the penance affected by the curse. Hence the arrangement of the plot shows that Vidushaka is not stupid but the playwright is using him in significant places in the progress of the play. In this play he is not merely the companion of the King, he is a commentator on the King's behaviour and action. He is also an advisor to the King.

The next time we see Vidushaka in Śakuntalā is in the Fifth Act. The plot has progressed considerably in the meantime. Dushyanta has married Śakuntalā and has come back to the Capital. But the kind of love so far delineated cannot be depended upon to endure, much less to

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[1]Bhat, The Vidushaka, p. 138.

ennoble the human beings and make them worthy to serve the higher ends of human life. This love must be purified of its passion; else it would remain self-centred. Hence the use of the curse is appropriate. Jhala remarks that the "curse of Durvasa is therefore a nemesis of Śakuntalā's own self-consuming passion which needed purging."[1] Śakuntalā has been cursed by a guest because she has failed to extend hospitality to him. Under this curse, Dushyanta has forgotten Śakuntalā. Now we see him as he is entertained with music and dance. As he listens attentively to the words of the song[2] the Fool asks him: ". . . do you comprehend the meaning of the song?" The King comprehends perfectly the message communicated through the song. It is a reproach from Queen Hamsapadikā who can not find any justification in the King's love for another woman in his heart. King Dushyanta admits that he has been cleverly taken to task. He sends Vidushaka to plead his case with Hamsapadikā. It is clear that the memory of Śakuntalā is fully gone from the King's mind. Though the Fool is not aware of the curse, he knows about the love affair in the forest. And it seems that his question to the King "Do you comprehend the meaning of the song?" is directed to revive some discussion of

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[1]Jhala, Kālidāsa, p. 184.

[2]O Bee, how is it that you, who caressed the mango-blossoms in search for fresh honey, have now forgotten it, being charmed by a short sojourn into the lotus!

yet another love in the King's life. But the King does not receive Vidushaka's hint. He is more concerned now to soothe the feelings of Queen Hamsapadikā. Also he is not able to remember anything which took place in the forest. He sends Vidushaka with the task of calming the annoyed queen. Vidushaka obeys without trying to pursue the matter any further. He leaves saying: "As your Honour commands" (Act V). It is the dramatist's ingenuity to create a situation where he can artfully remove Vidushaka from the scene because of its important significance in the scenes to follow. To kindle a spark of memory in the King at this time will jeopardize the whole plan of the play. So the Fool is removed on a mission meaningful to the main character of the play. The King's culture and system allows polygamy but it does not remove the possibilities of rivalry and jealousy among the queens. King Dushyanta should not only rule the kingdom satisfactorily, he should also be able to keep order and harmony at home. Therefore it is his primary concern now to appease the queen's anger by some means or other. As Vidushaka has no restraint on his movements in the palace and as he is a master of words, the King justifiably chooses Vidushaka for this task.

Here also the Clown-Fools in Shakespeare and in Kālidāsa evidence similar predicaments. Vidushaka has to act as a mediator between the King and his angry queen. He does not look forward to its prospects:

> O my fate, there will be no way out for me now when seized by her with the hands of others by the tuft of my hair on my head and beaten, as for an ascetic with passions gone when taken by a heavenly nymph.
>
> (Act V)

Feste in Twelfth Night acts to a certain extent as a go-between for Olivia and Duke Orsino. He does not actually enjoy all the disadvantages which come with his occupation. Maria informs Feste "My lady will hang thee for thy absence" (I.v.3-4). Feste has become used to such threats and says: "Let her hang me. He that is well hanged in this world needs to fear no colors" (I.v.5-6). Speaking of the role of peacemaker and go-between, Feste plays the role quite well. He says to Viola, "I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus" (III.i. 57-58).

