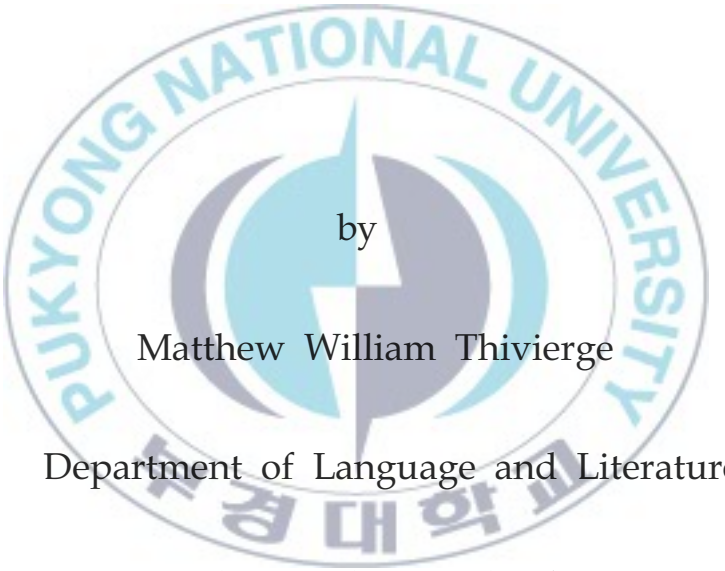
Thesis for the Degree of Master of English Literature

Narrative, idolatry and epiphany in *Twelfth Night, The Tempest, Othello* and *Hamlet*



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August 2009

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『십이야』, 『폭풍우』, 『오셀로』, 『햄릿』에서의 이야기 구조와 원리주의 그리고 현현성

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요 약

맥러스키의「과연 다 좋은가?」에서는 어떻게 셰익스피어 극의 주 무대 밖의 부차적인 이야기나 소재들이 드라마가 진행됨에 있어 극의 주요 해석 구조가 되어가는 지에 대하여 말하고 있다.

본 논문은 그에 더하여 교차하는 부차적 이야기의 소재를 통하여 우상숭배의 원리주의와 그에 반하는 현현성의 성취라는 공통된 주제를 찾고 있다.

『십이야』에서의 편지, 『폭풍우』에서의 마법서, 『오셀로』에서의 손수건 그리고 『햄릿』에서의 유령과 같은 부차적 소재들은 무대 위의 캐릭터들이 선택의 문제에 당면하게 하는 계기가 된다.

이 선택의 문제는 극중 인물들이 그들의 좁은 시각을 넘어선 성숙에로의 현현성의 성취인가 아니면 상황을 맹신하고 원리 주의적 관점의 우상화에 치우쳐 균형을 잃은 현실에의 안주인가 하는 것이다.

이러한 무대 밖의 부차적 소재들의 연구를 통해 우리는 원리주의와 이에 반하여 상황에 대한 거시적인 시각과 관계의 균형에 대한 셰익스피어의 르네상스적인 관점을 알 수 있다.

그의 극에서 이러한 현현성과 맹목주의에 대한 관점의 탐구는 문명화로 나아가는 시대의 종교의 위상에 대한 셰익스피어의 관점 연구와 맥락을 함께 한다.

Narrative, idolatry and epiphany in *Twelfth Night, The Tempest, Othello* and *Hamlet.*

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Abstract

This paper looks at how outside narratives, half told stories of events that happen outside of their play's structure and time frame, relate to the theme of epiphany versus fundamentalist idolatry. The terms epiphany and fundamentalist idolatry while are often charged with religious connotations do not fully apply to Shakespeare's works in their religious connotations yet they do apply in their broader meanings. This paper looks at fundamentalism being a strict adherence to a set of beliefs in this case, a strict adherence to an interpretation of an outside narrative. It also looks into the potential sudden broader realization that these narratives offer in a form of epiphany. This paper takes the theme of epiphany versus fundamentalist idolatry and applies them to *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest Othello* and *Hamlet* to find that the outside narratives often present the characters with the potential to form an idolizing attachment to a strict interpretation of their meaning. These same narratives also can provide the characters with the opportunity to utilize these stories in achieving a sudden broader viewpoint (epiphany) that may allow them to connect with other characters and break away from their own narrow perspective.

Introduction

In taking a deeper look at Shakespeare's works we must take care not to make too much of individual quotations in isolation. However, when looking at certain kinds of stories such as outside narratives brought into the larger context of the dramatic framework of his plays we can find a definite pattern and message.

In Shakespeare's works not only what is said directly but also what is said by other characters of each other can carry much weight with both readers and viewers of his plays. In McLuskie's "Is All Well?"she writes of how the "buried and half-told stories" in Shakespeare's plays "provide the explanatory framework for dramatic action" (547-548). The half told stories of events that have happened outside of the play's structure and time frame are described by McLuskie as "outside narratives" (548).

It is important to note that these stories leave us with loose ends, as McLuskie states: "None of these stories is tested, confirmed or denied in the dramatic action, they reveal, rather, the ways that narratives are used to give meaning and significance to the on-stage actions that are structured into a

dramatic narrative" (548). This giving of meaning and significance through these kinds of narratives or 'side stories'taking place outside the framework of the play can also be used in gaining an understanding of Shakespeare's view of the world and especially in discovering his views on fundamentalism and epiphany.

Further than merely providing the explanatory framework of the play, these outside narratives provide the context with which we can see Shakespeare's Renaissance perspective on fundamentalism with fundamentalism being the strict adherence to a set of beliefs. In the case of Shakespeare's plays we find that many of his characters, when presented with an outside narrative become interpretive fundamentalists in that they form a strict adherence to a particular interpretation of the outside narrative presented.

Indeed, in each of the plays covered here, these outside narratives become, by the characters strict unquestioning interpretation, connected to the concept of fundamentalism. Thus, looking at these stories can provide much insight into Shakespeare's overall perspective on such an issue.

