Rethinking Art and Virtue in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

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Abstract

This thesis argues that a re-examination of the similarities and differences between Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and its primary narrative source, Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590), reveals important insights that would help to resolve recent scholarly disputes surrounding the ethical aims of *As You Like It.* Indeed, the transparent nature of Lodge's ethical and artistic aims in *Rosalynde* offers an intriguing contrast to *As You Like It,* a play in which Shakespeare seems to have self-consciously removed all the elements of Lodge's text that ask us to read for a clear moral point. I propose that *As You Like It* does not have such a point, at least not in the way that scholars have been imagining. While Lodge's text affirms that art relates to ethics in a straightforwardly didactic way, Shakespeare's play obscures the moral point, suggesting that he may be working from a much less didactic view of how art and ethics relate. Moreover, because *Rosalynde* explicitly references Aristotle's ethics, I further suggest that a re-examination of Aristotle's position may yield insight into the ways *As You Like It* reconfigures Lodge's assumptions on the relation between art and ethics. I contend that *As You Like It* dramatizes the action of art teaching and thus queries the purpose of art and its relation to living well. Through this dramatization, Shakespeare re-inflates and recuperates a nuanced Aristotelian position on the relationship between art and ethics, according to which the purpose of art is to help us see and understand the world more fully in order that we might act more discerningly within it; art teaches us not a Lodgian formula for virtuous living but the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* (practical wisdom), which involves a nuanced and perceptive view of the world, and ourselves in the world, and forms the basis of virtuous character.

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Dedication

To my children, Corin and Madeline. I hope that art will help you see the world perceptively and live well within it.

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1 Introduction

> "Take heed, my sons, the mean is sweetest melody; where strings high stretched, either soon crack, or quickly grow out of tune. . . . Be valiant, my sons, for cowardice is the enemy of honor; but not too rash, for that is an extreme. Fortitude is the mean, and that is limited within bonds, and prescribed with circumstance" (Lodge 4-5).

These lines are taken from Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde,* the primary narrative source for *As You Like It.* They aptly sum up the exhortation of a dying father to his sons with which *Rosalynde* begins. Moreover, these lines strikingly echo the *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle's ethical instruction to his own son, Nicomacheas. Lodge depicts a fatherly exhortation, referencing an older fatherly exhortation, which frames and guides the story that unfolds thereafter. He positions his cast of characters within an Aristotelian moral framework and positions his readers to be instructed in virtue as they observe the consequences of the vicious and virtuous actions of the various characters. In other words, Lodge's way of framing his story leaves no ambiguity as to the artistic and ethical aims that ground his work. Lodge takes seriously the Aristotelian dictum suggested around this time by Sir Philip Sidney that the aim of poetry is to teach and delight (Sidney 10), but he does so in a way that unmoors this task from its Aristotelian origins by simplifying what it means for literature to teach. The purpose of *Rosalynde* is to offer a clear moral lesson—a template, that is, for a virtuous life.

The transparent nature of Lodge's ethical and artistic aims in *Rosalynde* offers an intriguing contrast to *As You Like It,* a play in which, if recent scholarly dispute is any indication, Shakespeare's ethical/political point is anything but transparent. As Howard Cole comments, "the play's "action" is devoted to debating issues whose resolutions apparently share the title's

ambiguity" (17). While the plot remains relatively consistent with Lodge's original, Shakespeare drops straightforward moralizing and gives his characters greater complexity. Or rather, as Cole has argued, the play is full of satirized moral platitudes that make the audience wonder if "these men of platitudes and maudlin vignettes must be persuaded "feelingly" because they have no minds" (21). Cole concludes that Shakespeare "delight[s] in testing those conventions Lodge simply follows" (30). A few of the play's characters have qualities we might recognize as moral excellencies (such as loyalty, bravery, or wit), but there is no one character to whom we could point and say, unequivocally, "here is Shakespeare's exemplar of true moral goodness." Even those characters fashioned after Lodge's moral exemplars exhibit flaws (insensitivity, misplaced aggression, insecurities, and a propensity to acidic remarks, to name a few).

Despite the play's lack of a transparent moral point, scholarly attempts to decipher such a point nevertheless abound. Indeed, the world of *As You Like It* does seem to operate on some kind of moral framework, however difficult to identify. As the plot progresses, the woefully oppressive world of a usurping duke gives way to the delightfully topsy turvy world of the forest of Arden, a world in which playfulness and free expression seem to reign. It seems reasonable to wonder if this topsy turvy green world constitutes Shakespeare's version of moral goodness that counteracts and corrects the world of civilized tyranny.[1] Many scholars think so: in Arden, society sheds its oppressive hierarchies and straight-jacket morality and reaches for a socially unfettered goodness. But these same scholars are perplexed by the way in which the joyous freedoms of the forest give way in the end to the still greater jubilance of a wedding and with it

[1] On the other hand, Lisa Hopkins notes that the green world of Arden is "a harsher world than [the courtiers] were expecting" (529).

the apparent re-inscription of a traditional, oppressive social order, one that is now stamped by a god's approval and decorated with a dance. Indeed, this scholarly perplexity prompted Bruce Smith's wordplay on the title in his wry comment about the play: "[c]uriously, many academic critics since the 1970s . . . *don't* like it" (5). Similarly, William West comments:

> [T]he play was largely bypassed by New Historicists and other avowedly politically and socially engaged trends in scholarship that rose to prominence in the latter half of the twentieth century. . . . Despite the play's clear interest in many of the positions that also interested these critics . . . *As You Like It* seemed too chipper, too sanguine, too conservative in its conclusion. (*As If* 15)

Illustrating this unease among scholars regarding the moral thrust of the play, Jean Howard notes the apparent tension between its middle and end. Rosalind's crossdressing, occurring as it does in the "holiday context of the pastoral forest," *could* spur social change, but in this case it merely reconfirms the existing, patriarchal social order: "the thrust of the narrative is toward that long-delayed moment of disclosure . . . when the heroine will doff her masculine attire along with the saucy games of youth and accept the position of wife" (434). Even more extreme in his conservative criticism of the play's ending, Peter Erickson argues that "*As You Like It* works smoothly because male control is affirmed and women are rendered nonthreatening" (68). Similarly, Louis Montrose sees the action of the play as culminating in the restoration of male relationships, and with it, the solidification of patriarchal power:

> Marriage, the social institution at the heart of comedy, serves to ease or eliminate the fraternal strife. And fraternity, in turn, serves as a defense against the threat men feel from women. Rosalind-as-Ganymede and Ganymede-as-Rosalind—the woman out of place—exerts an informal organizing and controlling power over

> affairs in the forest. But this power lapses when she relinquishes her male disguise and formally acknowledges her normal status as daughter and wife. (51)

On the other hand, Julie Crawford's essay, "The Place of a Cousin," responding directly to Montrose, argues that the play contains a more progressive moral message. Crawford interprets the bond between Celia and Rosalind as the most important relationship in the play and suggests that the wedding at the end, even if it does in some sense reaffirm patriarchy, more importantly affirms female agency by solidifying and foregrounding a potentially erotic bond between these female cousins. It is not *if* the ending has normative force that most scholars dispute, so much as the nature of the normativity. Which is Shakespeare affirming, an oppressive patriarchy, or a marital and social structure that is more egalitarian, more affirming of bonds between women, and harkening toward the greater social freedoms prized today?

Although these scholars may balk at such terms, much *As You Like It* scholarship focuses on the question, "what exactly *is* the moral point of *As You Like It*?" In disputing the practical moral point of the play, these scholars have assumed that the play offers such a message. This assumption, which is quite reasonable when approaching Lodge's text (given the transparent nature of its moral message), is much less reasonable when approaching *As You Like It* because Shakespeare has self-consciously removed all the elements of Lodge's text that ask us to read for the clear moral point: obvious exemplars of moral goodness, obvious consequences for vicious or virtuous action, and (just in case we missed all that) a tidy summary of the moral lesson to wrap it all up at the end. Since *As You Like It* is missing all the overt clues that might guide us to a practical moral message, I propose that maybe it doesn't have such a message, at least not in the way that scholars have been imagining. Lodge's requirement that the reader of *Rosalynde* read for the practical moral message is an outworking of a meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic view that

art relates to ethics in a straightforwardly didactic way, but the fact that Shakespeare obscures the moral point in *As You Like It* suggests that he may be working from a different, much less didactic, much less presumed, meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic view of how it is that art and ethics relate. *As You Like It* may in fact suggest that art cannot effectively teach a practical moral message. Thus, when scholars interpret *As You Like It* primarily for its practical moral message, they interpret, not in the way that Shakespeare asks us to interpret, but in the way that Lodge asks us to interpret. In looking for a practical ethical point, that I would argue the play does not contain, they risk obscuring the meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic point that I would argue the play does contain.

Given that scholarly debate on *As You Like It* has in some sense adopted Lodge's assumption of how it is that art and ethics relate, it is curious that no one has pondered the implications of the play's relationship, through Lodge, to Aristotle, one of the greatest moral philosophers the world has known. Since Aristotle has a well-developed position on how art relates to ethics (one that Lodge and others of his time drastically over-simplify), I would suggest that a re-examination of Aristotle's position may yield insight into the ways in which Shakespeare uses *As You Like It* to reconfigure Lodge's meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic assumptions in *Rosalynde.* I contend that *As You Like It* queries the very assumptions that form the basis of *Rosalynde.* In *As You Like It,* many of the characters make art, and their art is always aiming toward some end, in contrast with the merely decorative insertions of poetry throughout *Rosalynde*.[2] It is through these many theatrical depictions of art in *As You Like It* that the play

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[2] For an argument that art in *As You Like It* aims toward something – namely the characters' development – see William West, "Essays of Virtue, Essays of Bias: *As You Like It* as Shakespeare's Essays." See also Jonathan Lamb,

inquires after the purpose of art and its relation to living well. Through this dramatization, Shakespeare reinflates and recuperates a nuanced Aristotelian position on the relationship between art and ethics, according to which, the purpose of art is to help us see and understand the world more fully in order that we might act more discerningly within it; it teaches us, not a Lodgian formula for virtuous living, but the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* (practical wisdom) which involves a nuanced and perceptive view of the world, and ourselves in the world, and forms the basis of virtuous character. As we explore how Shakespeare positions this play in relation to the moral life, we will come to see that the marriages at the end have little normative force in relation to the lives of its audience, quite simply because, according to the view of art and ethics suggested by Aristotle and dramatized in *As You Like It*, art can depict and help its audience better see the variation of life, but, precisely because life is so varied, it cannot offer a template for a virtuous life.

Indeed, William West has argued a point similar to the one I am making. He writes:

> The optimism of *As You Like It,* beginning, middle, and end, comes from its relentless attention to how *what may be* need not be mired in *what is.* The play drives forward, even in the last lines of its epilogue, towards future ways of life that are not merely different but can be *made* different, and made *better,* than the present ones. The temperate solutions with which the play concludes are not offered as final, but as clearly open to ongoing changes. The play's very reserve and moderation, its resistance to extremity and desperation and finality, is what

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Shakespeare in the Marketplace of Words, Chapter 4, for an argument that the very medium of *As You Like It*, a fraught mix of prose and verse, is Shakespeare's way of imagining, or *aiming toward*, a more prosy world.

> allows for its relentless confidence that things can be changed. In this, it is perhaps more literally progressive (that is, *stepping ahead*) and more literally radical (that is, *from the root*) than any settled position on the instability of gender, or the elusiveness of equality, or the variety of desire, could be. (*As If* 17)

What West identifies as the play's drive forward, its resistance to "extremity and desperation and finality," I would argue is also the play's resistance to the idea that literature is valuable insofar as it offers the finality of a moral formula, whether that formula be conservative or progressive by our standards. However, it may be that we need to set aside our own commitments to particular moral formulas and to the reading practices that accompany these commitments in order to see the play's restless, optimistic resistance to such formulas.

What I propose here is not only a setting aside of such formulas and commitments but also a re-examination of a very old ethical and aesthetic theory, namely Aristotle's. It may be that the kernels of Aristotelian thought that Shakespeare, I will argue, drew from *Rosalynde* and reinflated in *As You Like It* still have something to offer today. Today's versions of moral platitudes and finalities may look different than those of the sixteenth century, but even today's scholars seem prone to seek refuge in platitudes. A resurgence over the last several decades, especially among philosophers, of interest in virtue ethics, as well as an interest in how Aristotle's aesthetic theory intersects with his ethical theory, indicates a common desire for a more particularist moral theory. According to a recent survey by PhilPapers, virtue ethics is now a plurality view among philosophers (Philpapers Surveys). In the field of literature, Jonathan Goossen's recent work "takes these recent developments [in understandings of the *Poetics* and its relation to Aristotle's ethics], synthesizes them into a coherent theory of comedy, and then uses this theory as a genuine interpretive theory" (6). My own project owes much to Goossen's,

and also to Martha Nussbaum's contention in *Love's Knowledge* that some literature offers an ethically significant view of life, and therefore should be viewed by philosophers (among others) as a relevant site of ethical inquiry. Nussbaum writes that "our actual relation to the books we love is already messy, complex, erotic. We do 'read for life.' We bring to the texts we love our primary concerns about life, many of which are ethical" (29). While I have a distaste for literature that tries to be overtly moralistic and didactic, I share Nussbaum's intuition that literature does somehow form our moral faculties. At root, my question is this: *how does art help us live well? As You Like It,* I propose, may be able to help us answer this question.