Vidushaka returns in the play when the scene has shifted to Dushyanta's Capital. To understand the encounter of the Fool with the King in this scene we should look back to the main stream of events which preceded this scene. The ascetics from the forest escort Śakuntalā to Dushyanta's court and present her as his wife. The curse operates on the King and as a result he can not recollect the marriage or his promise to Śakuntalā. When nothing succeeds to revive the curse-swept memory of the King, Śakuntalā offers to show the ring given to her by the King himself. But even her last resort fails, as it appears that the ring has been misplaced. It may possibly have

slipped from her finger while she was bathing in the river during her journey to the Capital. Mutual recrimination leads to nothing, and Śakuntalā leaves the Court escorted by the ascetics. Śakuntalā is carried away by a celestial lady. The King and the Court are astonished at this supernatural intervention. We get a glimpse of the King who is overcome by a gloom of uncertainty caused by the series of incidents inexplainable by his rational faculties. Soon the mystery is solved for the King. The ring is brought to the court by a fisherman who recovered it from one of his prize catches. The ring brings back Dushyanta's memory; he is freed from Durvāsā's curse. Now he remembers the wedding with Śakuntalā and all the details surrounding the marriage. He is deeply grieved at the injustice he has shown as a King and the sorrow that he has caused as a husband. Added to these pains caused to Śakuntalā he has been irreverent to the sage who came from the forest. Above all he feels intensely that he has debased and dishonoured the vow of marriage. He feels helpless as he does not know the whereabouts of Śakuntalā at this time. However, a celestial nymph, interested in the well-being of Śakuntalā, watches the King closely. She observes his reactions to this sad situation and observes his inclinations to rectify the situation. The King has put on the garments of a penitent and is mortifying himself. Dushyanta's remorse knows no bounds. Vidushaka is touched by the incident, too.

But he is a practical man and finds little sense in the King's plight. Because this mood of the King hampers all royal business, the kingdom is in a state of turmoil. Dushyanta's lack of care for his kingdom and the people is not cherished by Vidushaka because he is not merely an entertainer but also a well-wisher of the state. K. S. Sastri tells us that

> India in the time of Vālmiki, complier of Rāmāyana, and in the time of Kālidāsa knew a society which lived as a large and happy family, and one did not disrupt social welfare and harmony by avaricious act or by lack of care.[1]

Therefore the King's prolonged preference given to personal loss rather than to the needs of his subjects disturbs the Clown-Fool. Being a product of Indian culture, Vidushaka knows that by the mental possession of three powers (Saktis), such as Prabhu (courage), Mantra (diplomacy), and Utsaha (alertness and enthusiasm), political activity becomes fruitful and effective.[2] King Dushyanta seems to have lost them all for the present. So Vidushaka says:

> [Aside] He is again seized by the Śakuntalā malady. I do not know how he is to be treated.
> (Act VI)

Vidushaka hopes that he can save the King from torment and make him realize that the business of the state must be

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[1]Sastri, Kālidāsa: His Period, p.237.

[2]Kautilya, Arthasāstra, p. xxxvi.

attended to. So he threatens in the manner of a Fool:

> Just wait! I shall destroy the arrow of cupid with this bludgeon.[1] (Act VI)

And he raises his staff actually to strike down the imaginary arrow of cupid on the mango-blossom. Even in deep sorrow, the King smiles and chides the Fool:

> Hold! We know your Brāhmanical power!
> (Act VI)

Evidently the King, a member of the warrior and ruler class, pokes fun at a Brāhmin.[2] As noted earlier the reasons

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[1]See Chapter I, Section B, for the explanation of Vidushaka's stick.