In examining Shakespeare's plays we find that Shakespeare gives us a realistic view of character that describes the roots of

fundamentalist thinking as being founded in an excessive and exclusive passion such as self-love, anger, or an idolizing of a parental figure. In all cases there is introduced an object or character that acts as a physical symbol that introduces an outside narrative. These objects or characters present to other characters the opportunity to form either an idolizing attachment to a strict interpretation of the outside narrative or achieve a sudden broaderview of a greater reality which can be described as an epiphany.

These stories can be seen as the opportunity for achieving a sudden broader perspective beyond their idolatry depending on how the character receives and interprets such a symbol. It depends on whether or not the character presented with such a symbol and outside narrative chooses to react; either by relating the story to the broader narrative and the other characters'stories leading to an epiphany and integration into the community of the other characters or by fixating on the narrative and object leading the character to a fundamentalist idolatry and isolation from the others.

From an analysis of these outside narratives we find a Shakespeare that is critical of narrow secular viewpoints in

showing us fundamentalismopposed to a letting go of one's particular narrow view point and attachments to achieve a sudden letting go of that viewpoint in a form of epiphany. Thus the assertion of this thesis is that Shakespeare goes beyond his mere character's rationalized behaviors and gives us their passion led motivations making his stories realistic and at the same time carrying the message of support for a pluralistic society.

Often times when looking to find Shakespeare's particular viewpoint on character and religion, critics cite certain quotes or passages as evidence of Shakespeare's own ideology, claiming Shakespeare to be either a 'secret Catholic' or a protestant writer. However, when looking at Shakespeare's characters and especially according to the theme of revelation, one finds not the Secret Roman Catholic, or the Protestant Shakespeare, nor the closet pagan but a realist playwright and citizen of England. Such an exploration also leadsus to discover a Shakespeare that is anti-fundamentalist in thinking and instead a man who expresses balanced and realistic views of character. We also can find in his works that this theme of epiphany versus narrow minded fundamentalism is emphasized as being a theme and a story that goes beyond the mere confines of the dramatic action and instead

extends into a broader reality.

Shakespeare has written many plays and thus a sampling of his plays shall be chosen from the standard Shakespearian canon. Thus this thesis of outside narratives offering the choice of either epiphany or idolatry will be tested against two of Shakespeare's comedies: *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest* and against two of his tragedies: *Othello* and *Hamlet*.

Chapter I: Romance and Magic as Epiphany.

Apart from Shakespeare's tragedies we can find in his other plays something to teach us onfundamentalism. Both stories begin with a narrative of a ship wreck which comes to us as an outside narrative: we are told of the survivors and the ship wreck second hand. In *Twelfth Night* the shipwreck is one in which Viola is separated from her brother which leads her to isolate herself by playfully deceiving others in disguise. In the play we alsohave examples of passions in excess which leads the characters to isolate themselves from others in a form of fundamentalism. We also have a final scene in which many of the

characters receivean epiphany in the form of a sudden realization of a love match at the end.

In *The Tempest* we have Prospero's outside narrative of his life before coming to the island which shows how he wrestles with his past tragedy in order to turn it into a tale of reconciliation with his brother. This narrative too, is also related by Caliban when he speaks of how Prospero has usurpedhis earlier freedom to rule the island as he pleased.

1. Pagan Festivities and Romance in *Twelfth Night*

Often in the characters' embracing a broad interpretation of an outside narrative they can achieve inclusion in a broader community. This is well embodied in *Twelfth Night* which is essentially thestory of various characters' discovery of love by letting go of their too firmly held beliefs and behaviors thus reaching an intimacy with another character. As Copelia Kahn states "theirs is a journey from self-deception to self-knowledge" (43).

In the play many of the characters go through such a

journey of self discovery, namely: Orsino, Olivia, and Viola. They begin with a particular isolating passion in excess (Orsino: music, Olivia grief, Viola a repression of grief expressed by her dressing up as her brother). Thus, in essence each character has their own idol that isolates them from a romantic love partner. Later they achieve an alleviation of their extreme passions, achieving an epiphany in the form of the sudden realization of a love partner at the end.

As well, key to the play's use of epiphany in a religious dimension is found in the characters Malvolio and Feste. Malvolio serves as an example of a kind of religious fundamentalist as Karen Greif states: "Malvolio stubbornly insists on making rascal words behave with as much decorum as he believes they should" (59). Feste stands as an example of the broader view that comes with epiphany. While Malvolio is a proto-Puritan, Feste defines himself as being near but not of the church, and connected to the broader world.

Thus we have in *Twelfth Night*, a play that may come across as anti-Puritan. Yet Shakespeare is careful to have Malvolio described as 'A kind of Puritan' as stated by the character Maria. Still, while Malvolio and Feste reside at the heart

of the plays theme of literalist interpretation and isolation versus metaphorical interpretation and the discovery of community it is in the beginning of the play we are first introduced to Viola and her outside narrative.

Orsino is one such example of this. From the onset of Act 1, Orsino is clearly a lovesick romantic as shown for when he calls for more music to drown out his love. Act 2 scene 4 begins much like Act 1, with Orsino calling out for music again. Yet it is here where he elaborates on his feelings in describing his love for Olivia as being a ravenous and insatiable one like the sea:

> Alas, their love may be call'd appetite,
> No motion of the liver, but the palate,
> That suffers surfeit, cloyment, and revolt;
> But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
> And can digest as much. (II.iv.98-102)

This first introduction to his love for Olivia comes to us as an outside narrative: he speaks of his love for her at a distance as he is unable to visit her.We hear of their relationship from him before we meet her in the play. With regards to Orsino's "appetite" being as "hungry as the sea", as John Hollander has pointed out, while the play is a "ritualized twelfth night" and an "epiphany play" it also gives us an "analysis of feasting". He adds that the play "develops an ethic of

indulgence based on the notion that the personality of any individual is a function not of the static proportions of the humors within him but more of the dynamic appetites that may more purposefully, as well as more pragmatically, be said to govern his behavior" (13).