This essay will proceed in the following way: in the first section, I will lay the foundation for understanding Lodge and Shakespeare's relationship to Aristotle by first expositing, with the help of scholars such as Stephen Halliwell and Martha Nussbaum, Aristotle's position on the relationship between poetry and ethics. In the second section, I will use Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* as a bridge from Aristotle to Lodge and Shakespeare's creative works. Parts of Sidney's popular poetic theory are based explicitly on Aristotle's. Thus, Sidney's influence on the poetic culture of late sixteenth and early seventeenth century England would have entailed an Aristotelian influence on the poets and intellectuals of this time and place and would certainly have put Lodge and Shakespeare in contact with a certain version of Aristotle's poetic theory. In the third and fourth sections, I will compare *Rosalynde* and *As You Like It* to demonstrate how Shakespeare is querying Lodge's meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic assumptions by dramatizing how art helps people live well. Through this dramatization, Shakespeare re-inflates a robust Aristotelian position on the relationship between poetry and ethics. In conclusion, I will briefly suggest how the act of setting aside practical ethical concerns raised by the play in order to better understand how Shakespeare is thinking on a meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic level about the

relationship between art and ethics allows for a reinterpretation of the play that removes much of the normative force of the ending and resolves the practical ethical concerns that scholars bring to the text.

2. The Relationship Between Art and Ethics in Aristotelian Thought

Before I can look at how *As You Like It* is reinflating a nuanced Aristotelian position on the relationship between art and ethics, I need to provide a basic sketch of Aristotle's position. It is difficult to say whether Shakespeare would have been familiar with Aristotle's texts themselves or whether he would simply have picked up bits and pieces from a general cultural interest and vague familiarity with ancient texts. In Shakespeare's time, the *Poetics* had made a recent reappearance. It was almost entirely unfamiliar in the West until Aldus Manutius printed a Greek edition in 1508, which then began attracting critical attention. Subsequently, it was translated into Latin in 1536 by Alessandro de Pazzi and frequently reprinted (Goossen 2-3). The literary-critical environment of the Renaissance tended to conflate Aristotle's *Poetics* with Horace's *Ars Poetica.* Both were read as rhetorical manuals. The unfortunate effect of this upon understandings of the *Poetics* was, as Halliwell notes, "one of simplification and coarsening, grounded as it was in a willingness to fragment Aristotle's ideas and to assimilate them to the formulations of doctrine found in the *Ars Poetica*" (*Aristotle's Poetics* 296).[3]

Lodge and Sidney's explicit references to Aristotle suggest that certain Aristotelian ethical and poetic doctrines were part of the general literary milieu in which Shakespeare

[3] Goossen also makes this point in *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Aristotle on Comedy* (2-3).

participated, but their fairly free-wheeling adaptations of these doctrines also suggest the kinds of distortions noted by Goossen and Halliwell.[4] My point in expositing Aristotle is not so much to suggest that Shakespeare is trying explicitly to be more Aristotelian than Lodge or Sidney in his view of how art teaches. Rather, I am suggesting that Lodge assumes in the frame of his text that art teaches, whereas Shakespeare, in adapting Lodge, chooses to dramatize this framework of art as teacher. Thus, *As You Like It* enacts the process of art teaching. In other words, while Lodge tells his reader that art teaches, thus restricting his point to the discursive level, Shakespeare dramatizes the action of *mimesis*. He shows his reader how art teaches, thus sublimating his point to the structural level of the text. Handling his material as a dramatist, Shakespeare's dramatic representation of art teaching ends up being more nuanced, and therefore more Aristotelian, than the work of Lodge or Sidney. As the characters of Lodge's story take on the flesh and blood of real actors in *As You Like It*, so too, the ideas that inform Lodge's story take on a life of their own in Shakespeare's dramatization.

In the following section, I will outline how Aristotle's aesthetic theory connects to his virtue ethical theory. Recent decades have seen a revival of philosophical interest in virtue ethics.[5] This revival has been accompanied by recent efforts to understand Aristotle's *Poetics* as an important part of his ethical theory.[6] Prior to this effort, ethical philosophers had paid little

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[4] For a more complete account of the history of the *Poetics* see Goossen's Introduction to *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Aristotle on Comedy;* Cave, "The Afterlife of the *Poetics*"; and Halliwell, *Aristotle's* "*Poetics,*" Chapter 10.
[5] This revival is often ascribed to G.E.M. Anscombe's article, "Modern Moral Philosophy." Other major texts in this revival include Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*; Alistair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; John McDowell, "Virtue and Reason"; Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*; Linda Zagzebski, *Virtues of the Mind*, and Rosalind Hursthouse, *On Virtue Ethics.*
[6] For important contributions to this effort see Martha Nussbaum, *Love's* Knowledge; Stephen Halliwell, *Aristotle's Poetics* and *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*; Richard Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy*; and Jonathan Goossen, *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Aristotle on Comedy*.

heed to the *Poetics* (Kenny xxxvii). Given the long history of Aristotelian scholarship, it is not always a straightforward task to exegete Aristotle. A paper of this length can hardly do justice to Aristotelian scholarship, past or present. In my exegesis, I have chosen to rely primarily on current scholars who have taken a particular interest in understanding the connections between Aristotle's ethical and poetic theory. I draw especially on the work of Martha Nussbaum and Stephen Halliwell, two of the most notable examples of this effort. I have also chosen to use Anthony Kenny's translation of the *Poetics.* Kenny notes that his translation is meant to be sensitive to the connections between Aristotle's ethical and poetic theory (xxxviii).

Both Aristotle's ethics and poetics must be understood within his broader theory of teleology, according to which everything that exists has both a formal cause and a final cause, or *telos*.[7] The formal cause is the form or blueprint of a thing (that which makes it the kind of thing that it is), while the final cause is the end or purpose for which a thing exists (*Physics* II.3.194b.25-40). For anything to be good, it must engage in the activities dictated by its form. It is these activities that will enable it to fulfill its *telos* (Shields). For example, a tooth is the kind of thing that chews food (this is its formal cause). For it to be a *good* tooth, it must engage in the action dictated by its form: it must chew food. In so doing, it will fulfill its *telos*. Like every other aspect of nature, humans have a formal and final cause. For Aristotle, humans are the rational animal (this is their formal cause). The final cause of being human, that toward which our lives are directed, is *eudaimonia*, which is generally translated as happiness, flourishing, or living well: "Happiness, then, is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action" (*NE*

[7] Aristotle also names two other causes that are not important for this paper: material cause (the material of which a thing is made), and efficient cause (that which brought it about) (*Physics*).

I.7.1097b.20-1). As humans, we fulfill our *telos* by living according to our rationality (*NE* I.7.1098a.7-8).

Virtues are the character traits that allow us to live a life of reason and bring about our flourishing. Thanks to historical baggage attached to the word "virtue," this word does not translate all that well from the Greek. By virtues, Aristotle simply means the traits by which we are well-functioning humans. Moral virtues are one kind of virtue, but intellectual virtues are equally important. In Book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle explains what it means to be a well-functioning human:

> Now if the function of man is an activity of soul which follows or implies reason, and if we say 'a so-and-so' and 'a good so-and-so' have a function which is the same in kind, e.g. a lyre-player and a good lyre-player, and so without qualification in all cases, eminence in respect of goodness being added to the name of the function (for the function of a lyre-player is to play the lyre, and that of a good lyre-player is to do so well); if this is the case [and we state the function of man to be a certain kind of life, and this to be an activity or actions of the soul[8] implying a rational principle, and the function of a good man to be the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the appropriate virtue; if this is the case], human good turns out to be activity of soul exhibiting virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete. (*NE* 1.7.1098a.7-18)

[8] For Aristotle, one's soul is that which makes one alive (Kenny xi).

Aristotle's analogue of the lyre-player helps to illustrate what it means to be a well-functioning human. Just as a good lyre-player engages well in the activity of playing the lyre, so too, a good human engages well in the activity of being human – that is, using reason. Moreover, virtue is a matter of character, rather than action simpliciter, which means that virtue ethics is concerned, not just with doing the right thing, but with becoming the kind of person who does the right thing. Thus, motivations matter. As I will demonstrate in the second half of this paper, *As You Like It* is a play that is equally concerned with states of character and the actions that derive from character. The play dramatizes the development and refining of good character toward a *eudaimonic* end, especially in Orlando. Art becomes a crucial teacher in this acquisition of virtue.

For Aristotle, emotion is an important component of virtuous character. In keeping with his view that morality is grounded in character, Aristotle's emphasis on the whole person as virtuous agent extends to emotion. Aristotle's view of emotion contributes to the role that he sees poetry as playing in the development of virtue. Aristotle believed that emotions are responsive to reason and an important part of human cognition. In emotion, as in action, the virtuous agent will find the mean, responding to situations with the appropriate emotion and the appropriate level of emotion (Kenny xiv). In other words, emotions are very closely linked with moral beliefs. If you believe that someone has wronged you, there is a rational emotional response to this belief - namely to feel anger toward that person; if you come to realize that you were mistaken in this belief, you may expect anger toward that person to subside in accordance with your rational

judgements.[9] In *Love's Knowledge,* Nussbaum puts it this way: "Because the emotions have this cognitive dimension in their very structure, it is very natural to view them as intelligent parts of our ethical agency, responsive to the workings of deliberation and essential to its completion" (41). The fully rational person will both know what is good and desire it. If you know what is good, but do not desire it, you are not fully rational. If you do the right thing because you want to, you are more virtuous, and more fully rational than the person who does the right thing despite desiring to do the wrong thing. For Aristotle and other virtue ethicists, our rationality requires us to live according to virtue, an action which has both a cognitive and emotional component. For the virtue ethicist, "it matters not only that a person do the right action, but also that she feel the right way" (Stark 440).

Furthermore, the kinds of actions in which one takes pleasure or pain signify the state of one's character:

> We must take as a sign of states of character the pleasure or pain that supervenes upon acts; for the man who abstains from bodily pleasures and delights in this very fact is temperate, while the man who is annoyed at it is self-indulgent. . . . For moral virtue is concerned with pleasures and pains; it is on account of the pleasure that we do bad things, and on account of the pain that we abstain from noble ones. (*NE* II.3,1104b.4-11)

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[9] This does not imply that our emotions always obey these norms any more than the existence of moral norms implies that those norms are always followed (Stark 440).

Thus, virtuous people will consistently delight in doing what is virtuous. For Plato, emotions occlude our rational faculties and therefore hinder our ability to act virtuously, but for Aristotle, practical reason (the ability to know the right thing to do) divorced from emotions is not sufficient for the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom (*Love's Knowledge* 40). One of Orlando's problems throughout *As You Like It* is that his emotions are improperly directed, indicating improperly directed reason. The mistreatment he has received at the hands of his brother has taught him to approach new situations assuming the worst. Thus, he leaps into the camp of Duke Senior in a frenzy of hostility because he has wrongly assumed their ill intentions toward him. He must learn to see situations more discerningly in order to feel and act well in response.

As I will argue that Shakespeare demonstrates with Orlando, acquiring virtue is a process of *mimesis,* often translated as imitation, which is to say that a virtuous orientation of character is a matter of education in which one is habituated to doing good acts. Just as we learn to speak by speaking, rather than by first memorizing grammar facts and then applying them, we learn the virtues through practice: "but virtues we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well. For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them . . . so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts" (*NE* II.I.31-6). This process of habituation is best begun at an early age (*NE* II.3,1104b.4-11). Furthermore, just as a child learns to speak by imitating the voice patterns of those who already speak, virtues are acquired by imitating the actions of virtuous people. Christopher Shields explains:

> Aristotle thinks that imitation is a deeply ingrained human proclivity . . . . *[M]imêsis* is *natural*. We engage in imitation from an early age, already in

> language learning by aping competent speakers as we learn, and then also later, in the acquisition of character by treating others as role models. In both these ways, we imitate because we learn and grow by imitation, and for humans, learning is both natural and a delight (*Poet*. 1148b4–24). (Shields)

Just as education is a concern for Lodge in *Rosalynde* (indicated in his declarations of didactic intent), education in virtue is a concern for Shakespeare also. However, unlike Lodge, who aims at explicit instruction, Shakespeare enacts the mimetic nature of education through the character of Orlando, who has been "unkept," or unschooled, and thus has not had occasion to develop the full range of virtues. Rosalind artfully takes on the project of schooling Orlando through a mimetic process in which he practices the character that she eventually wishes him to fully embody.