[2]In ancient times four major classes were created in India to facilitate the function of the society. First, the Brāhmin (Priest), then Kshatriya (warrior and ruler), the Vaisya (merchant), and the last was Śudra (labor or menial class). Because of the existing misconception about "Caste-System" in India, it would seem necessary to provide here a simple explanation of the basic facts in relation to this concept. If one clearly understands the concept of division of labour as it is understood in the West, there would not arise any difficulty whatsoever in appreciating what was desired initially by dividing the Indian society into four classes at the dawn of civilization. The compendious term Varnāsrama was used to describe a happy family life among harmonized social groups which lived in a state of co-ordinated service and mutual dependence and which was an organization for national service. Though the term caste, similar to democracy and freedom of speech has acquired unmerited abuse and has been unduly misappropriated in contempt in modern times, no other can be equally expressive and comprehensive of that bundle of duties which constitutes the bonds of social life. Caste never implied mere privileges and never led to arrogance and oppression or exploitation and never bred discontentment, resentment and enmity. The law, laid down by Manu, an ancient economist without formal training, was understood in its proper spirit and gladly accepted, strictly enforced and cheerfully obeyed. In Śakuntalā alone, Kālidāsa demonstrates the functional operation of Caste system. The Brāhmins in the

behind making fun of the Priest and his class are not satisfactorily conclusive.[1] But as in the times of the Feast of Fools and Soties in Western culture, in Sanskrit literature from the Third Century, A.D., the class of Priests has been subject to sarcasm and invective satire. People believed that Brāhmins had supernatural power. They also believed that a Brāhmin could turn anything into ashes if he was provoked and if his patience was tried too much. No one could tell how much of it was true but just the same the fear was intense in people's minds. So the King's comment here implies the ineffectiveness of the power usually vested in a Brāhmin. In Shakespeare's plays too, the Fools comment on Priest's misgivings and shortcomings.

The absurd and ugly Brāhmin, object of all humility

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hermitage practice self-denial, piety, and penance, and endeavour to reach the truth. The King, a Kshattriya, is a foe of the oppressors and friend of the oppressed, known for his prowess, born ruler of men. Kālidāsa describes the Vaisyas as merchants who carried Indian commerce to the ends of the earth and who made frequent voyages on the high seas to increase the wealth of the land. Sudras are described as experts in their own vocations, such as carpentry, farming, weaving, industrial arts, etc. The fisherman in Act VI of Śakuntalā comments that "Even a low profession should not be given up if it is hereditary." All the Castes served and respected one another and worked for the advancement of their motherland until a few became avaricious and began to exploit this beneficially sound program, similar to the case of the men who served their employers out of their own accord and earned an honest living until a handful of middle-men became profit-seekers and initiated the greatest blunder of mankind, the slave market. The original meaning of Caste System was thus abused by people who came later.

[1]See Chapter I, Section B.

and harrassment, becomes compassionate friend to the King. Watching the King completely overcome by his sense of guilt and remorse, this humble character rebuked the King only to revive his royal spirit. "What is this, my friend?" said Vidushaka to the King:

> Such conduct is indeed, unbecoming of you. Noble men never indulge in sorrow. This is unmanlike. Surely, mountains stand unshaken even in a gale-storm!
>
> (Act VI)

Vidushaka seems to advocate that if courage and righteousness combine forces they can overcome any obstacle by the prowess of combined temporal and spiritual power. Also, he evidences one of the many original qualities the Vidushaka was endowed with in the beginning. Bhat tells us that though Vidushaka may be a happy companion of the King, he may sometimes "adopt an attitude of protest, in some cases he may disapprove of the hero's passion."[1] Vidushaka prophesies about the future, too. He assures the King: "there is surely the union in store for you. In course of time you will find your ladyship" (Act VI). Like Lear's Fool's prophecy, his is based on experience and common sense. Challenged by the King, "How do you know?" Vidushaka replies with certainty:

> Because parents cannot bear too long their daughters afflicted with separation from their husbands.
>
> (Act VI)

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[1]Bhat, The Vidushaka, p. 120.