While, in the beginning of the play, Orsino is guided by his appetites in excess, as he is quite love sick, later he finds himself drawn to Cesario:

> [they] say thou art a man. Dianas lip
> Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe
> Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound,
> And all is semblative a woman's part
> I know thy constellation is right apt for this affair.
> (I.iv.31-35)

This shows a hint of what is to later become Orsino's epiphany: he clearly has an intuitive grasp of Cesario's being a woman under her disguise. She also proves a good match for Orsino as she feeds his hunger for music by discussing music with him. This match seems fated from the start, when Viola/Cesario first plans to enter Orsino's camp and employment using her talent for singing:

> I'll serve this Duke.
> Thou shalt present me as a eunuch to him.

It may be worth thy pains, for I can sing,
And speak to him in many sorts of music,
That will allow me very worth his service. (I.ii.55-59)

From this we can see that Viola is an answer to Orsino's desire for love and also music whereas Olivia is, like Orsino in his romantic excess, excessive in her dwelling on her brother's death. Both stories (Orsino's relationship with Olivia and Olivia's brother's death) are first introduced to us as outside narratives: we are told of them and not shown; the actions occur offstage and outside the dramaticstructure of the play.

Although Orsino does have an early intimation of attraction to Viola/Cesario, even after their first meeting Orsino's epiphany is not fully complete: he doesn't fully realize his love for Viola who remains still in disguise. He first goes through a further deception when he thinks Cesario has intentionally stolen Olivia's heart before achieving his epiphany or sudden realization in finding out that Cesario is really the feminine Viola. In this final scene we can see that Orisino's earlier intuitions of Cesario's true sex are confirmed; Orsino has his epiphany.

Viola in her particular unique way reaches a sudden realization of love and the finding of her brother all at the same time making it an epiphany of brotherhood and romantic love. It is important to note that

while she is the main character in *Twelfth Night*, her journey through deception to epiphany is less prominent in the play compared with other characters such as Orsino or Maria. The full extent of her deception is not quite so obvious. As one critic has stated, "Viola copes with the supposed loss of her twin brother by, in effect, becoming him"(Khan 42). This insight may give us the key to the depth of Viola's own deception, that throughout the play she is deceiving herself from the full grief of losing her twin brother. It would explain her playful attitude in dressing up as her brother: not only a disguising of her sex but also a covering up of her grief.

Like *The Tempest* this shipwreck also comes to us as an outside narrative, as in both plays the story of the potential survivors is told by witnesses far after the fact of the ship wreck.

When Viola hears this outside narrative we see a more playful Viola who is encouraged in hope by the sailors regarding the loss of her brother:

Captain:I saw your brother,
Most provident in peril, bind himself,
Courage and hope both teaching him the practise,
To a strong mast that lived upon the sea;
Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.
Viola: For saying so, there's gold:

Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope, (I.ii.11-19)

On the other hand we have this positive, hopeful Viola contrasted with her disbelief in her brother's survival at the end as she thinks him a ghost:

> Such a Sebastian was my brother too:
> So went he suited to his watery tomb. (V.i.231-232)

Thus it appears that through the course of the play, Viola gradually loses hope in her brother's survival. She also, in dressing up to look like her lost brother, turns her grief into a game of disguise much in tune with the play's focus on festivity. Likewise the outside narrative of the shipwreck leads Viola to deceive others by her disguise, also masking her grief making her clothing a physical symbol of her brother and her loss. It is this disguise that isolates her from Orsino, her love match, yet paradoxically brings her close to him in that it is only in the guise of a man that she is allowed into his court.

Like the other characters Malvolio goes through his own deceptions yet is prevented from having an epiphany by his two faults: self love and idolatry. Malvolio, like Orsino, is found to be a man motivated by

his passions as Olivia says: "Thou art sick of self love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite"(II.v.89-90).

It is this appetite of feeding his own ego and self love that leads to his being tricked by Maria. Malvolio is put through a deception which in their attempt to play with his narrow mindedness has also the potential to open him up to the epiphany of love, community and other character's perspectives. It is Malvolio's narrow mindedness that inspires Maria to "…drop in his way some obscure Epistles of love"(II.v.25-26),and thus introducing another narrative structure; a mysteriously vague and coded letter in an attempt to make fun of Malvolio's fundamentalist thinking rooted in his self love. In this case the narrative opens up various possibilities; we can see that the letter is written by Maria and Toby in a vague manner leaving it open to interpretation. For Maria and her group the implied meaning is clear: they expect Malvolio to misinterpret the letter according to his ravenous ego, despite the fact that there are potentially differing interpretations that can occur.

Her method of tricking Malvolio involves her using Malvolio's second fault and obstacle to epiphany his idolatry of himself (his self-love) which leads him to interpret the letter as to be addressed to him. It is what draws him from the path of clarity into deception; his seriousness.

The key word here is epistles: giving us the religious notion of a letter coming from an apostle, further strengthening the association of Malvolio being a Puritan and also the notion of bibliolatry. So too like the character of the Puritan, Malvolio uses the letter in a form of bibliolatry: using one text to suit his own purposes and holding onto that text and interpretation regardless of any outside contradictory information. This is clearly shown when Malvolio first reads the letter and says:

> 'M.O.A.I.' This simulation is not as the former: and yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name. (II.v.139-141)

In essence he idolizes the forged love letter because it fits his dream of becoming a master instead of a servant. Indeed it is shown that at his core, Malvolio's faith in the letters message, twisted to suit his purposes though it is, comes from his self love as:

> …it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him; and on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work. (II.iii.151-153)

It is the letter that transforms him as it deceives him as is shown in Act 3 scene 2:

> Maria: Yond gull Malvolio is
> turned heathen, a very renegade; for there is no
> Christian, that means to be saved by believing
> rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages
> of grossness. He's in yellow stockings.
> Toby: And cross-gartered?
> Maria: Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school
> i' the church. I have dogged him, like his
> murderer. He does obey every point of the letter
> that I dropped to betray him. (III.ii.66-75)

It is here where Maria says Malvolio is like a pedant who studies in the church. A pedant is essentially a person who is overly concerned with formalism and precision or who makes a show of learning. Malvolio's idolizing the letter and idolizing his dream of changing from a servant to a master is what blocks Malvolio from having his own epiphany. If Malvolio would only see more clearly, he would change from a serious 'heavy'character to a more enlightened one, sharing in the festivities. He would also, by laughing along with the joke, let go of his stifling self love and be opened up more to love others instead of loving himself exclusively.