An important feature of virtue ethics is that virtuous character comes with the possession of virtue as a complete set. As I quoted earlier from book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "human good turns out to be activity of soul exhibiting virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete" (*NE* 1.7.1098a.7-18). For Aristotle, human good cannot be achieved without a harmonious integration of all the virtues. For example, a person who is hard-working but not just is not a virtuous individual, even though they do possess one of the virtues. Indeed, their propensity to work hard could be used to further unvirtuous, even evil, ends. There were doubtless numerous hard-working Nazis who, lacking a sense of justice, worked hard to further the evil ends of the Nazi regime.

Possessing virtue as a complete set requires a kind of holistic, integrated understanding of the world. Aristotle calls this understanding the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* (practical wisdom). Aristotle defines *phronesis* as "a true and reasoned state or capacity to act with regard

to the things that are good or bad for man" (*NE* VI.5.1140b.4-6). In *The Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle writes: "Now it is thought to be the mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, e.g. about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general" (*NE* VI.5.1140a.25-30). *Phronesis* is a kind of finely tuned discernment. It is the ability to attend to what really matters in order to bring about one's own flourishing and flourishing in general. As Nussbaum remarks, perception is at the core of practical wisdom (*Love's Knowledge* 37). Practical wisdom is distinguished from practical reason in that it has both a cognitive and emotional component. *Phronesis* is often characterized as the virtue that makes possible the possession of the virtues as a complete set.

Practical wisdom is needed because right action in any given situation is deeply context-specific. Aristotle writes: "For among statements about conduct those which are general apply more widely, but those which are particular are more true" (*NE.*II.7.1107a.29-31). In other words, general principles of how to live well might apply more broadly, but will often miss the mark by failing to take deeply relevant particulars into account. Aristotle also writes: "What sort of things are to be chosen, and in return for what, it is not easy to state; for there are many differences in the particular cases" (*NE* III.1.1110b.6-8). Nussbaum uses the example of friendship to illustrate the importance of particularity on a virtue ethical account: general rules might be a good starting point for being a good friend, but these general rules will only get you so far when learning to be a good friend. Rather, being a good friend depends on perceptive response to your friend's individual needs, character traits, history, and experience. In fact, to approach a friendship without concern for the particulars of the friend is a failure to acknowledge who that person is, which in turn amounts to a failure to love that person; it is an ethical failure

(*Love's Knowledge* 71-3). Since it is very unlikely that any life will proceed in exactly the same way or that any situation will repeat itself in every detail, ethical principles developed antecedently and designed for very general types of situations are not very useful.[10] Therefore, epistemically, a formula or set of general rules are unlikely, on their own, to result in an ethical life, even if general rules are a good starting point. Rather, what we need is a finely tuned awareness of all the details of a situation that are relevant for ethical choice (38). Aristotle calls this awareness the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom. We gain this awareness through persistent imitation (habituation), which invites a growing understanding, both cognitively and emotionally, of what features of a situation are relevant for virtuous choice and ultimately for human flourishing (Hursthouse, Pettigrove). It may be the virtue of practical wisdom that Orlando can especially be said to lack at the beginning of *As You Like It.* Though he always desires to do the right thing, his attunement to the particulars of situations is constantly failing, causing him to respond inappropriately. In contrast, Rosalind responds to the vicissitudes of fortune with such "subtlety" (i.e., such practical wisdom) that she is able to move the play toward a state of *eudaimonia.* By the end of the play, she has even taught Orlando the virtue of practical wisdom, as demonstrated by his deviation from the script she has given him. Orlando has moved from mere imitation to skillful improvisation that demonstrates his practical wisdom.

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[10] This is a way in which virtue ethics contrasts with other normative ethical theories. Think, for example, of Kant's Categorical Imperative. Note that virtue theorists are not necessarily opposed to there being universal principles, but for the virtue theorist, these principles are likely to be much more complex than the Kantian, for example, would have them, which means there will be a lot more universal principles on a virtue ethical framework. If a situation were to repeat in exactly the same way, the same universal will apply, but the situation is unlikely to repeat in just this way, partly because a human life is singular by nature (*Love's Knowledge* 38).

Although Shakespeare is not appealing to these Aristotelian categories by name, the ways in which he reworks Lodge's text reveal that these Aristotelian categories can be appropriately applied. Whereas Lodge's characters remain fixed throughout his narrative, Shakespeare's characters go through a gradual process of growth that is brought about through the habituation that art provides. In this way, Shakespeare enacts an Aristotelian model of education.

My exposition of how virtue is acquired on a virtue ethical account brings me to my discussion of how Aristotle views poetry as fitting into the process of acquiring virtue. [11] Poetry is a particular kind of *mimesis* and can be instrumental in acquiring virtue. However, when referring to art, Aristotle is using *mimesis* as a different, though related concept. Stephen Halliwell explains this kind of *mimesis* as follows:

> Aristotle speaks of [artistic] mimesis both as a property of works and performances of art and as the product of artistic intentionality; the subject of the verb *mimeisthai* can be an individual work, a genre, an artist (the primary "maker"), or a performer (the executant) of an artwork. To call a performance or work "mimetic" is, for Aristotle, to situate it in a context of cultural practices that grow out of certain human instincts and develop into institutions that involve communication between artists or "makers" (such as poets or painters), performers (such as actors or musicians), and audiences (whether individuals or groups such as theater audiences). (*The Aesthetics of Mimesis* 153)

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[11] What Aristotle means by poetry might be better translated "creative writing" or "imaginative writing." It is content, rather than metrical form that makes poetry what it is. Poetry deals with "what could be" either necessarily or probably (Kenny xi).

In art, *mimesis* occurs as a kind of relationship between the art, the artist(s), and the audience. When an audience engages with poetry, they engage in a kind of imitation (Aristotle calls this "recognition") that helps them practice and develop understanding of the world—an understanding that is closely tied to practical wisdom. The work of poetry teaches perceptive seeing of the world that the audience imitates. Thus, they learn to see the world with greater discernment and understanding. Orlando engages in this process of imitation by acting out the part that Rosalind, as poet, has given him. In this way he learns to see the world through Rosalind's eyes, thus becoming more perceptively responsive to the world around him.

According to Aristotle, a work of poetry represents a "whole action" in which there is a beginning, middle, and end linked by "probability and necessity." Poetry's ability to represent action in this way is one of the ways that poetry helps its audience develop perceptive responsiveness to the world. Unlike Plato, who claims that poetry only represents particular things like war or statesmanship of which the poet may have no direct knowledge (Goossen 16), Aristotle argues that poetry represents something more general, namely *praxis*: purposeful "actions" of people (*Poet.* I.1448a.2-5). Aristotle has in mind something we might call "whole action" encompassed by his concept of unity in plot. Aristotle writes: "It is the story of the action that is the representation. By the 'story' I mean the plot of the events" (*Poet.* II.1450a.0-10). Later he explains that the story is the representation of a whole action: "In just the same way a story, since it is the representation of an action, should concern an action that is single and entire, with its several incidents so structured that the displacement or removal of any one of them would disturb and dislocate the whole" (*Poet.* II.1451a.30-35).

In constructing a plot, a poet is engaged in the same kind of reasoning that all people should engage in when acting purposefully in the world. The audience then engages in this kind

of reasoning as they recognize how the elements of plot fit together. Events in a plot must be linked together by "probability and necessity" (*Poet.* II.1451a.35-40), which means that each event must probably or necessarily follow from the event that comes before and precede the event that comes after. Aristotle says that poetry does not represent events that actually happened (the job of the historian) because chance events happen all the time in the real world that do not proceed according to probability and necessity, and thus do not fit together into this kind of whole action (*Poet.* II.9.1451a.35-1451b.5). However, when we choose actions, we must reason according to probability and necessity, rather than according to the chance events (for which we cannot plan) that may disrupt probability and necessity. Thus, poetry is better able to represent the reasoning process involved in right action, than is the historian who simply records what has happened. In this way, poetry, because it represents whole action, can instruct its audience in practical wisdom.

Because poetry represents whole actions linked by probability and necessity, Aristotle suggests that poetry deals in universals: "For this reason poetry is more philosophical and more serious than history; poetry utters universal truths, history particular statements. The universal truths concern what befits a person of a certain kind to say or do in accordance with probability and necessity—and that is the aim of poetry" (*Poet.* II.1451b.5-10). As Halliwell persuasively argues, Aristotle does not mean universal in the sense that poetry must be abstracted away from particulars. Indeed, Aristotle suggests elsewhere that specificity is crucial to a successful plot:

> [T]he universals in question are not quasi-Platonic ideas that transcend the realities of our experienced world; nor are they moralistically or didactically formulable principles; nor, finally, are they generalized abstractions. . . . [the universals that the dramatic poet deals with] emerge in and through the perception

> of particulars; they inhere, so to speak, as categories of discrimination and understanding, in perceptual cognition that is built up out of memory and experience. (*The Aesthetics of Mimesis* 193-4)

Rather, in the context of the *Poetics,* Aristotle means universals to be something more like broader patterns that emerge either probably or necessarily from particular actions and events. By representing these broad patterns, poetry teaches its audience to discern these patterns. Halliwell goes on to argue:

> The implication of Aristotle's theory in its entirety is that poetry needs the convincingness of vivid particulars precisely in order to open up for its audiences the quasi-philosophical scope of comprehension and discernment that it is capable of providing. The extent to which universals can be discovered in a work will depend on an interplay between the depth and richness of the poem's imagined world (the complexity of the work's explanatory-cum-causal pattern of human action and experience) and the degree of engaged understanding that is brought to it by the mind of the spectator or reader. (*The Aesthetics of Mimesis* 199)

The upshot of Halliwell's interpretation is that, for Aristotle, what poetry offers is a kind of instruction or habituation in the perceptual abilities that comprise the virtue of practical wisdom. As Halliwell puts it, "Consequently, to "understand and reason what each element is" (4.1448b 16-17), for a given mimetic work, cannot be—or cannot be only—a matter of identifying particulars, but must, on Aristotle's account, involve comprehension of how those particulars make cogent sense within a larger grasp of reality" (199). This type of reasoning looks a lot like the holistic, integrated understanding that a person with practical wisdom will have.

While one might emulate virtuous people, the practice of engaging with poetry allows us to imitate the kinds of perception that can teach us to read situations in our own lives well. Therefore, poetry can play an important role in habituating us to ethical action. Christopher Shields explains:

> As we engage in more advanced forms of *mimêsis*, imitation gives way to *representation* and *depiction*, where we need not be regarded as attempting to *copy* anyone or anything in any narrow sense of the term. For tragedy does not set out merely to copy what is the case, but rather, as we have seen in Aristotle's differentiation of tragedy from history, to speak of what might be, to engage universal themes in a philosophical manner, and to enlighten an audience by their depiction. (Shields)

In other words, for Aristotle, a poet is one of superior discernment, able to model practical wisdom through poetry. Therefore, it is not that good poetry offers a formula for ethical action, as Lodge indicates; rather, it guides us in reading the world well. It is not so much that we imitate the moral principles we find within poetry, as one might think in Aesop's *Fables*, which are not likely to apply all that directly to the specifics of our own lives. Rather, what we imitate is the poet's *way of perceiving*. Through a masterful expression of content in a form that suitably expresses that content, poets guide us into a different and better way of seeing the world. Therefore, according to an Aristotelian framework, aesthetics and ethics will be closely bound. Good poetry takes a form that is able to address the complexity of the world,[12] helping the reader

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[12] Thus, literature that offers a clear moral lesson is likely to be lacking both aesthetically and morally because it fails to grapple with the complexity of life.

attend discerningly to its complex, interrelated details, many of which will be pertinent in ethical choice.[13]

In representing the universals that emerge from particulars, the poet represents the move that must be made in each real-life situation, partly guided by emotional response, in which we must attend carefully to the particulars of a situation, and from there determine the universal, ethical principles that must govern our action. In *As You Like It,* we see Aristotle's conception of the relationship between universals and particulars at work most notably in the way that Orlando becomes a good lover by learning to attend to the particulars of each situation and person. We can also see here how a simple, didactic account (as exemplified in Lodge) of the relationship between literature and ethics—in which literature offers a clear moral lesson or an antecedently developed ethical principle that we can apply to our own lives—falls short of characterizing the full extent of the relationship between literature and ethics. Indeed, Halliwell argues that this kind of moralizing literature that attempts to offer antecedent moral lessons is actually antithetical to what Aristotle means by a universal:

> [I]nsofar as universals are present in a work, they will be present as implicit, "embodied" properties of a poem, not explicit, let alone propositional, elements. This means, among other things, that they are not a matter of the content of reflective or moralizing sentiments expressed by characters *in* the work. . . . Because the universals posited by *Poetics* 9 must be essentially implicit, it may be

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[13] Martha Nussbaum's book, *Love's Knowledge,* explores this connection between ethics and aesthetics on an Aristotelian framework and suggests several ways in which certain novels grapple with the morally relevant complexity of life (6).
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> useful, furthermore, to think of them as, in modern terminology, "emergent aesthetic properties: features not readymade, present on the surface of the work, but dependent on an active, interpretative understanding (chapter 4's process of *manthanein*) on the part of spectator or reader. . . . This last observation should count decisively against all attempts, including that of Schopenhauer, to take the universals of *Poetics* 9 as a matter of "instruction" in general truths of human nature (*The Aesthetics of Mimesis* 197-8)

Because the unique particulars of each situation are so important for discerning the universal ethical action that needs to be taken, poetry will never be able to offer us a formula for ethical choice. Instead, it offers us a window into the complexity of life and the opportunity to practice recognizing that complexity, a skill that we can apply when we read the circumstances of our own lives. The poet, then, functions as a guide, not because she can tell us what to do, but because she can help us see more fully and attentively.