Bhat explains this part of Vidushaka as he is a

> fruitful speaker, has knowledge of the past, present and future; knows the specific things that ought to be done and those that ought not to be done; is an expert on judging pros and cons of an issue; speaks realistically;. . .[1]

We have seen earlier that Lear's Fool predicts the future course of action in like manner.[2] King Dushyanta is skeptical about the possible union. But Vidushaka has no doubt in his mind at all. He believes in omens:

> Indeed the ring itself is an indication that the union must take place and will be brought about in an inconceivable manner.
> (Act VI)

Clown-Fools may counsel but it is up to their patrons whether or not they pay any attention to them. King Lear does not consider the Fool's appraisals of the situation until it is too late. And Dushyanta does not know at all how to come to terms with reality. More and more he drowns in melancholy. He paints a portrait of Śakuntalā. As a honey-bee hovers over the portrait of his beloved, the King steeped in sorrow, nearly oblivious of his world, reproaches the bee:

> If, O bee, you touch the _bimba_-like lip of my beloved, which, charming like the tender sprout of a young plant, was kissed by me in hymeneal sports, I will place you in confinement in the interior of a lotus.
> (Act VI)

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[1]Bhat, _The Vidushaka_, p. 96.

[2]See Chapter III.

Vidushaka feels extremely sorry to witness the great ruler degenerating into an affectatious courtly lover, and he exclaims: "He has certainly gone mad, and by associating with him, I, too, have been touched by his foolishness" (Act VI). In effect, the Fool calls the King a fool, while referring to himself as a wise man. Similarly, in Lear, the Fool addresses the King as a fool on many occasions.

Vidushaka is employed again to perform a significant function. As the King feels his grief harrowing deep in his soul, he seems to become ineffective and shows lack of initiative to seek for any means to find Śakuntalā. And this overpowering sorrow keeps the King away from all royal duties. Once his sincerity of heart and faithfulness of love have been tested, the powers from above decide to arouse the King from his lethargy. This is successfully done only by making an attack on his friend Vidushaka. As the King censures and blames himself, he suddenly hears his friend's voice pleading for help. Dushyanta is aroused by his friend's plaintive voice. The attendant tells him that "some unseen power has seized Vidushaka and tied him upon the top floor of the . . . palace" (Act VI). So the King turns hastily to his friend's rescue: "Fear not, my friend, fear not!" Vidushaka's state here is as ridiculous as that of Malvolio in Twelfth Night. Both are most "notoriously abused." Vidushaka describes his plight: "I have become hopeless of life, like a mouse pounced upon by

a cat" (Act VI). As the King is about to release his arrow Vidushaka is released by the spirit. Actually it is the charioteer of Indra[1] who has been impersonating the "spirit." He explains his reasons for being involved in such an unusual trick. The King is called upon by the gods for protection from the race of demons. And the charioteer has come to escort the King to the field of action. He relates his instructions: "Go, your honor, armed as you are, ascend the chariot of Indra and set out for victory." Dushyanta agrees to follow the instructions but enquires why it was necessary to put his helpless friend through "such torment?" The explanation is not too far from valid:

> We saw that you were spiritless owing to mental affliction and neglected the duties which were expected of you. Hence we adopted this manner to rouse you to anger. Because, the fire blazes forth when it has its fuel stirred up; the serpent extends his hood when offended; and generally every creature manifests its prowess against provocation.
>
> (Act VI)

Once reminded of his primary duties, Dushyanta realizes his grave error. He has given priority to his self-satisfaction over the need of the state. He comes to the understanding that reason must govern passion. This moment of realization is a long way from the moment of his first meeting with Śakuntalā. The King now decidedly reassumes his role of a protector and a benefactor. He is ready to leave with the

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[1]Lord of the Sky, comparable to Zeus.

charioteer of the gods. But before leaving he places the responsibility on Vidushaka to explain his sudden departure abroad to the minister of his kingdom. He also asks Vidushaka to inform the minister that until he returns the sole responsibility to "protect the subjects" should lie with the minister. An Indian treatise on love explicates that the true love of a virtuous woman enspirits a man. One "under its influence becomes more dutiful, more unselfish and more reverential. The poet shows this most perfectly in *Śakuntalā*."[1] This is the last time that we see or hear from Vidushaka. The play ends in the happy union of Dushyanta and Śakuntalā brought about by supernatural intervention. The couple receives each other purged of all blemishes that they incurred by indulging in sensual and passionate, impetuous and unwise love. The play begins in a hunt and ends in peace. Though indirect, yet by important contribution of Vidushaka, Kālidāsa shows that the hunt of love is a delight, but mere physical rapture leads often to unhappiness and has to be spiritualized into the abiding peace of emotional tenderness. True love, as Dushyanta and Śakuntalā find out in the end, is a purifying and ennobling force. They have learned by suffering to consider the world around them with more gravity, and have learned to observe their ethical obligations:

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[1]Sastri, *Kālidāsa: His Period*, p. 182.