Like the other characters, Malvolio goes through his own deception. Yet while he has his moment of potential epiphany when he discovers

he had been tricked, he does not, like the other characters, rise to an epiphany. The reason why he doesn't rise is because of his particular fault: his rigidity of character and his strong thinking that he is superior and correct while others are not. His flaw is his lack of humility. It is for this reason that he is not to be found on stage at the end of the play with the other characters causing the other characters to go after him. In essence this ending leaves the play open ended suggesting another story to be told leaving us to make up our own ending or create our own narrative for Malvolio. This leaving theconclusion of the play partially to our own interpretation leaves us questioning the extent of Malvolio's deception, wondering too whether he is beyond redemption or not.

As mentioned earlier in my introduction, Malvolio's Puritanism has been touched upon by other critics, yet Feste's role in the matter has been only marginally touched upon. Malvolio's literalist interpretation of the outside narrative of the letteris seen in greater detail when examining Feste to provide a contrast the two characters, as at several times in the play, Feste and Malvolio come into conflict with each other. At the end of the play is the most obvious conflict, when Feste visits Malvolio in the dark room. Yet, before getting into that final conflict, it is of some use to look at what Feste says regarding the

twisting of words to suit one's purposes. Malvolio provides us with an example of idolatrous fundamentalist thinking and Feste presents him with a potential epiphany while both have implied religious connections to their positions.

Ideologically Feste serves as a strong contrast to Malvolio's uncompassionate, narrow minded, literalist interpretation of things. This is first shown at the end of Act I: when questioning Olivia's sadness and if Olivia thinks her brother is in heaven:

Feste: Good Madonna, why mourn'st thou?
Olivia Good fool, for my brother's death.
Clown: Think his soul is in hell, Madonna.
Olivia: I know his soul is in heaven, fool
Clown: The more fool, Madonna, to mourn for your Brother's soul, being in heaven. (I.v.63-69)

Feste intends this as a joke meant to enlighten Olivia's grief and cheer her up.

When asked his opinion, Malvolio replies that he thinks Feste is unproductive, lazy and of no use to have around. Malvolio also says that Feste does mend Olivia's grief but adds that Feste would do better when sick, as:

Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool. (I.v.74-75)

Malvolio's sentiments seem rather dark in his suggesting that sick people make better fools. The key point here is found when Olivia defends Feste against Malvolio's assertions that Olivia should get rid of Feste, when she says that:

> To be generous,
> guiltless, and of free disposition, is to take those
> things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-
> bullets. There is no slander in an allowed fool. (I.v.90-93)

This statement of Olivia's runs directly counter to Malvolio's bibliolatry. Malvolio takes everything seriously as comments are cannon balls. Where as if he had a more 'festive'attitude being of a "free disposition" and more generous he would be less sensitive to minor comments, taking things in context instead of from a narrow perspective. His rigid literalism is what blocks him from community and from epiphany. In Malvolio's case, his potential epiphany is a realization of the joy that comes from play and an appreciation of other's value instead of only his own isolating sense of self superiority.

Another telling scene with regards to Feste and idolatry occurs in the opening of Act 3 when Viola asks Feste if he lives by making music, "by thy tabor" and Feste answers that he lives "by the church", meaning that he lives near the church in location and not by trade or

for earning money. This contrasts with Malvolio's character in how he gains money and esteem by working for and supporting the structures of society whereas Feste makes his living by flouting and playing with such constructs. In doing so, Feste opens others up to an awareness of the world that exists around and beyond such structures. In essence Feste provides us with a perspective that goes beyond the confines of the plays setting and social structures.

Later in the same act, there is another reference that contrasts with Malvolio's bibliolatryand makes reference to literary interpretation and to the theme of epiphany versus idolatry. This occurs when Viola complains of Feste's wordplay Feste replies that:

> To see this age! A sentence
> Is but a chev'ril glove to a good wit- how quickly
> The wrong side may turned outward! (III.i.11-13)

Feste's point is that words have meanings attached to them and that because words and ideas are different things, sometimes words can be misinterpreted; misunderstandings can occur. Likewise words can be twisted to suit ones own bias or purposes. This matches well what has happened with Malvolio: he has taken the love letter and applied it to himself out of his bias and self-love. Feste's complaint is that

sentences and words can be twisted and so can be unreliable tools in seeking truth.

In order to further extrapolate on this, Feste introduces us to an outside narrative in the half told story of his sister. Feste does so by saying that he wishes his sister didn't even have a name at all. Feste explains thatas her name is, in essence, a word and in using words many times makes them lose value, it would make his sister and her name wanton and cheap. He is also saying that it would make her name wanton and cheap and by association, make her wanton and cheap. Here again Feste is pointing out that words can be twisted and shaped to suit one's needs even to the point of turning one's own sister into a wanton. This flexibility of meaning and interpretation of words to suit one's needs matches the subtitle of the play being "What you will" and the playing with conventions that is the purpose of the Twelfth Night Festival.

It is when the Feste is questioned further, he says something interesting. Feste says that he won't explain further his reasoning for his distastefor words and double meanings because:

> Troth, sir, I can yield you none without words,
> and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove
> reason with them. (III.i.23-25)

Looking at this whole opening to Act 3, we can see that the clown in essence is saying two connected things using two separate narratives. The first is Feste's place of residence. He says that he lives only in physical proximity with the church, but does not make money from the church as a minister would, yet has closeness with the church or an association with it. This church allusion places in the audience's mind the church and the clown's relationship with it. Secondly, out from this play on words with the church and Feste's house comes Feste's lamentation that words have double meanings and so he has grown tired and suspicious of words especially when they are connected to serious things like family and vows or promises: all things closely connected to the church's administration.