How exactly does the audience participate in *mimesis* along with poets and actors? Answering this question will be crucial to understanding how it is that art teaches. *Mimesis* in art involves an interplay of art object and audience, and, in the case of drama, actors and producers; *mimesis* involves both representation and recognition of the representation. As Halliwell writes: "Artistic mimesis is conceived of as the representation of a world in relation to which the audience imaginatively occupies the position of an absorbed or engrossed witness. That is one reason why concepts of mimesis . . . inescapably raise questions about the relationship between the world *inside* and the world *outside* the mimetic work" (*The Aesthetics of Mimesis* 21-2). According to Aristotle, as we have already discussed, practice makes perfect. Persistent imitation invites a growing understanding, both cognitively and emotionally, of what features of a

situation are relevant to virtuous choice and ultimately to human flourishing (Hursthouse, Pettigrove). Furthermore, poetry can move an audience, both cognitively and emotionally, toward virtuous action. This process has to do both with what is represented in poetry, and also how the audience responds to this representation. The audience participates in poetic *mimesis* by 1) recognizing what is represented (that is, seeing the likeness to things they know in the real world), and 2) feeling the emotions that arise in response to what has been represented and recognized. For example, in tragedy, the audience recognizes the downfall of a character who is somewhat like them (slightly better than most people, but not so good that the audience can't recognize and relate). As they recognize the character's likeness to themselves and the sequence of events leading to the downfall of the character, they feel both pity and fear—pity for the character who is good but has fallen, and fear for themselves because such things might happen to them as well (*Poetics* III.13.1453a.4-6). Recognition is a complex cognitive, emotional response by which the audience participates in *mimesis*.

There is pleasure in recognizing and understanding something that is familiar (I.4.1448b.5-7), but the emotions that accompany the real-life analogue of the representation will be present in the audience as well. It is through recognition that Aristotle says the audience can find pleasure even in difficult emotions. In the case of tragedy, these emotions are pity and fear. The pleasure of recognition when watching a tragedy allows the audience to attune and train their emotions in a way that is important for virtuous character and useful in real-life situations. In other words, the pleasure of recognition keeps the audience coming back for more, which allows for the habituation to practical wisdom. Because engaging with poetry so fully involves our emotional faculties, it becomes a place to train or fine-tune our emotional responses. As discussed earlier, our emotional responses are closely tied to reason. Thus, properly habituating

our emotions through literature is an important aspect of habituating ourselves to virtue. In the experience of engaging with poetry, we don't simply assent cognitively to propositions of what is right and wrong, we also feel what is right and wrong. We might feel dislike, even disgust, for example, toward Oliver because he treats his own brother unjustly, while feeling admiration for Orlando when he sacrifices himself to save his evil brother. Similarly, when we laugh at the comic foibles of Orlando, we are learning to view our own foibles as flaws in need of correction. Thus, the mimetic involvement of the audience, move them toward practical wisdom.

3. Aristotelian Influence on Philip Sidney's Defence of Poesy

While the extent to which Shakespeare and Lodge were familiar with specific Aristotelian texts is unclear, they would have undoubtably been familiar with Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*, written in 1580. As Kenny notes, Sidney's *Defence* exhibits a fairly well-developed awareness of Aristotelian aesthetic theory (xxxvi), and the influence that Sidney had on Shakespeare is well-established.[14] In this section, I will explore the Aristotelian threads in Sidney's *Defence,* in order to suggest the extent to which writers and thinkers of the time would have been engaging with the implicit Aristotelian idea that the value of poetry lies in its ability to teach and delight. Although Sidney is not altogether consistent in his application of Aristotelian poetic theory, I will not be focusing on these inconsistencies, but rather on the sections of Sidney's *Defence* where he is clearly interacting with and mobilizing Aristotelian poetic concepts. The broad interest in such concepts at this time supports the plausibility of my

[14] For a discussion on Sidney's influence on Shakespeare, see Alwin Thaler, *Shakespeare and Sidney: The Influence of the Defense of Poesy* and H.R. Woudhuysen's introduction to *Love's Labour's Lost.*

interpretation of *As You Like It* as a play that enacts the action of *mimesis*. As with Aristotle, though to a lesser extent, Sidney's *Defence* carries with it a long history of scholarship to which it would be impossible for me to do justice in the space of this paper.[15]

Several of the key Aristotelian points outlined in the section above are recognizable, if not wholly developed or consistent, in the *Defence*. Sidney borrows the concept of artistic *mimesis* from Aristotle, but combines Aristotelian poetic theory with that of other thinkers such as Horace. In some places of his *Defence,* Sidney simplifies Aristotle's concept of *mimesis* to something more straightforwardly didactic, anticipating Lodge's explicit invocation of such a model. In other parts of the *Defence*, however, Sidney champions Aristotelian poetic concepts such as probability and necessity.

Early in the *Defence,* Sidney aligns with Aristotle in his discussion of what poetry represents, suggesting that poetry represents universals, understood as action unfolding according to probability and necessity. Sidney writes:

> Truly, Aristotle himself, in his discourse of poesy, plainly determineth this question, saying that poetry is *philosophoteron* and *spoudaioteron* – that is to say, it is more philosophical and more studiously serious than history. His reason is , because poesy dealeth with *katholou,* that is to say with the universal consideration, and the history with *kath' hekaston*, the particular. Now, saith he,

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[15] For a history of literary responses to Sidney in the fifty years following his death, see Gavin Alexander, *Writing After Sidney: the Literary Response to Sir Philip Sidney, 1586-1640.* For more on Sidney's poetics, see A.C. Hamilton, *Sir Philip Sidney: A Study of His Life and Work*, especially chapter 4; Dorothy Connell, *Sir Philip Sidney: The Maker's Mind*; R.W. Maslen's introduction to *An Apology for Poetry, or, the Defence of Poesy*, 3rd ed; and Gavin Alexander's introduction to *Sidney's, 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism.*

> the universal weighs what is fit to be said or done, either in likelihood or necessity. (19)

Like Aristotle, Sidney defines the universals that poetry represents as events that unfold according to what will probably or necessarily happen, distinguishing poetry from history on the grounds that history represents only the specific events that did happen whether or not they unfolded according to probability and necessity. The poet, says Sidney, is superior in teaching to the historian because "he is to frame his example to that which is most reasonable, be it in warlike, politic or private matters, where the historian in his bare 'was' hath many times that which we call fortune to overrule the best wisdom – many times he must tell events whereof he can yield no cause, or if he do, it must be poetically" (Sidney 19-20).

In keeping with Aristotle, Sidney endorses a virtue-ethical position that the highest end for humans is "well-doing" rather than simply "well-knowing":

> so yet are all [kinds of knowledge] directed to the highest end of the mistress-knowledge, by the Greeks called *architektonike,* which stands as I think in the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing and not of well-knowing only – even as the saddler's next end is to make a good saddle, but his further end to serve a nobler faculty, which is horsemanship, so the horseman's to soldiery, and the soldier not only to have the skill but to perform the practice of a soldier. So that the ending end of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that have a most just title to be princes over the rest" (Sidney 12-13).

Although Sidney, in contrast with Aristotle, declares that poetry exceeds philosophy in its ability to teach virtue, Sidney follows Aristotle in suggesting that the proper end of a human is not

simply to have knowledge, but to live well. Sidney's contention that poetry exceeds both history and philosophy in its ability to teach virtue derives from the Aristotelian idea that we must gain practical wisdom – which is a step beyond practical reason in its integration of knowledge and desire – in order to live well. Sidney contends that poetry is the best teacher because it is able to train both knowledge and desire, being more philosophical than history (representing the universal) and more delightful than philosophy. In this contention, Sidney borrows directly from Aristotle, even as he diverges. Thus, Sidney sets the stage for Lodge and Shakespeare, among others, to explore how it is that poetry teaches.

Thomas Lodge's Overt Didacticism

Having laid an Aristotelian and Sidneyan groundwork, I will now turn to a more direct comparison of *Rosalynde* and *As You Like It* to look at the ways in which Shakespeare reworks *Rosalynde* both to adapt it to the stage and to offer a more robust exploration of the meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic question, 'how does art teach?' In their concern with how art teaches, both Lodge in *Rosalynde* and Shakespeare in *As You Like It* owe a debt to Sidney and Aristotle. However, as similar as the basic plot is in both texts, the structure of the text and nature of the characters suggest different views on how art teaches. Lodge's text attempts to teach Aristotelian virtue by demonstrating through a framed narrative the simple message that virtue has its reward and vice its punishment. He supports this message with exhortations to his readers to live virtuously. In this way, the text reveals an underlying assumption that art teaches in an overtly didactic way. Ironically, this method of teaching virtue cuts against some of the key tenants of the virtue ethic that Lodge is exhorting his reader toward.

For Aristotle, virtue is acquired by persistent imitation of virtuous actions. This imitation is a kind of representation, or *mimesis*. So far so good for Lodge, we might think: he is giving his readers examples of virtuous people to imitate. More than that, he is telling his readers explicitly which characters are virtuous and should therefore be emulated, so that readers can't miss the point. The problem with this approach is that Lodge's one-dimensional, formulaic characters, though they may hammer home a moral message, leave the reader with merely a vague, even inaccurate, sense of what virtue looks like in action; the text offers general moral principles vaguely and unrealistically instantiated. In this way, the text proves to be of limited use on an Aristotelian framework in providing a model for the reader's imitation of virtue. For Aristotle, general moral principles don't get us very far toward becoming virtuous. Thus, for example, it is one thing to know abstractly, and even desire, that one should be temperate, and another to know exactly what temperance will look like instantiated in a particular situation in one's own life. To gain this kind of understanding of particulars, one must imitate the actions of virtuous people acting within a complex world. Moreover, one must imitate not only their actions, buts also the way virtuous people understand and respond to the complexities the world offers. By imitating this way of seeing the world, one will be habituated to the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom, which makes the acquisition of the other virtues possible. By practicing the virtue of practical wisdom, one is able to get beyond mere imitation and act virtuously within particular situations. For Aristotle, poetry helps us live well because it habituates us to a better way of seeing and understanding the world. Unfortunately for Lodge's stated purpose of teaching virtue, his text does not get much beyond general moral principles, nor does it portray the complexities of the world that might help the reader better understand the world. As a result, Lodge's virtuous

characters are not all that useful as models of virtue, and his way of seeing the world does not contribute very far to the understanding of his reader.

On the other hand, in *As You Like It,* Shakespeare enacts the process by which poetry teaches. He is representing the action of *mimesis*, thereby querying the meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic assumptions that Lodge is making in *Rosalynde.* In *As You Like It,* art plays a crucial role in helping the characters develop and learn how to live well within the world of the play. Perceptive poet that he is, Shakespeare's representation of the action of representation ends up being truer to life, and therefore more Aristotelian than Lodge's overtly didactic text. Whereas *Rosalynde's* world is simplified to straightforward aphorisms, *As You Like It* explores the ways in which art shapes people, helping them understand the complexity of the world.