> The strangely estranged pair is again brought together equally strangely, but not until they have passed through the trial of sorrow and become ready for a perfect reunion of hearts. There is no explanation, no apology, nor any demand for reparation. Śakuntalā has now learnt in silence the lessons of suffering; and with his former self-complacency and impetuous desires left behind, the king comes, chastened and subdued, a sadder and wiser man. The young year's blossom now ripens into the mellow fruit of autumnal maturity.[1]

Emancipated by the long penance, Śakuntalā and Dushyanta have become more wise and considerate than before. Now they are ready to assume the responsibilities of love and marriage. The responsibility is not only for each other but for the continuation of the famous race of Dushyanta. Divinity not only governs life but also takes interest in it. Thus human beings and divine powers working together bring harmony and joy to Dushyanta and Śakuntalā.

Śakuntalā, thus, is the story of the redemption of love. The first half deals with individual pleasure, indulgence and self-satisfaction, and the second half shows love in purgatory from which it emerges in its highest form and gives peace and happiness that are of the spirit.[2] And in this profound treatment of the theme of love, the contribution of Vidushaka is demonstrated to be far from insignificant. In *Śakuntalā*, the usual picture of the Clown-Fool of

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[1]Dasgupta, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 145-146.

[2]Jhala, *Kālidāsa*, p. 187.

Sanskrit drama remains in the background as he becomes a dramatically functional character.

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ADDENDUM

Scholarly work treating some of the substance dealt with in this thesis but appearing in print after thesis defense, October 13, 1970.

Since this thesis was written we have come across a scholarly work done on Antony and Cleopatra by Harold Fisch, Professor of English, Bar-Iban University, Israel.

The findings of this scholar are so similar to ours that it seem only pertinent to bring them to our reader's attention. At the outset Fisch points out that

> Shakespeare is dealing directly in this play with a pair of characters who lay claim to mythological status . . .[1]

It is comforting to realize that noted scholars like Bethell and Fisch have noticed the requirement of acknowledging the mythological implication in this play. Speaking of the Isis-Osiris legend, Fisch says:

> The Mars-Venus theme is, . . . not carried through to the end, and instead, the two main characters merge into another mythological grouping of much greater significance for Shakespeare's purpose, namely, Isis-Osiris-Set triangle with Cleopatra functioning as Isis . . . and Antony as Osiris, the dying Sun-god who is resurrected in

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[1]Harold Fisch, "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology, "Shakespeare Survey, XXIII (December, 1970), 59.

eternity.[1]

Fisch goes on to examining Octavius Caesar as Set in the Isis-Osiris-Set legend which is beyond the scope of our study.

That the mythological dimension is not superimposed or "read-in" by the readers is made quite clear by Fisch. He says that the "link with Isis" is a

> more than casual feature of Cleopatra's personality was proposed by the eighteenth-century editors Capell and Warburton. . . . It is surprising that present-day scholars have not shown more interest in this suggestion.[2]

Led by the evidences in the play, as we have, Fisch states

> Shakespeare shows himself profoundly conscious of the full implications of the Isis-Osiris myth, and modern students . . . , if they were wise, learn of it in both depth and detail from this play.[3]

Although Fisch cites many of the passages we have, may we point out that the geographical and chronological difference between our study and Fisch's work will show that we concede our basic idea about Antony-Cleopatra-Clown-Fool to none other than the director of this thesis.