Yet the church allusion is just that: an allusion, and must remain, for Feste complains that words being twisted in 'this age'making it a generational association. This too matches how many have thought Malvolio to be a Puritan while on closer reading we find that Maria says that "sometimes he is a kind of Puritan"(II.iii.139). As Paul Yachnin adds in his analysis of Shakespeare and Puritans "Shakespeare is careful to attenuate the connection between Malvolio and real-life

Puritans, whether the reforming party in the English Church or the political establishment of London"(Yachnin 784).

It is this complaint of Feste's that is a complaint against Malvolio's bibliolatry; his twisting of the love letter to suit his dreams of greatness. "When Malvolio stumbles upon the mock epistle and imposes his contemplative dream upon the *yielding word*, he proves himself in the process quite mad, "a contemplative idiot" (Simmons 184). Malvolio's singularity of hold on an interpretation or viewpoint is so strong that he refuses to take into account others opinions even in jest. This is shown in Act 4 scene 2 where Feste has Malvolio locked in a dark room. It is here in the dark room where this final conflict occurs between Malvolio's literalist interpretation of events to the point of idolatry of himself and his words against Feste's more fluid and broad minded interpretations. Feste says that the room is not dark but full of windows to which Malvolio replies:

> Malvolio: I am not mad, Sir Topas. I say to you, this house is dark.
> Clown: Madman, thou errest. I say there is no darkness
> But ignorance, in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.
> Malvolio: I say this house is as dark as ignorance, though Ignorance were as dark as hell and I say there was never a man thus abused. I am no more mad than You are. (IV.ii.41-49)

The point of this passage is that Malvolio is speaking literally, using much the same rational, literal thinking that he uses when he twists the vaguely addressed love letter into a letter addressed to himself, "Malvolio stubbornly insists on making rascal words behave with as much decorum as he believes they should"(Grief 58). In this scene, Feste, on the other hand is speaking of darkness metaphorically. It is a final attempt to reach out to Malvolio so that he may achieve an epiphany: so that he can see himself in another less serious and more enjoyable light. However it is because of his rational self love that he cannot play along and is therefore left in the dark. As Karen Grief observes, "Malvolio stands as an isolated figure in a festive world from beginning to end because never once does he honestly perceive his own nature, the true identity of "what I am", or the corresponding ties of identity that bind him to his fellow players"(Greif 59). Maria changes to gain intimacy with Sir Toby, Orsino discovers Viola, Viola finally casts off her disguise while Olivia lets go of her grief: all achieve the letting goof their idols to gain emotional intimacy while Malvolio does not.

Thus, in *Twelfth Night* we find Malvolio clearly idolizing himself and Feste, from his sad disheartened tale, a victim of word play

fundamentalism. Although both are neither directly stated as religious fundamentalist and victim it is implied; Malvolio being "a kind of Puritan" and Feste living "by the church". Both have this revelation of character brought about by outside narratives; Malvolio and the love letter and Feste the story of his sister made wanton. We also are presented with a Feste who tries to bring Malvolio to a broader view of things beyond his literalist interpretations but to no avail.

2. Magical Visions: Prospero's Narrative in *The Tempest*

At first glance, *The Tempest* appears to be merely the story of fantasy; magic and illusion, yet when accounting for each character'stransformation, we find that the play actually carries the same theme of epiphany and community versus the idolatry of the self as the other plays.

With the exception of Ariel, Miranda and Ferdinand, the other protagonists go through a process of quest, leading to epiphany and community. They first suffer from an illusion that leads to the balancing of their desires. In *The Tempest*, the

characters at first experience an illusory epiphany and yet to the same results as the other plays, they reach a real epiphany and a balancing of their desires that leads to community.

The play is a form of medieval romance in its having a quest theme; a quest, and trial leading to a reward. It also carries the theme of reason and appetites out of balance that, when purified, lead to a greater self-awareness. The play also touches upon the issue of civilization and the role of technology more directly than other plays through the character of Caliban.

In terms of narrative structure we have several instances of actions that happen off stage and are told to us by characters afterwards onstage. The first comes from Prospero when he relates the tale of his first coming to the island. It is also connected to his own struggle with a desire for revenge which he eventually wins, achieving his epiphany and release from the island.

From the start of the play, we find Prospero wrestling with feelings of anger and desires for revenge. This is the quest he must work through to achieve his epiphany and thus inclusion in the greater community. The root of his angry focus comes to us in the form of a story he tells Miranda which Prospero has

told her in part. Some critics have theorized that Prospero has told her only in part as often times, his emotions become too much for him to fully express his story to her, yet it is with the approach of the ship that prompts Prospero to tell her his tale in full as the right time has arrived:

Miranda: You have often
Begun to tell me what I am, but stopp'd
And left me to a bootless inquisition,
Concluding 'Stay: not yet.'
Pros. The hour's now come;
The very minute bids thee ope thine ear;
Obey, and be attentive. (I.ii.32-38)

His story is about events that have happened before the time frame of the play making it an outside narrative. His story interestingly enough is a statement of Prospero's neglect of his temporal duties as Duke of Milan, leaving them to his brother to attend to:

The government I cast upon my brother,
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies. (I.ii.75-77)

His story here is a clear example of Prospero's tragedy: He withdrew from the world and into his studies and intellectual

pursuits neglecting both the relationship with his brother and his governmental duties as he mentions most clearlyin his tale:

> I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
> To closeness and the bettering of my mind
> With that which, but being so retir'd,
> O'er prize'd all popular rate, in my false brother
> Awak'd an evil nature; and my trust,
> Like a good parent, did beget of him
> A falsehood in its contrary, as great
> as my trust was. (I.ii.89-95)

From this we can see two things: Prospero becomes imbalanced; in neglecting his worldly ends he fundamentally focuses in on his studies. The second is that from this singular focus on his studies, Prospero neglects his relationship with his brother and thus his brother begins thinking himself the proper Duke of Milan. It is Prospero's idolatry of study that leads to the neglect of his relationship with his brother which leads to Prospero's vilification, alienation and finally banishment from Milan. Thus it can be said that The Tempest is a play that starts off as a tragedy and turns into a story of redemption.