The features of Lodge's text that Shakespeare altered are 1) its explicit, formulaic moralizing, 2) the fixed nature of its characters, conventional to a prose romance, and 3) its insertions of poetry that merely decorate the text rather than move the plot forward or develop a character. Discarding the proverbial moralizing lifts the requirement that the text straightforwardly illustrate a moral point. In *As You Like It*, the world of the play becomes less constrained and more complex. As a result, the audience too becomes less constrained by the moral message and better able to perceive these complexities. In other words, *As You Like It* grants the existence of a world that is not governed so straightforwardly by moral formulas. In this way, the play is more able than *Rosalynde* to teach practical wisdom. The complexities of the world of the play manifest in complex characters who grow and develop through their interactions with art. In *As You Like It,* even the 'good characters' exhibit flaws, they learn and develop, and they do so through the mimetic practices of poetry. Thus, as Shakespeare represents the action of representation, sublimating to the structural level of the text what Lodge limits to

the discursive and narrative level, he reinflates a more nuanced Aristotelian position on the relationship between art and ethics.

Rosalynde is a prose romance that is elaborately nested within multiple frames. Each of these frames function to offer explicit moral direction, as well as instructions to the reader to read the story for its moral message. The primary frame occurs within the world of the story as the instructions of a dying father to his sons on how to live a virtuous life. The father declares: "I will bequeath you infallible precepts that shall lead you unto virtue" (2-3). Moreover, the father sets himself up as the virtuous person whose actions his sons, and by implication the readers too, should imitate in order to become virtuous themselves: "Let mine honour be the glass of your actions, and the fame of my virtues the lodestar to direct the course of your pilgrimage. Aim your deeds by my honourable endeavours, and show yourselves scions worthy of so flourishing a tree" (3). Using the metaphor of a glass (or mirror) and lodestar, John of Bordeaux suggests to his sons and to the reader that virtue is acquired in the Aristotelian way by imitating a guide. Tellingly, however, these two metaphors place the emphasis on the fame and honour that the father's virtues have attained. It is this honour, more significantly even than the actions of the father (though the two are connected) that guides the actions of his sons. In other words, the father's life follows a simple formula in which acting according to virtue will be rewarded with honour and the achievement of such honour or failure to do so will be the measure of one's actions. It is this simple formula that his sons must follow, and by which they will see their own actions reflected, either as honoured or dishonoured. This formulaic notion of virtue echoes throughout the story as an over-simplification of the Aristotelian position.

The characters in *Rosalynde* live exclusively by proverbs and aphorisms. After the father has gone on for several pages of proverbial instruction to his sons, he closes his speech in the

following way: “Seeing then man is so mortal, be careful that thy life be virtuous, that thy death may be full of admirable honours; so shalt thou challenge fame to be thy fautor, and put oblivion to exile with thine honourable actions” (6). The speech suggests that virtue is a formula that can be adequately captured by aphorisms and measured by the fame or oblivion one achieves. Virtue is easy to recognize because it always brings with it honours. Having delivered his speech, John of Bordeaux dies and the story proceeds to tell of the exploits of a wicked son and a good son. These exploits straightforwardly illustrate the precepts set forth by the father. The oldest son Saladyne decides to act wickedly by disinheriting his younger brother, Rosader, and keeping him as a servant (10-11), later attempting to have him killed (14). In swift and convenient consequence of Saladyne’s actions, he is thrown in prison and Rosader runs off to the forest of Arden to escape his brother’s villainous plots. In keeping with the virtues he continually exhibits (such as courage, patience, etc), his fortunes are reversed in the forest of Arden when he meets his beloved Rosalynde, who has been banished to the forest, gains the respect of her father, the banished duke, and eventually marries her, by which point the happy (and virtuous) couple have also been restored to their fortune.

Meanwhile, Saladyne has had an epiphany in prison, realized that he doesn’t like the consequences of villainy, and gone in search of his brother to reconcile and make things right. Since he has reformed his ways and chosen in the end a path of virtue, he too is soon rewarded by honour. He falls in love with the banished daughter of the usurping duke, marries her, and is restored to his land when the wicked duke is killed in battle. Rosader, however, being more virtuous, receives the greater honour, becoming heir to the throne. Thus, the father’s prediction comes true: “for if the inward thoughts be discovered by outward shadows, Rosader will exceed you all in bounty and honour” (3). Leaving no ambiguity as to who will experience the honours

that follow virtue, the narrative voice continually comments on who is virtuous and who is wicked. For example, Rosader, in defending himself against Saladyne, is described as "so resolute and with his resolution so valiant" (13), whereas Saldyne's plotting is described as "his villainous determination" (14). Framed by the father's proverbial speech, the plot that unfolds exists to illustrate the father's message to his sons. The point of the tale is clearly, in Sidneyan terms, to set virtue out in her best colors, teaching by showing the rewards that come to the virtuous person, and the punishments that come to unbridled wickedness.

In case there was any doubt of this aim, two additional frames beyond the world of the story instruct the audience to read the tale for its moral lesson. One of these frames consists of a fictional letter from the dying Euphues (for whom the alternative title of the piece, "Euphues Golden Legacy," is named) to Philautus, bequeathing him the story of Rosalynde so that he may use it to instruct his sons in virtue:

> Thou has sons by Camilla, as I hear, who being young in years have green thoughts, and nobly born have great minds; bend them in their youth like the willow, lest thou bewail them in their age for their wilfulness. I have bequeathed them a golden legacy, because I greatly love thee. Let them read it as Archelaus did Cassender, to profit by it; and in reading let them meditate, for I have approved it the best method. . . . Here may they read that virtue is the king of labours, opinion the mistress of fools; that unity is the pride of nature, and contention the overthrow of families. (xxx)

This frame offers the reader Lodge's theory of how poetry teaches. In addressing a fictional audience through Euphues, Lodge is able to instruct his actual audience in how to read *Rosalynde.* Here, as in Sir John's speech, he suggests the Aristotelian principle that virtue is

gained through habituation, but the emphasis is placed, not on the habituation of actions more generally, but on the habituation of thoughts. The sons to whom the story is directed have "green thoughts" that must be bent like the willow in order to eventually hold a proper shape on their own. The story of *Rosalynde* is set forth as that which will bend the thoughts and wills of the young toward virtue. As a whole, the text suggests that the correct bent for the thoughts is to believe that living by proverbial virtue will bring honour. This bent of the thoughts will presumably motivate them to live virtuously, but it is less important, perhaps, to practice virtue than to motivate actions by dwelling on virtue's reward. Like Sir John, Euphues presents virtue as a series of aphorisms: "virtue is the king of labours," and "opinion the mistress of fools" (xxx). Thus, poetry teaches by illustrating a proverbial formula for living well.

Euphues, a figure borrowed from the prose fiction of John Lyly and often invoked as a literary persona during this era, ties Lodge's text still further to Sidney's *Defence.* Euphues, which means "graceful" or "witty" in Greek represents the inventiveness of the poet in his capacity as fictional storyteller. Associated as he is with wit, Euphues is well-suited on a Sidneyan view to tell a story that will teach and delight. Moreover, the story that Euphues bequeaths, named "Euphues Golden Legacy," invokes Sidney's golden world created by the vigor of the poet's invention. Thus, the wit of the fictional poet creates a golden world with which to teach virtue.

Offering one more frame, *Rosalynde* closes with an epilogue in which Lodge addresses his actual audience with a summary of the moral lessons he intends to teach through the story:

> Here, gentlemen, may you see in Euphues' Golden Legacy, that such as neglect their fathers' precepts, incur much prejudice; that division in nature, as it is a blemish in nurture, so 'tis a breach of good fortunes; that

> virtue is not measured by birth but by action; that younger brethren, though inferior in years, yet may be superior to honours; that concord is the sweetest conclusion, and amity betwixt brothers more forceable than fortune. (165)

These lessons are, of course, directly illustrated in the plot in which Saladyne suffers when he disregards his father's precepts, and experiences a turn of fortune when he reforms and reconciles with his brother. However, Rosader, even though he is a younger brother, gains more honour than Saladyne because his actions are unrelentingly virtuous from the start; restating these lessons at the end in a series of aphorisms reinforces a formulaic notion of virtue and sets forth poetry as an excellent way to teach such formulas. Moreover, the author's direct address to an actual audience hammers home the notion that such moral formulas are broadly applicable. They are not just useful to Sir John's sons, or Philautus's sons, but to the readers as well. The text suggests that virtue is a simple formula best taught through heavy-handedly didactic stories that illustrate these proverbs. In this way, Lodge assumes a simplistically didactic meta-ethical, meta-aesthetic theory about how art teaches. As we will see, the epilogue to *As You Like It* offers a playful reimagining of Lodge's epilogue, suggesting to the audience that art does impact life, but not by way of explicit moralizing.

Unlike Shakespeare, whose characters develop throughout the play with life-like complexity, Lodge offers a relatively flat, fixed cast of characters in keeping with romance conventions. Each character is a simple type. Rosader is a virtuous, valiant brother, responding predictably in each situation according to these characteristics. Scenes in which Shakespeare depicts Orlando's (Rosader's name in AYLI) actions as social blunders, Lodge depicts the same actions as virtuous. For example, Rosader bursts combatively into Gerismond's camp in the

forest of Arden, demanding food, but his aggressive stance is not criticized as it is in *As You Like It*, and is even associated with the Aristotelian virtue of courage:

> Therefore, if thou be a gentleman, give meat to men, and to such men as are every way worthy of life. Let the proudest squire that sits at thy table rise and encounter with me in any honourable point of activity whatsoever, and if he and thou prove me not a man, send me away comfortless. If thou refuse this, as a niggard of thy cates, I will have amongst you with my sword; for rather will I die valiantly, than perish with so cowardly an extreme. (60-1)

Despite Rosader's outburst, Gerismond, "looking him earnestly in the face" immediately recognizes Rosader to be a "proper . . . gentleman" (61). As this scene illustrates, the character of Rosader does not develop throughout the story. All his actions simply reinforce his type as a virtuous character following his father's precepts without deviation.

Similarly, Rosalynde is simply a beautiful, virtuous lady, lacking the wit with which Shakespeare's Rosalind so artfully sets her world to rights. Whereas, in *As You Like It,* the usurping duke banishes Rosalind because her subtlety and smoothness speak to the people and make them pity her (I.3.75-8), in *Rosalynde*, the usurping Duke banishes Rosalynde because he fears the kind of man her "heavenly and divine" beauty might attract: "some one of the peers will aim at her love, end the marriage, and then in his wife's right attempt the kingdom" (28). Although Rosalynde does orchestrate some of the plot development in the forest of Arden (for instance, she assumes the shepherd's guise of Ganymede, induces Rosader to woo her as if she were Rosalynde, and reveals her true identity at the end so that she can marry him), these orchestrations are a diversion from the main action rather than its development. Whereas Shakespeare's Rosalind wishes to test and train Orlando's character before she reveals her true

identity, it is unclear why Lodge's Rosalynde does not immediately reveal her true identity to Rosader; they both seem already fixed in their love, which does not alter or develop through the courtship charade. The only motivation suggested for this play-acting is that Ganymede "was loath to let [Rosader] pass out of her presence" (85). It seems her purpose could have been accomplished more speedily by revealing her true identity at this moment. Her character fulfills the simple type of a beautiful maiden, and her play-acting serves little purpose in moving the plot along.

As with the other characters, Saladyne fulfills the type of the villainous brother who forsakes virtue in pursuit of unjust wealth. Early in the narrative he councils himself:

> What, man, thy father is dead, and he can neither help thy fortunes, nor measure thy actions; therefore bury his words with his carcase, and be wise for thyself. . . . Thy brother is young . . . suppress his wits with a base estate, and though he be a genteleman by nature, yet form him anew, and make him a peasant by nurture. (10)

From this point on until his imprisonment, his actions toward Rosader accord with his self-council, but of course, his plans fail. Rosader's character is not formed anew, and Saladyne soon finds himself imprisoned, the just heavenly reward for his villainy (100). This punishment results in a sudden change of character, but the transformation is so abrupt that it does not accord well with the Aristotelian notion of virtue developed through habituation. Rather, virtue comes from experiencing the painful consequences of vicious actions. The formulaic nature of character and the lack of realistic character formation in *Rosalynde* supports a simplistic notion of virtue that cuts against the virtue theoretic view that virtue is deeply context dependent, achieved through

nuanced understanding of the world, and that virtuous character is developed over time through habituation.

In keeping with the fixed nature of the characters, the many verse interludes throughout the text are largely decorative, merely illustrating various conventions, rather than developing the plot or characters. For example, Rosalynde's madrigal (33) and Rosader's sonnet (79) embellish the reader's sense of these characters' love for one another. However, removing these poems from the story would not alter the narrative. Monatus hangs two sonnets on his sheep-hook "as labels of his loves and fortunes" (151). In this way, the poems signify various conventional postures without moving the plot forward or giving the reader a better sense of each character. The way in which verse decoratively illustrates the narrative provides an interesting parallel to the way in which the narrative decoratively illustrates proverbial moral precepts without really developing the reader's understanding of these precepts. In contrast, Shakespeare weaves poetry into the very fabric of *As You Like It.* Orlando's poems (with which Shakespeare may have been obliquely poking fun at Lodge's stilted verse) give Rosalind a sense of his ineptitude as a lover and motivate her to use *mimesis* to teach him the arts of love. Through overt moralizing, fixed characters, and decorative verse, *Rosalynde* operates on the assumption that poetry teaches by offering clear moral lessons illustrated through highly contrived stories in which virtue is rewarded and vice punished.