That Shakespeare could have known the facts of Egyptian mythology is quite clear to Fisch. He cites Plutarch, The History of Africa, The Golden Ass, as we have, and comments that there could be a "number of other sources"

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[1] Fisch, "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology," pp. 60-61.

[2] Ibid, p. 61.

[3] Ibid., p. 62.

from which the playwright could have learned about the Isis-Osiris legend. We have examined beyond what Fisch has done and found out that a collection of stories written by a Syrian monk and the trade routes to India could have been among the other sources that Fisch referred to.

In our study we have amply demonstrated what "death" means to the Egyptian Queen; and in this connection we have established the value of the services rendered by the Clown-Fool in this play. In so far as the union of Antony and Cleopatra in the "after-life" is concerned, Fisch's findings are the same as ours. It is encouraging that an eminent Shakespearean scholar has also recognized the importance of the use of "death" in the same manner as we have. He points out that death is "immortality" for an Egyptian. Fisch observes,

> For it is the peculiar achievement of the ancient Egyptians that they managed to swallow death in immortality . . . . At the very heart of the Osiris legend is this notion of immortality, the mummified remains of the dead man living on eternally in the "field of peace". Shakespeare had somehow penetrated into this region of ancient belief; creating for us . . . , a dramatic realization of the active attainment of immortality. It is achieved especially in the speeches of Cleopatra as she mourns over the mutilated Antony-Osiris, in this re-enacting perfectly the classic pose of Isis . . . . [1]

We draw to the reader's attention the fact that quite unaware of Fisch's point of view and his conclusions about the

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[1] Fisch, "_Antony and Cleopatra_: Limits of Mythology," p. 63.

Antony-Cleopatra relationship, the present writer has analyzed in detail (pp. 229-234) the eulogy of Cleopatra and has pointed out clearly that the eulogy is in other words a lament of Isis-Cleopatra for the dead Antony-Osiris. And our study has shown that the evidence in the play leads the reader to see qualities of Amon Ra as well as those of Osiris in Antony, the eternal lover of the "serpent-woman of the old Nile."

In regard to Cleopatra's death, Fisch remarks,

> Shakespeare presents in the fifth act a ritual of apotheosis in which Antony and Cleopatra in the most ceremonial fashion put off mortality and announce their union as god and goddess eternally united in the field of peace. She performs a ritual marriage between herself and the dead Antony which is going to be consummated in the afterworld. . . .[1]

It should be quite clear to any reader unacquainted with Egyptian culture that the concept of an "afterworld" or "after-life" is as strong in an Egyptian as a Christian belief in "immortality." Hence, to appreciate the significance of the union in "afterlife" it is absolutely necessary to understand the "funerary" customs of Egypt. This point leads us directly to our main hypothesis, the importance of the role of the Clown-Fool. He is the Executioner because he provides the Queen with the weapon which brings her life to an end; the Clown-Fool is also a Priest because he helps the Queen

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[1]Fisch, "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology," p. 63.

to "marry" Antony in "death." In Fisch's words we will say that he helps the Queen to "put off mortality" and through his assistance Cleopatra "performs a ritual marriage between herself and the dead Antony which is going to be consummated in the afterworld. . . ."[1] Fisch's findings strengthen our basic contention that instead of being irrelevant and discursive the discussion on the sincerity of Cleopatra is needed to show how much Antony means to Cleopatra so that she wants to forsake the world to be united with her eternal lover, Antony, and declares "Husband, I come." The discussion on Egyptian mythology and the information on the "funerary" customs are needed to demonstrate clearly the meaningful relationship between Antony and Cleopatra and to acquaint the reader with enough background material so that he may easily understand what Cleopatra really means when she expresses her appreciation to the "rural fellow" because he performs a "noble deed." These discussions are indispensible because they convey to the reader what "death" really means to the Egyptian Queen; and also to put it in simple words, they are necessary for the reader to understand what the Clown-Fool means as he wishes the Queen of Egypt the "joy o' the worm." This is surely not said in jest. We have shown in detail the grave significance of the role of the Clown-Fool in the play. This part of the study is