For Prospero, finding himself later cast out of Milan and stranded on an island, finds himself in several instances in the play, fighting with feelings of anger towards his brother and his

compatriots. Feelings that he eventually overcomes, forgiving all parties of villains. It is also noteworthywhen accounting for the theme of bibliolatry and excess that he, in the end, drowns his magic book, leaving it behind upon his returning to Naples; it being a symbol of not only colonial power and technology but of a source of bibliolatry in its power to lead some in their narrow minded lust for power and control.

In the play there are also three groups that go through trials leading to potential epiphany and a change of heart. The first and most apparent group is Ferdinand and Miranda. Both characters arestrongly connected to their parents. Ferdinand quests to find his father and discovers Miranda, and falls in love with her, and yet before gaining her, is put through trials by Prospero testing his humility. In the end he discovers that his father is alive, much like that of Viola in *Twelfth Night*.

Another group is called the "Three men of sin" (III.iii.53) by Ariel and consists of Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio,(with Gonzalo going along with them but not included in the epitaph 'three men of sin'). Earlier, all three were responsible for Prospero's banishment from Italy.

From the onset their being shipwrecked and stranded on

the island their predicament, (an event that has occurred just outside the framework of the play) becomes like an object of epiphany. Like the handkerchief in Othello and the love letter in Twelfth Night, it may be looked upon and interpreted in different ways.

The advisor/servant Gonzalo though a part of this group of survivors and though a weak follower, being morally sound goes through no such change or epiphany. Indeed, as per his good character, from his first appearance on the island he speaks positively of their predicament:

> Beseech you, sir, be merry…
> Our hint of woe
> Is common; everyday…
> But for the miracle,
> I mean our preservation, few in millions
> Can speak like us: then wisely, good sir, weigh
> Our sorrow with our comfort. (II.i.3-8)

As per his optimistic views he also "sees the island in the form of an ideal commonwealth" (Frye 177). Indeed the island itself proves to be a form of litmus test of character. Gonzalo sees, "How lush and lusty the grass looks! How green!" (I.i.51), while Adrian sees it as "though this island seem to be a

desert"(I.i.33). Their various perspectives are like separate narratives, the narrative oftheir shipwreck too serves as a litmus test of their characters as well. Gonzalo says that their clothes:

> being, as they were, drenched
> In the sea, hold, notwithstanding, their freshness
> And glosses, being rather new-dyed than stained
> With salt water"(II.i.59-62).
> Yet Antonio retorts that,
> "If but one of his pockets could speak, would it not
> say he lies? (II.i.63-64)

Antonio is implying that Gonzalos pockets must have mud and/or water in them proving Gonzalo to be lying about the extent of the good condition of their clothing. Sebastian also chimes in, agreeing with Antonio's assessment of Gonzalos statement adding his agreement, "Ay, or very falsely pocket up his report" (II.i.65) meaning that Gonzalos pockets if not opened would remained sealed holding Gonzalo's false report safe. From all of this we can see that it is Gonzalo who is open to the epiphany, the realization that the island is magic and it is a miracle that they have survived and in such good condition, where as Antonio and Sebastian see it as a great misfortune.

It is also Gonzalo that sets Prospero off with books and

other amenities; "Out of his charity…did give us, with rich garments, linens, stuffs, and necessaries (I.ii.270). Thus, Gonzalo like Ferdinand seems to be a rather good character in need of no epiphany.

Alonso, who has lost his son in the shipwreck asks for peace (II.i.9). His calling for peace is interesting, for at the end of the play he receives it when he meets Prospero and finds his son alive.

For the greater part of the play, they all go in search for Alonso's son Ferdinand as their quest. It is during their search that Sebastian and Antonio's appetites for power grow to the extent that they begin conspiring to kill Alonso and Gonzalo in order to make Sebastian king of Naples in Alonso's place. Thus it can be said they fall into a form of political fundamentalism; an egoism to the point of motive for murdering some members of their group.

In the end Alonso shows the greatest remorse even asking his son's forgiveness and becomes reconciled with Prospero. While Sebastian and Antonio remain, like Malvolio in *Twelfth Night,* unchanged in showing no remorse, and also calling Caliban a marketable person much like a fish. Sebastian is an example of

self-love.

A third group consisting of Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo who all serve a dramatic purpose much in the same way as Malvolio does in *Twelfth Night*. From the onset Trinculo sees the island as desolate, "Here's neither bush nor shrub…"(II.ii.18). It is important to note too that Stephano enters drunk, drowning his sorrows in drink showing his appetites in excess and thus blocking him from seeing the larger picture of magic and epiphany as he sings:

> I shall no more to sea, to sea,
> Here shall I die ashore. (II.ii.44-43)

Much in the way that the earlier group goes on a quest to find Alonso's son, this group goes on a quest, instigated by Caliban to murder Prospero:

> As I told thee before,
> I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer,
> that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island. (III ii 40-42)

It is here that Ariel works to foil their plans by whispering in their ears to get them to turn against each other upon which

they turn on Trinkulo and beat him. Ariel then flies off to warn Prospero.

In his selfish desire for power, Stephano wishes to become king of the island (III.iii.104-105), matching that of the earlier groups lust for political power. So too, Caliban wishes to usurp Prospero. Indeed from the start Caliban relates the story of their past when Prospero had usurped Caliban's position as lord of the island as Caliban complains:

> This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother
> Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,
> Thou strok'st me, and made much of me. (I.ii.332-335)

Caliban adds that he was once his own king yet is now in his eyes a virtual prisoner and a slave. Prospero's reply to this is his reminding Caliban that he tried to rape Miranda and that his ill treatment is his punishment for that as Prospero says:

> Filth as thou art, with human care; and lodg'd thee
> In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate
> The honour of my child. (I.ii.348-350)

Thus we can see here that Prospero's neglect of his duties and his brother has brought him to this island disrupting

the life and the unquestioningly care free ways of Caliban.