4. An Aristotelian Reading of *As You Like It*

Shakespeare has traditionally been characterized as anti-Aristotelian in his approach to theatre. This characterization, as Jonathan Goossen has noted, in turn derives from unflattering misunderstandings of Aristotle, originating in the sixteenth century and persisting to the present,

through which Aristotle and his *Poetics* came to be seen "as one of the chief sources of those stultifying dramatic rules that smothered Jonson but were powerless over Shakespeare" (1). Like Goossen, I wish to challenge this (mis)characterization of Shakespeare and Aristotle. I would suggest instead that *As You Like It* presents a deeply Aristotelian view of the relationship between theatre and ethics. In the world of the play, art has a restorative effect. As the characters of the play encounter art and engage in their own theatrical "seeming," they are moved into fuller self-knowledge, wholeness, and flourishing. The society of the play begins in a state of rupture and corruption—with enmity and violence between brothers and a self-serving duke who has seized power—but gradually, through artistic intervention, the world of the play is restored to a state of order, community, and well-being that, if not a permanent state of happily-ever-after, at least gestures toward a sort of Aristotelian *eudaimonia*, or state of flourishing for its characters. In *Rosalynde,* the plot is moved stiltedly along by proverbial moral formulas that dictate that virtue must always be rewarded and vice always punished. Within Lodge's narrative, the artistic interventions that take place have little meaningful effect upon the restoration that takes place at the end. In Aristotelian terms, these events are not linked by probability and necessity. *As You Like It* is different. In Shakespeare's play, art is the driving force linking events in the plot.

While the straightforward nature of the moral point in *Rosalynde* reveals the underlying assumption that art teaches by illustrating moral formulas, Shakespeare depicts a much less straightforward world in *As You Like It.* In the complexity that he adds to the world of the play, he obscures the moral message of the source material and simultaneously brings to life a richer, and more Aristotelian, depiction of the relationship between art and ethics. Shakespeare offers a world in which characters grow and develop through their interactions with art, even as they encounter complicated trials. Art shapes them and shapes their responses to their situations,

ultimately enabling Rosalind, the master poet, to set her world to right, not because she lives according to proverbial formulas that apply to all people at all times, as do Lodge's virtuous characters, but because her understanding of the particularities of her world, gained at least in part through art, enables her to respond well to a variety of situations, while also teaching others to do the same.

The characters in *As You Like It* are more complex than the characters in *Rosalynde,* who are already more-or-less fixed types. However, this greater complexity should not obscure the fact that, through the plot progression of *As You Like It*, the characters grow more complex, rather than simply revealing the complexity they already possess. Indeed, their ability to grow is part of their complexity. As William West has argued, "the characters start out relatively incomplete and uncomplicated, and then, by testing their desires against what the world gives them, put themselves in much more complicated, much less presumed, relations to both world and desire" ("Essays of Virtue, Essays of Bias" 154). Shakespeare's characters grow by testing their desires through art. In this way, Rosalind's play-acting allows her to test what it is like to be a shepherd boy, the love interest of a shepherdess, and Orlando's lover. Art enables these characters to grow by enabling them to experience and thus understand the complexities of their world more fully. According to Aristotle, this is exactly how poetry teaches. Poetry provides its audience with the opportunity to practice recognizing the way in which probability and necessity causes a certain chain of events to unfold in particular situations. This practice teaches the audience to perceive well how their own actions in particular circumstances will unfold according to probability and necessity, leading to particular outcomes that may be either desirable or undesirable. In depicting how art impacts the lives of various characters, *As You Like It* teaches its audience to better perceive how art might impact their own lives.

The metatheatrical character of Rosalind, the poet-teacher, and especially her double disguise in which she pretends to be herself, allows Shakespeare to explore the question of how poetry teaches. This feature of the double disguise, unique among Shakespeare's plays, makes apparent Shakespeare's alignment with Aristotle's poetic theory. In the end, art helps us to be ourselves in a state of flourishing. As West has argued:

> [In *As You Like It*] the characters themselves are observers, experiment, and experimenters. They are the ones who ask "what if?" and they ask about themselves. They do what they can to find out what the world would be like if certain things in it were different than they are. They ask because each of them finds him or herself in a world that is not as they like it, and they seek to find out other ways of being in the world that may be more to their liking. (149-50)

Extending West's insight to explore Shakespeare's relationship to Aristotle, we might apply Aristotelian terms to the action of the play: characters in *As You Like It* search for *eudaimonia* (for a state of well-being or flourishing) even as they find themselves in a world in which they are not flourishing. In their quests to make the world more as they like it (more conducive to their flourishing), their explorations of possibilities through art, or "seeming," play a crucial role in teaching them how to flourish. In watching the artistic exploration of the characters in this play, the audience too learns something important about *how* art can guide them toward flourishing. The play's representation of representation produces recognition in the audience, teaching them to understand the world more fully so that they can act with greater wisdom within it.

The first act sets up Rosalind as a skilled artist who will use her abilities to direct events toward her own well-being. We see from the first entrance of Rosalind and Celia that the play

will be concerned with the human end of happiness; it will explore how to achieve this end when life is in a state of rupture. Celia begins this scene by appealing to an unhappy Rosalind, "I pray thee Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry" (1.2.1), to which Rosalind mournfully responds, "Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of, and would you yet were merrier: unless you could teach me to forget a banished father you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure" (1.2.2-5). Rosalind's world is in such a state of disarray that, even as she appears happier than she is, she does not see how she can really be happy. However, a few lines later Rosalind acquiesces to Celia's request to be merry: "From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see, what think you of falling in love?" (1.2.22-3). In these lines that mingle playfulness with melancholy, we find a blueprint for the play, a blueprint that ultimately exceeds the boundaries of theatre, as the epilogue demonstrates, to become a blueprint for real life. Rosalind resolves to devise sports with which to banish her sadness and make herself merry; she proposes a game of make-believe in which she falls in love. With Celia, her accomplice and faithful cousin, she will use *mimesis* in the form of play-acting to achieve happiness, even as the daughter of a banished duke. Rosalind may show more mirth than she is mistress of, but as we see in the celebration she has orchestrated by the end of the play, her final end is to be mistress of all the mirth that she shows. Rosalind's art aims for nothing less than *eudaimonia*.

Speedily, the sport of falling in love that Rosalind proposes becomes more than mere sport, demonstrating that Rosalind's play-acting aims to alter reality. By the third scene of act 1, Rosalind's sport has taken on a seriousness that reveals a sincerity in her aims. Though she may play at falling in love (as she goes on to do in the Forest of Arden in the double disguise of Ganymede playing Rosalind), sincere love is her goal. Having met and fallen for Orlando in act 1, Rosalind's melancholy takes on more than a hint of lovesickness. When Celia asks if

Rosalind's brooding silence is for her father, Rosalind responds: "No, some of this is for my child's father. O how full of briers is this working-day world!" (I.3.11-2). Though the banter is playful, the tone of regret suggests Rosalind's sincerity. She is not after the short-term happiness of flirtation, which her "sport" has already achieved. She is pining after the father of her (future) child, which implies that she is after the more sincere happiness of a long-term love relationship, perhaps with Orlando. Celia's dismissive solution to Rosalind's plight is found in her council to stay a conventional course: "They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery. If we walk not in the trodden paths our very petticoats will catch them" (I.3.13-5). According to Celia's metaphor, Rosalind's melancholy is both trivial and easily avoidable – merely burs that she can easily shake off. Moreover, if she sticks to the trodden path, she will altogether avoid the annoyance of burs. The implied solution, according to Celia, is to stick to a conventional course. Whatever is the conventional course that Celia has in mind (perhaps Shakespeare is obliquely referencing Lodge's overly conventional portrayal of virtue), Rosalind rebukes Celia's council for its inadequacy: "I could shake them off my coat. These burs are in my heart" (I.3.16-7). Despite Celia's insistence on convention as an easy solution to Rosalind's sadness, Rosalind understands that a conventional, well-trodden path will not be adequate in her circumstances either to avoid these so-called burs (after all, it was not *her* deviation from convention that caused her father's banishment), or to shake off the burs. They have attached to her heart and therefore are far more than mere annoyance. As the plot soon reveals, her path toward happiness (by which she will be rid of these burs) will require of her an artistry that is far from conventional. It will require her to play the role of Ganymede, and then as Ganymede, to pretend to be Rosalind. Rosalind must come into her own as an Aristotelian poet in order to set her world to rights. Her art must represent with such discernment and skill that it responds well to an

unconventional situation and helps both her audience and herself develop the practical wisdom that will lead to flourishing.

In his devious way, Duke Frederick understands better than Celia that Rosalind has the potential to set the world to rights using her burgeoning skill as an artist. Feeling his position threatened, he attempts to turn Celia against Rosalind by pointing out Rosalind's skill in playing her part: "She is too subtle for thee, and her smoothness,/ Her very silence, and her patience/ Speak to the people, and they pity her./ Thou art a fool. She robs thee of thy name,/ And thou wilt show more bright and seem more virtuous/ When she is gone" (1.3.75-81). Duke Frederick seems to admit here that Rosalind plays her part (as virtuous daughter to a duke) so skillfully – with such *subtlety* and *smoothness* – that the hearts of the people are inclined to restore her to her throne. In true Aristotelian fashion, Rosalind's skill as an artist has already begun to fine-tune the emotions of the people, giving them the desire and will to restore reality to the way it should be. They pity Rosalind and wish to restore her to her name.

What Duke Frederick fails, to his detriment, to recognize is that the best artistry aims toward truth and goodness, just as Rosalind's does as she continues to play the part that was unjustly taken from her. In aiming toward proper understanding and representation of the world, the best art trains the understanding of the audience, creating a more virtuous society. Like Rosalind, Duke Frederick is also an artist of sorts, but his art is one of misrepresentation and misunderstanding that displaces people from their parts. In becoming duke, he throws the kingdom into disarray by stealing a part that should not be his and banishing the rightful duke and Rosalind in the process. He even displaces his own daughter into the role of a shepherdess. Because his art does not aim toward true representation and understanding of the world, it fails to have a restorative effect. He is one who mars rather than one who makes. His failed

representations stem from his failure to understand that his own well-being depends on the well-being of society as a whole. What is more, he councils Celia to join him in his act, caring only that Celia *seem* virtuous, not that she actually aim toward virtue. Thus, the excellent aims of Rosalind's art make her the better artist, even as she plays a diverse set of roles, not all of which strictly align with reality. The point is not that art must always have a one-to-one correspondence with reality, or that it can never be fictional. Rather, the point is that even artistic fictions should represent truths about reality in a way that develops our ability to perceive the world well. We find this idea in Aristotle's insistence that poetry represents whole action and therefore speaks in universals, offering a nuanced, holistic perception of the world. In the end of the play, the aims, and therefore the worth of Rosalind and Duke Fredericks' artistic practices are revealed for what they are. Rosalind orchestrates a happy ending, while Duke Frederick comes to see his deeds for what they are and abandons his aims altogether, leaving the kingdom to the rightful duke.

Rosalind, the discerning poet, dons her Ganymede disguise in Act 1.3 in response to her banishment and its further rupturing of her world. Rosalind laments the necessity of the disguise but recognizes its wisdom. Two wealthy women travelling alone may well be targets of violent assault: "Alas, what danger will it be to us, / Maids as we are, to travel forth so far!" (1.3.107-9). This tone of lament continues: "Oh Jupiter, how weary are my spirits! . . . I could find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel and to cry like a woman" (2.4.1-5). Rosalind's solution to her plight is one born of necessity: "Were it not better, / Because that I am more than common tall, / That I did suit me all points like a man, / . . . A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart, / Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will. / We'll have a swashing and a martial outside, / As many other mannish cowards have, / That do outface it with their semblances" (1.3.113-21). Of necessity, she, along with Celia, now utterly forsakes Celia's earlier council to stick to the

trodden path. Acting new roles, the two cousins now set out, both literally and figuratively, to exchange a trodden, well-kept path for the rugged forest of Arden. The necessity of their disguises further demonstrates that the aims of their artistry are ultimately toward flourishing. In displacing the rightful duke and seizing this role for himself, Duke Frederick was aiming toward misrepresentation. He was willing to mar everything and everyone else around him in order to make himself duke. Thus, even if he mistakenly thinks that he is aiming toward his own flourishing, he has utterly forsaken any aim toward what is good, and true. Rosalind and Celia on the other hand are not aiming for misrepresentation they are aiming for a more holistic well-being. At present, their future happiness depends on their ability to protect themselves in a perilous world. Rosalind, the better artist of the two cousins, volunteers to take the more difficult part of shepherd boy (difficult in that it is the one most different from her accustomed role). With their well-being in mind, Rosalind recognizes that if she appears to be a man their vulnerability will be lessened. Unlike her wicked uncle, Rosalind aims her actions much more skillfully and virtuously toward flourishing.