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[1]Fisch, "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology," p. 63.

beyond Fisch's immediate concern; he limits his discussion to the relationship of Antony and Cleopatra but he realizes that the function of the Clown-Fool in relation to Cleopatra does not lie in fun-making; he thinks it "represents more than a comic deflation. . . ."[1] This is where our study gains merit over that of the work done by Fisch. In a detailed, analytical and descriptive manner we have shown the significance of the role of the Clown-Fool in relation to the meaningful portrayal of the "peerless lovers."

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[1]Fisch, "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology," pp. 63-64.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ADDENDUM

Fisch, Harold. "Antony and Cleopatra: Limits of Mythology," Shakespeare Survey, XXIII (December, 1970), 59-67.

ABSTRACT

We would imagine that after centuries of critical interpretation of Shakespeare's play, there would remain no scope for yet another study in Shakespeare. But innumerable volumes of commentaries produced by Shakespeare scholars indicate that Shakespearean materials are still valid subject for study and analysis and that the need for a satisfactory meaning-experience interpretation of his work remains. This study has been prepared with an earnest belief that it would contribute some small substance to the still needed studies and that it might give some direction toward a possible better appreciation of some of Shakespeare's characters.

The artist creates from multifarious personal and vicarious experiences. It is our, the readers', duty to recreate from the smallest components within the play, the meaning which has been artistically architectured by the playwright. We have concentrated mainly on Falstaff, Lear's Fool and the Clown of Cleopatra. Often the inclination is to impose a particular viewpoint on a play instead of letting the play create the meaning for itself. With a conscious effort to refrain from arrogating our opinion on the plays, in this study we have examined and analyzed the characters individually as they stand, and in relation to

others, as they contribute to the total meaning of the play. For instance, we have examined the contribution of Falstaff as Vice character and have demonstrated in depth that as a Vice he does not make satisfactory sense in the broad perspective of the Henry IV plays. On the other hand, the obvious qualities of a Clown-Fool in Falstaff make his role more meaningful and more relevant to the play. We have shown that there is no need of imposing the qualities of a Morality on the Henry IV plays as the Prince explains that his association with Falstaff is voluntary, and he signifies that he will shed off this "loose behavior" whenever he is "wanted." At the end of the play he makes it clear, too, that if Falstaff had the necessary quality, namely, wisdom, he could have been kept and advanced to the position of the Court-Fool. Lacking that quality, Falstaff had to be rejected.

Lear's Fool is generally known to have performed the antithetical role to Lear's folly. But another significant use Shakespeare makes of him in the play has not been fully shown, namely, that of the role of a compassionate friend in Lear's friendless world. With the assistance of the text we have demonstrated this side of the Fool's character.

The Clown-Fool of Cleopatra has received merely some passing remarks from critics. Our investigation into the portrayal of the Queen of Egypt shows that this Clown serves as an Executioner-Priest in the meaningful ending of the play.

The scholarly journal, Comparative Literature, points out that in literature man lives in "one world." The objective of this journal is to point out that "transcending the barriers of language and national culture, the peoples of the world have a vast common heritage of literary themes, types, movements, styles and techniques."[1] Scholars who contribute to this journal are "also interested in those similarities that reflect, not influence, but simply the common experience and humanity of man."[2] In the last chapter of this study we have contributed such a discussion of basic artistic similarities which are reflected in the works of Shakespeare and Kalidasa. Such study of the comic characters of Elizabethan and Indian drama demonstrates that a scholar can hardly remain within his limited "world" or "tradition" of specialized work, and that he is bound by his "scholarly" obligations to acknowledge and understand the ethical and artistic similarities which bring different cultures close together for common understanding in literature.

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[1]Chandler B. Beall, ed., Comparative Literature, Cumulative Index, Vols. 1-15, 1949-1963 (January, 1966), Front Cover.

[2]Ibid.