Before Prospero, Caliban had only his mother Sycorax as company on the island and as the introduction of others involves either compromise or conflict, naturally, as the unchanging Caliban continues his lifestyle of unquestioningly and artlessly followinghis own whims and appetites, is thus lead to seek to rape Miranda. Such is his character. It is interesting to note that both are narrow minded fundamentalists on opposing sides of a coin: Prospero was uncompromising and neglectful in feeding his appetite for study much in the way that Caliban is uncompromising at the expense of others in his feeding his sensual appetites.

In the end this group gets drunk and after suffering trials on the island, show much remorse as their murderous lust for power is transformed into a humble view of themselves. Finally, they become reconciled with Prospero.

Chapter II

Tragedies: Outside Narratives Introducing the Idolatrous Excess

Like the comedies, Shakespeare's tragedies have something to teach us of fundamentalism both religious and political. In *Othello* we have examples of idolatry in how Desdemona relates to Othello's handkerchief. The meaning of the handkerchief as a symbol of fidelity comes to us from the outside narrative of Othello's parents who are not represented in the play. We also encounter the story of Emelia's cheating on Iago as told to us by Iago, another form of outside narrative. In *Hamlet* we find several outside narratives which bring about the characterization of Prince Hamlet as a man who becomes a fundamentalist in his narrow pursuit of justice to the disregard of others in the play. Hamlet takes the story of his father's murder and instead of sharing it with Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Ophelia leaves them out of it, choosing instead to exclude them in his narrow minded pursuit of justice and his passion for revenge. This causes him to act coldly towards them.

1. Iago's Gossip Narrative in *Othello.*

In *Othello*, we are provided with examples of idolatry of

various kinds in the characters of Othello, Emelia and Iago. So too, the play is full of half-told narratives. As Kate McLuskie points out, "Desdemona uses Othello's stories of his travels to explain how she fell in love with him; Iago uses the story of Cassio's sexual dream to fuel Othello's jealous rage; Othello uses the story of the handkerchief to provide objective justification for his obsession with its loss" (548).

At the heart of the tragedy, Othello shows us a clear example of an exclusive idolatry in his holding onto his mother's interpretation of the handkerchief, making it a kind of religious idol for him. This excessive faith and trust in the handkerchief as a symbol of love and trustworthiness leads him to the destruction of both Desdemona and finally himself when he receives sudden realization too late, for it is in one moment after he kills Desdemona that he realizes that he had been tricked by Iago making it a kind of epiphany. This physical object which has the potential for idolatry is used by Iago to that effect. It is a physical symbol and reminder of the outside narrative that explains its dramatic purpose in the play.

Yet, also in the play we have Iago and his wife Emelia. For both of them their particular idolatry is that of financial

success over morality. More specifically, Emelia's is reflected in her willingness to cheat on her husband to get him promoted. For Iago it is his desire to destroy Othello for spite. Though definitely motiveless (Iago does not describe why he chooses Othello as a target), it may very well be that due to his wife's previous infidelities that Iago is projecting his subconscious anger onto Othello. This theory has been recently brought forth by A.D. Nuttall and shall be examined here.

Iago has been most famously described by Romantic Poet and critic Samuel Taylor Coleridge as being a mere "motiveless malignity" (315). Finding a motive for Iago seems near impossible, indeed there is nothing definitive in the text, no 'smoking gun' as it were. At the start of the play, Iago complains to Brabantino about Cassio's promoting Othello over him providing Iago with potential motive. However, later in the play we can see Iago thinking aloud:

> For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
> Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof
> Doth (like a poisonous mineral) gnaw my innards;
> And nothing can or shall content my soul
> Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife. (I.ii.295-299)

Here, at first we see Iago suspects Othello of having an affair with his wife. As we later find out, there is a gossip narrative that makes Iago suspect this, though at this point nothing is directly mentioned.It is later on that Iago elaborates; introducing an outside narrative in the form of some gossip he has heard:

> I hate the Moor,
> And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
> H'as done my office. I know not if't be true,
> But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
> Will do as if for surety. (I.iii.386-390)

As Nuttall explains: "Here Iago tells us that he has decided consciously to treat a story that could be false as if it were true" (282). This story is not played out on stage so we have no way to confirm its truth making it an outside narrative: a story told to Iago as gossip. It is indeed an example of what McKluskie defines as an "outside narrative" and a "half-told story"(547). This if anything is the 'smoking gun' and taken at face value seems to prove Iago's motive. As Nuttall says, "Iago entertains the thought that Othello has had sexual relations with his, Iago's wife, Emelia. This, it might seem is a perfect, "straight" motive for what Iago

does later"(281-282).

Much in the way that we get a clearer picture of Malvolio's idolatry from looking at Feste, it is possible to gain a more complete picture of Iago and his evil by looking at his wife Emelia and her motivations. Indeed it is Emelia's lack of morals that, while makes her a good match for Iago, also provides us with some insight into his motivations. For after the plot to make Othello jealous is well under way (after the handkerchief is stolen), Emelia rationalizes to Desdemona:

> Who would not make
> Her husband a cuckold, to make him a monarch? I
> Should venture purgatory for it. (IV.iii.74-76)

This shows that to Emelia, cheating on her husband to gain a promotion is a mere trifling matter, whereas Desdemona quickly says that she would never cheat on Othello "for the whole world" (I.iii.78). Thus we can see the kind of couple that Iago and Emelia make, both are conniving and are fundamentally focused on promotion and financial success tothe point that it becomes an idol to them. There is also a lack of intimacy with both of them, which could potentially lead to a lack of trust between them. For

indeed, Iago doesn't tell his wife about his machinations regarding the handkerchief when he tries to get her to steal it as Emelia states:

> My wayward husband hath a hundred times
> Woo'd me to steal it, but she loves so the token,
> For he conjur'd her she should ever keep it
> That she reserves it evermore about her,
> To kiss, and talk to; I'll ha' the work ta'en out,
> And give't Iago: what he'll do with it
> Heaven knows, not I. (III.iii.296-302)

Thus we can see that when she steals the handkerchief she says that she doesn't know why her husband wishes it stolen. It is important to note that she also tells us how Desdemona relates to the handkerchief: by kissing it and talking to it.In essence Desdemona near worships the handkerchief in a near idolatry much as Othello considers it a magic token, symbolizing his love and Desdemona's fidelity.