However, this is not to say that Rosalind simply aims to come full circle back to the role in which she begins the play. As West has noted, her character is not complete when the play begins. Rather, the plot depicts the process of her development through art. By the end of the play, her acting of multiple parts has made her a more dynamic Rosalind; Poetry and play-acting give her opportunities to test various possibilities and more fully understand who she is becoming and what she wants. This trajectory of growth is most readily apparent in the developing love between Rosalind and Orlando. In part, her love for Orlando develops as she becomes an audience member herself. On observing one of Silvius's poetic, love-sick laments for Phoebe, Rosalind declares, "Alas, poor shepherd, searching of thy wound,/I have by hard

adventure found mine own" (2.4.41-2). What we see here is Aristotelian recognition. As Rosalind observes Silvius act out his unrequited love for Phoebe, she identifies, or recognizes, a similarity to her own experience. This recognition helps her better able to identify and understand that she loves Orlando. In this way, her love crystalizes through engagement with art. The way in which Rosalind engages with Silvius's art in this scene also accords with Aristotle's conception of artistic *mimesis* in which the audience participates actively in the imitation. The way she observes Silvius is described in active terms. She "searches" for his wound and calls this searching a "hard adventure." Her description of how she observes Silvius suggests a kind of immersive viewing experience of an audience member who has been fully swept up into the world of the play and the life of the characters. In Act 3.4, Rosalind further acknowledges the effect that such art can have on the desires and understanding of people in the audience. Corin has just offered to take Rosalind to view Sivlius and Pheobes' performance of love and disdain, calling it "a pageant truly played" (3.4.48). To this, Rosalind enthusiastically responds, "O come, let us remove. / The sight of lovers feedeth those in love" (3.4.52-3). As Rosalind identifies with the emotions and desires of Silvius, her love is fed; that is to say, she gains clarity into her own emotions and desires and her own love grows. She imitates the artist's perceptive understanding of the world, and through this imitation she comes to understand herself better than she did before. Through imitation, she acquires more fully the virtue of practical wisdom.

In order to achieve her goal, which has been in place all along (to be merry), but is gradually gaining clarity and substance throughout the play (to gain happiness by becoming Orlando's lover), Rosalind must learn to manage a complex set of parts not all of which are

compatible.[16] Unlike Lodge's Rosalynde, who had simply to live by aphorisms, Shakespeare's Rosalind must depend on her improvisational abilities as an artist to achieve her aim of happiness. Rosalind recognizes the complexity of this task when she first encounters Orlando in the Forest of Arden and realizes with a regretful cry that she is playing the wrong part to be Orlando's lover: "Alas the day, what shall I do with my doublet and hose!" (3.2.211-12). This moment of consternation suggests the degree to which Rosalind is getting by on improvisation. She is not living by proverbs and formulas. These would be inadequate to guide her in such strange and unpredictable circumstances. Rather, she is making things up as she goes. Through no fault of her own, she is well off the trodden path that Celia initially recommended. Her art, guided by her practical wisdom, is her only resource for setting her world to rights. Fortunately for Rosalind and Orlando's future happiness, Rosalind rises to the occasion and turns an awkward situation to her advantage. After all, she has doubts about Orlando's fitness to be her lover. For one thing, his love poetry is terrible, as she points out to Celia (3.2.159-65). Thus, Rosalind's disguise provides a convenient opportunity to test Orlando's abilities as a lover and even teach him to play this part with greater skill. To this end, Rosalind as Ganymede offers to play Rosalind so that Orlando can practice wooing (3.305-6).

Rosalind manages the complexity of her various roles by becoming Orlando's poet-teacher. This enables Orlando to learn practical wisdom for himself, thus equipping him to be a good lover and enabling them both to achieve their flourishing. Once again, aphorisms and moral

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[16] Note that the good toward which Rosalind's life aims is not entirely consistent with Aristotle's articulation of a good human life, even though her idea of how to achieve this good is Aristotelian in nature. On this point, I would note that one might disagree with Aristotle on what counts as a good human life, while still finding something valuable in his moral psychology.

formulas cannot stand up to life's complexities. Their flourishing ultimately hinges on their ability to respond perceptively and wisely to the particulars of each situation. Orlando demonstrates his need of such a teacher. We might say he has a good heart, in that he desires to do the right thing. As Oliver observes, Orlando is "full of noble devise" (I.I.156). He has noble intention or purpose. Yet, despite good intentions, he often fails to do the right thing.

The contrast between Rosalind and Orlando is established in Act 1. While Rosalind responds as an artist to the hardness of her fortune by devising sports that will eventually make her merry, Orlando, whose circumstances are similarly hard, devises no such sports and seems at a loss as to how to improve his situation: "I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it" (1.1.22-3). Orlando even admits that circumstances are beginning to get the better of his natural inclinations toward goodness. What he needs is a different kind of habituation than his wicked brother offers. Orlando complains that his brother Oliver has been treating him contrary to the dying charge of their father to "breed [Orlando] well" (1.1.4). Rather, Oliver keeps him "rustically at home—or, to speak more properly . . . at home unkept" (1.1.6-7). Orlando adds: "Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me. He lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education" (1.1.15-9). Oliver's method of education undermines and removes Orlando's gentility. Though Orlando resists this mining, he does not know how to fix his situation. He would do well to imitate Rosalind's practical wisdom by devising sports that aim toward flourishing. While Rosalind and Celia in Act 1.2 engage in witty banter with Touchstone that begins to display their capacity as artists, Orlando in Act 1.1 blusters at his brother and sullenly bemoans the mistreatment he endures, even seizing Oliver by the throat and crying: "Wert thou not my

brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pulled out thy tongue for saying so" (I.I.55-8). Though Orlando's outburst is certainly understandable, it does nothing to remedy his situation, but rather incites his brother to plot his death. His outburst contrasts with the calculated way in which Rosalind devises sports and responds to her banishment by making a play. Inviting further contrast between Rosalind and Orlando, when Oliver demands of Orlando, "Now, sir, what make you here?" (I.I.27), he puns on 'create', thus inviting the audience to think of Orlando as an artist. However, Orlando responds bitterly, "Nothing, I am not taught to make anything" (I.I.28). Lacking education, Orlando lacks the practical wisdom of an artist that would allow him to understand and represent the world well. Unable to make anything, Orlando, 'unkept' as he is, knows only how to "mar" things, as Oliver points out, when he sarcastically responds to Orlando, "What mar you then, Sir?" (I.I.29). Jaques uses the very word "mar" later on in reference to Orlando's poetry when he declares, "I pray you mar no more trees with writing love-songs in their bark" (3.2.251). The unschooled Orlando needs a skilled poet to teach him to *make*, rather than *mar*.

When Orlando reaches the forest of Arden, he continues to blunder. This time he misreads the forest of Arden as a deeply hostile environment: "If this uncouth forest yield anything savage, I will either be food for it or bring it for food to thee (2.6.6-7). Responding in like manner, he bursts violently in on Duke senior's camp and demands food. This outburst prompts the Duke to ask him: "Art thou thus boldened, man, by thy distress? / Or else a rude despiser of good manners? That in civility thou seem'st so empty?" (2.7.91-93), to which Orlando responds: "Speak you so gently? Pardon me, I pray you. / I thought that all things had been savage here, / And therefore put I on the countenance / Of stern commandment" (2.7.106-109). In misreading the situation, Orlando has once again shown a lack of practical wisdom and

failed to act appropriately in response to his situation. When the Duke gently confronts his mistake, Orlando asks pardon, showing that he has the capacity to be taught. Still, he needs a teacher.

We see Orlando's lack of practical wisdom again in his methods of wooing Rosalind. Orlando seems unable to express his love to Rosalind except through hackneyed love poetry. On reading Orlando's poetry, Rosalind laments, "O most gentle Jupiter! What tedious homily of love have you wearied your parishioners withal'" (3.2.150-1). Because his poetry is too conventional—too overtly copied— it has the wrong emotional effect, moving his audience to weariness, rather than to love, and causing Rosalind to doubt his sincerity. It seems that left to its own devices, his art will fail to bring about the happy reality he seeks. Rosalind, disguised as Ganymede, reveals her lack of faith in Orlando's performance by telling him he has none of the marks of a man in love (3.2.352-62), and instead pointing out, "You are rather point-device in your accoutrements, as loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other" (3.2.364-6). To Rosalind, Orlando appears too self-absorbed to be really in love. Similarly, Celia observes, "but for [Orlando's] verity in love, I do think him as concave as a covered goblet, or a worm-eaten nut" (3.4.22-3). Both Celia and Rosalind suspect that Orlando's love-sick exterior has no real truth or substance. That is to say, they worry that Orlando's artistry, like Duke Frederick's, aims not at truth and flourishing. They question not only his methods, but also his motives. Does he really love Rosalind, or does he only love himself? When Rosalind becomes his poet-teacher, she is able both to train his methods and test his motives.

Oddly, the list that Rosalind rattles off as traits of a good lover seem equal in triteness to Orlando's poetry: "a lean cheek," "a blue eye and sunken," "an unquestionable spirit," "a beard neglected," etc. (3.2.356-66), but in the end we find that all the mimicry she asks of him is

merely a stepping-stone in Orlando's formation. Furthermore, Ganymede's playful banter in this section suggests that Rosalind is not altogether sincere in these instructions to Orlando. After all, Ganymede offers to "cure" Orlando of his love-sickness by playing an annoying lover (3.3.380-410), a claim that contradicts the giddy excitement with which she greets the news that Orlando is the poet in the forest: "What did he when thou sawest him? What said he? How looked he? Wherein went he? What makes he here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? How parted he with thee? And when shalt thou see him again? Answer me in one word" (3.2.212-16). The claim that she will cure Orlando's love is part of Rosalind's act, not her sincere goal in proposing to play Orlando's lover. Indeed, she has admitted to Celia: "I will speak to [Orlando] like a saucy lackey, and under that habit play the knave with him" (3.2.286-7). Rosalind is being intentionally deceptive in this scene. She is playing a game. The Oxford note suggests that to play the knave is probably a reference to playing cards. The character of Ganymede wants to offer a plausible reason for suggesting that Orlando pretend to woo Rosalind, but the Rosalind beneath the disguise aims to help Orlando learn, not a formula for love, but the discernment needed to be a good lover.

Crucially, Rosalind's double disguise allows her to become Orlando's poet-teacher. As I have argued, Rosalind's artful invention of a new identity is not an end in itself, but a means to the end that will make her happy. Furthermore, her lack of faith in Orlando's sincerity motivates her to continue concealing her true identity, even after she discovers Orlando in the forest and recognizes the reality of her feelings for him. Instead, Rosalind takes on the double disguise of Ganymede pretending to be Rosalind. The layered artifice gives her a didactic power that she would not otherwise have had because it allows her to step into a meta-theatrical role from time-to-time in order to give stage directions to Orlando. For example, when Orlando says, "I would

kiss before I spoke" (4.1.66), Rosalind corrects him: "Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were graveled for lack of matter you might take occasion to kiss" (4.1.67-9). Rosalind's theatrical endeavors give Orlando some rules to follow, allowing him to practice the role of lover, which habituates him to the virtues required to be a good lover. This acting ultimately brings about the reality they both seek.

However, though habituation is a good start, the play soon reveals that Orlando must grow past his need for these directions. In the end, he must achieve virtue for himself. Orlando's temporary need for stage directions aligns with an Aristotelian view of education as habituation. Nussbaum explains Aristotle's view on the place of general rules in education: "Aristotle has no objection to the use of general guidelines . . . for certain purposes. . . . Rules and general procedures can be aids in moral development, since people who do not yet have practical wisdom and insight need to follow rules that summarize the wise judgments of others" (73). Orlando's state of development is such that at first he needs some general guidelines for being a good lover. These, Rosalind is able to offer by stepping out of her role of pretend Rosalind and back into her roles as Ganymede the teacher. Because no such formula exists, Rosalind cannot offer Orlando a perfect formula for being a good lover, but through the opportunity that art gives them for practicing love, Orlando gains the habituation he needs to become a good lover. Ultimately, Rosalind wants more from Orlando than for him to simply follow her stage directions, just as she wants more than to be his pretend lover. In the end, Orland must not simply mimic an exemplar; he must learn practical wisdom for himself.

There are two instances in which Orlando deviates from the script that Rosalind prescribes. A comparison of the two can yield insight into the ways in which Orlando is developing and acquiring virtue as he becomes a good lover through art. Orlando's first failure to

follow Rosalind's script is marked by the distinct lack of understanding that I have noted in him previously. He seems to have good intentions, but he miscalculates what action will lead to the result he desires or intends. The unintended result, in this instance, is that he fails in a fairly obvious way to be a good lover, showing up later than the time he had promised to visit Rosalind. After this incident, one might expect that his development into a good lover would be depicted by Orlando learning to follow the script. However, in a particularly Aristotelian move, Orlando's growth into a good lover – his acquisition of virtue – is depicted instead by a second deviation from the script. This time, Orlando deviates, not out of carelessness or misunderstanding, as before, but because a situation has arisen that renders the script inadequate. He is thrown into a situation in which he must exercise practical wisdom in order to make an ethical choice that is responsive to a peculiar situation. Faced with a dilemma between keeping his promise (thus abiding by the script to which he has pledged himself) or saving his brother, he chooses well and shows Rosalind that he has indeed gained practical wisdom for himself.

The centrality of punctuality to Orlando's education in practical wisdom is introduced the first time Rosalind interacts with Orlando in her Ganymede disguise. The ensuing discussion about timekeeping becomes Rosalind's first test of Orlando's sincerity and practical wisdom as a lover by probing his regard for punctuality, a regard she soon finds lacking. Rosalind initiates this test by asking, "I pray you, what is't o'clock?" (3.2.290). Orlando responds, "You should ask me what time o' day. There's no clock in the forest" (3.2.291-2). Here, Orlando reveals a lackadaisical approach to measuring time, but Rosalind immediately uses this as evidence to call into question Orlando's sincerity as a lover: "Then there is no true lover in the forest, else sighing every minute and groaning every hour would detect the lazy foot of time as well as a clock" (3.2.293-5). A true lover, according to Rosalind, will attend to time so as to be faithful

and attentive; she is teaching Orlando the script of a lover. The initial exchange between Orlando and the disguised Rosalind sets up the sequence by which Orlando will learn and then demonstrate his practical wisdom and therefore his ability to be a good lover through his level of respect for the script of punctuality that Rosalind has given him, yet this sequence also sets up Orlando and the audience to learn the limits of a script.

Orlando's first failure to return at the appointed time causes Rosalind great dismay, indicating to her his lack of sincerity as a lover. In response she declares, "His very hair is of the dissembling colour" (3.4.6). When Orlando finally shows up, Rosalind chides him: 'Why, how now, Orlando? Where have you been all this while? You a lover? An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more" (4.1.35-7). Rosalind is unhappy with Orlando for failing to follow the script by which he has agreed to be habituated to the art of love. In contrast, Orlando apparently does not understand the problem with his actions. He exclaims: "My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise" (4.1.38-9). He sees no need for punctuality, despite his promise, an indication of his lack of practical wisdom. Rosalind explains again that a lover's punctuality indicates his sincerity: 'Break an hour's promise in love! He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts and break but a part of the thousand part of a minute in the affairs of love, it may be said of him that Cupid hath clapped him o'th' shoulder, but I'll warrant him heart-whole" (4.1.40-4). Orlando's apology suggests that perhaps he will try harder next time, and indeed he does.

However, it is not his success in following the script of punctuality that indicates in the end to Rosalind that he is a true lover, for he fails a second time to follow the script. Nevertheless, Rosalind of all people knows the inadequacy of a script to meet all the challenges that life may throw one's way. For Rosalind, a script is only the starting point. Thus, it is when

Orlando finally proves his ability to improvise wisely, rather than his ability to follow the script, that Rosalind is finally convinced of the sincerity of his love. Orlando's second failure to abide by the script and return to Rosalind at the appointed hour is different in significant ways from his first failure. In this second instance, it is the way in which he fails to abide by the script, rather than the way that he follows the script that demonstrates his practical wisdom. The event begins with Rosalind declaring:

> By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous, if you break one jot of your promise or come one minute behind your hour, I will think you the most pathetical break-promise, and the most hollow lover, and the most unworthy of her you call Rosalind that may be chosen out of the gross band of the unfaithful. Therefore beware my censure, and keep your promise. (4.1.172-9).

With this ominous threat from the "fake" Rosalind and Orlando's own promise that he will return at the appointed hour with "no less religion than if thou wert indeed my Rosalind" (4.1.180-1), Orlando sets out into the wood where he encounters an unexpected moral choice. We learn, after much anxiety from Rosalind, that Orlando has failed to keep his appointment because he was injured in the heroic act of rescuing his "most unnatural" brother from a lioness. The newly reformed Oliver, rather than the injured Orlando, returns to Rosalind to relate to her the event: "Twice did he turn his back, and purpose so [to leave Oliver to his fate]. / But kindness, nobler ever than revenge, / And nature, stronger than his just occasion,/Made him give battle to the lioness, / Who quickly fell before him. In which hurtling / From miserable slumber I awaked" (4.3.128-33). In a mental and emotional battle with his judgement, Orlando has done the heroic thing in saving his undeserving brother, even risking the displeasure of Rosalind to act

according to virtue. In saving his brother, Orlando has deviated from the script of a lover that he was given to follow, but he has proven his true virtue and practical wisdom by responding to the particulars of the situation and doing the right thing. As soon as possible, the wounded Orlando sends Oliver to Rosalind on his behalf. Oliver relays to Rosalind: "Brief, I recovered him, bound up his wound, / And after some small space, being strong at heart, / He sent me hither, stranger as I am, / To tell this story, that you might excuse / His broken promise, and to give this napkin, / Dyed in his blood, unto the shepherd youth / That he in sport doth call his Rosalind" 4.3.151-7). By dispatching his brother to show Rosalind his bloody napkin and ask forgiveness on his behalf, Orlando shows that he now recognizes the gravity of breaking his promise, and has only done so, as the bloody napkin indicates, because the script became inadequate; virtue in this case required a broken promise. Thus, it is not precise following of the script, but his ability to improvise well that restores and establishes his character.

Rosalind's art has done its work, not by giving Orlando a Lodgian formula to follow, but by truly teaching practical wisdom. Rosalind is satisfied. The next time she sees Orlando, she proposes marriage between him and the real Rosalind: "I will weary you then no longer with idle talking. Know of me then—for now I speak to some purpose—that I know you are a gentleman of good conceit. . . . If you do love Rosalind so near the heart as your gesture cries it out, when your brother marries Aliena shall you marry her" (5.2.49-62). Often it is argued that Rosalind is not a virtuous poet, but a manipulative dissembler, using her mastery of art to hoodwink and control everyone around her.[17] I would argue that this scene suggests just the opposite. If

[17] Erickson, for instance, calls Rosalind "witty, strong and manipulative" (69).

Orlando proved himself to her by following all of her stage directions perfectly, then such a reading would be reasonable, but the fact that Orlando proves himself precisely by deviating from Rosalind's stage directions in order to make the moral choice required by a unique situation, demonstrates that Rosalind is indeed a virtuous poet skilled at discerning the universal patterns of life and teaching Orlando and others to do the same.

Importantly, there is arguably never a big reveal moment in which Rosalind throws off her disguise to let everyone know that she has been Rosalind all along. Perhaps we are to assume that when Rosalind finally enters as the real Rosalind, the other characters now recognize that Ganymede was Rosalind all along, but the extent to which the other characters understand the layers of disguise is never made clear. Instead, reality and art bleed together as Rosalind conjures yet another story in which she is a magician with the power to manifest the real Rosalind. The fact that she has been pretending to be herself allows for this strange conclusion, reinforcing an Aristotelian conception of the relationship between art and human flourishing. Because Rosalind's disguises remain artfully obscure, the transformative power and purpose of art is revealed more fully. Art has remade the world as it should be and as the characters like it. As characters have begun to act their parts well, performance has gradually given way to reality. Thus, there is not a clear divide between art and life; rather, art transforms life.

Further obscuring the boundary between art and life, Rosalind's magical powers are not clearly a ruse. When Rosalind finally enters undisguised, she comes accompanied by the god Hymen who will officiate the wedding ceremony, suggesting that her magic is real enough to conjure a deity. In other words, the transformative power of her art is more significant than anyone realized. Hymen's entrance, though undoubtably the most artificial moment of the whole play, places the most dramatic stamp upon reality because here the marriages toward which the

action of the play has been building become a reality. Rosalind's conjuring of Hymen facilitates the consummation of art and life. Hymen declares: "Then is there mirth in heaven / When earthly things made even / Atone together" (5.4.103-5). Art has brought earthly things together in *eudaimonic* unity. Furthermore, Hymen has done more than bring earthly things together. Art has brought about an atonement of earthly things that achieves unity between heaven and earth. In Sidneyan terms, art has produced at least a temporary glimpse of the golden world. After this moment of celebration, everyone will go on with their lives, no doubt discovering as time goes on the necessity of new improvisations and the unfolding of new depths to their character, but for now, the play rests, completed in the unity that art has achieved.

In what is perhaps a final affirmation that art's purpose is to restore reality, the "big reveal" moment comes not in the play itself, but in the epilogue, when the character of Rosalind playfully reveals herself to be a male actor. This divulgence suggests to the audience that, just as the play within the play restored human flourishing in the world of the play, so too, the play may have a restorative effect upon this reality. However, Shakespeare makes no attempt to offer his audience a Lodgian moral for an epilogue. *As You Like It* is not a play that can offer the audience a formula for a good life. According to Shakespeare, art cannot do such a thing. As Rosalind insists to Celia, a trodden path is insufficient to achieve flourishing. Rather, art transforms reality by teaching the audience to perceive well the complexities of the world, thus teaching us to live, not by aphorisms, but by skilled improvisation, otherwise known as practical wisdom.

In some ways, Shakespeare's epilogue is the very antithesis of Lodge's, as seen in the undisguised actor's impish remarks to the audience:

> If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue. Yet to good wine they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the

> better by the help of good epilogues. What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play! I am not furnished like a beggar, therefore to beg will not become me. My way is to conjure you. (Epilogue 3-11)

According to the Oxford notes on this passage, the phrase, "good wine needs no bush," was a proverbial saying meaning that good wine needs no advertisement. "A branch or bush of ivy . . . used to be hung up as a vinter's sign; hence *bush* came to mean a tavern-sign" (227). Pursuing this analogy, a "good epilogue" serves as a sign that helps make a "good play" better. The flippant tone of the speech suggests that Shakespeare may be punning on the meaning of good in order to poke fun at Lodge's far-from-subtle epilogue. On this reading, Lodge makes his "good" (as in moral) story "better" (as in, more moralistic) by emphasizing his moral point in his epilogue. Shakespeare rejects this Lodgian conception of the point of art by taking a straightforward formula (that a good epilogue makes a good play better, just as a good bush makes good wine better) and obscuring it into a riddle. In mock dismay, the actor exclaims: "What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play!" (Epilogue 7-9). Far from offering a moral epilogue that makes a moral play more moral, Shakespeare offers neither a moral epilogue, nor a moral play. I would suggest that Shakespeare offers a riddle instead of a moral in his epilogue because doing so supports his view of how art teaches. Art trains us to meet the vicissitudes of fortune, not with unreflective aphorisms, but with the wit and dexterity of which practical wisdom is comprised. Thus, this epilogue confirms what Rosalind has been teaching us all along. By contradicting the aphorism, the epilogue ends up slyly confirming it. This epilogue does make a good play better, but not in the way that we might have expected. Like Rosalind, Shakespeare, in collaboration with the

actors who embody his work, prefers to “conjure” his audience—that is, to transform our lives by magic. Just as Rosalind was restored to herself through acting and conjuring, so too, the actor who played Rosalind is playfully restored to himself at the end of the play. This restoration of the actor to himself suggests that, for those in the audience who find in the play the Aristotelian mimetic pleasure of recognition, and through this, learn to understand the world with greater discernment, the play might also help them become more fully themselves.

In the spirit of this sly epilogue, I submit that the very subtlety of this epilogue, which would resolve the moral quandary that has preoccupied recent scholarship, has been entirely obscured by this very preoccupation. As scholars debate the practical moral point of a quadruple marriage, they look for the moral formula that the play offers and lose sight of the play’s insistence that it is neither a moral play nor a moral epilogue because the transformative power of art comes in its ability to teach improvisational skill, not formulaic moral principles; art transforms by conjuring and by making conjurers. Taking my cues from Aristotle, Shakespeare, and Rosalind, I propose that we deviate from this well-trodden scholarly path. In doing so, we may come to a greater appreciation of the complexity of art and life. We may even find the play’s ending to be more as we like it.

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