In taking this into account we can see the forces which have been directed at Othello to shape him, though from the start it is his handkerchief and his faith in itspower that is used against him. As Desdemona comes to treat the handkerchief as if it were Othello himself, first, Othello comes to treat the handkerchief as

an idol:

> That handkerchief
> Did an Egyptian to my mother give,
> She was a charmer, and could almost read
> The thoughts of people; she told her, while she kept it
> 'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father
> Entirely to her love: but if she lost it,
> Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
> Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt
> After new fancies. (III.iv.53-61).

Here we can see the obvious connection Othello places in the handkerchief. Indeed at the end of this passage he adds:

> Make it darling, like your precious eye,
> To lose, or give't away, were such perdition
> As nothing else could match. (III.iv.64-66)

Thus Othello puts faith in the handkerchief as a symbol of relationship fidelity and from his story to Desdemona, she thus, treats the handkerchief with the same idolatry that Othello does.

With regards to Othello's motivations for jealousy, Othello says at the end of the play he wishes to be thought of as:

> one that lov'd not wisely but too well;

Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought
Perplexed in the extreme. (V.ii.345-347)

Indeed, as the A.D.Nuttell points out that the key word here is "wrought" in the sense that, "in fact it is the old past tense of work and is so used here. Othello is saying that he has been worked upon, wrought as a clay figure is wrought by the finger and thumb of the artist" (278). As much as this is the case, it is however, Othello's narrative story of his mother's faith in the handkerchief, instilled in her son that is essentially, the very seed that Iago works upon to bring Othello's destruction. It is thus that the narrative in Othellobrings the reality of idolatry and fundamentalist faith from outside the narrative structure of the story and into its heart.

2. A Play Within A Play As Narrative in *Hamlet*

In several ways *Hamlet* embodies the theme of epiphany versus idolatry.As mentioned earlier in this paper epiphany is interpreted as the sudden realization of a broader reality. Idolatry in this instance refers to Hamlet's narrow focus on achieving

revenge for his father's death to the disregard of other relationships. In *Hamlet*, Prince Hamlet idolizes his father to the extent that he disregards and isolates himself from, amongst others, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Ophelia.

In the character of Horatio we find a man who questions things rationally and is quite cautious. It is a caution that keeps him from any form of narrow minded fundamentalism. Horatio proves to be an excellent foil for Hamlet for in Prince Hamlet we have a character that in essence changes from a saintly character to an uncompassionate fundamentalist in his pursuit of justice regarding his father's death and in so doing, brings about the alienation of other characters.

With regards to outside narratives, *Hamlet* brings us two: The first being the play within a play and the second being his telling the tale of the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Both narratives bring about the characterization of Hamlet as being a well balanced man who becomes transformed into a fundamentalist opposed to breaking away from his idolization of his father and achieving a kind of epiphany in the realization of other characters as allies.

From the very first act of the play we have questions

regarding the appearance of the ghost. Horatio is called to witness the ghost's appearance as he is a respected man. One in whom Hamlet puts much trust in as well:

> Marcellus: Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
> And will not let belief take hold of him,
> Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us.
> Therefore I have entreated him along
> With us to watch the minutes of this night (I.i.26-30)

Horatio at first doesn't believe the ghost exists. It is Horatio that brings in the outside narrative of "Fortinbras of Norway" (I.i.85), that mirrors that of Hamlet and his father Hamlet Sr. in that both sons have fathers who have been killed. This outside story is presented as a possible reason for the ghost's appearance; King Hamlet appears in armor on the battlements causing the soldiers there to suspect the King has appeared to perhaps in relationto the threat of invasion from Norway:

> Well may it sort that this portentous figure
> Comes armed throughout our watch so like the King
> That was and is the question of these wars. (I.i.112-114)

Horatio quickly recovers his wits and soon rejects the ghost's narrative saying that "A mote it is to trouble the minds eye"

(I.i.115). Yet then he recalls that he'd heard that after the assassination of Julius Caesar that the dead rose and began speaking in the streets (I.i.116-128) showing that continues to interpret this narrative that the ghost presents as being connected to the death of King Hamlet being a murder.

The first consideration of Horatio's places him as one who thinks the ghost's appearance is of no consequence and should be without much regard.Horatio belittles the visitation and says that it is of little consequence to trouble one's mind with. It is also important to note the reference toanother narrative, that of Julius Caesar. It is also mentioned later by Polonius when he says he acted before: "I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed I'th' Capitol" (III.ii.102). These references support the ghost's appearance as being connected to his murder over the other theories of the ghost being an impostor or the ghost being an evil spirit sent to bring destruction to the state of Denmark.

After this first rejection, Horatio presents us much later with another interpretation for the ghost's appearance when accompanied by Hamlet. Horatio fears that the ghost is evil and might assume some other horrible form which might deprive Hamlet's sovereignty of reason and draw him into madness

(I.iv.72-74). Horatio thus attempts to dissuade Hamlet from meeting with the ghost. Suddenly here we find Horatio rejecting the ghost's presented narrative outright, judging the ghost ahead of time instead of investigating further as Hamlet does. This prejudice is what blocks Horatio from the ghost's message which has the potential to bring a greater awareness of the things that are wrong in the state of Denmark. As after Hamlet goes to confer with the ghost Marcellus says he feels that "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" (I.v.90).

In this scene we find that Hamlet is a fearless figure who showsconcern for the state of his own soul and little for his life itself when he replies to Horatio's concerns:

> Why, what should be the fear?
> I do not set my life at a pin's fee,
> And for my soul, what can it do to that,
> Being a thing immortal as itself?
> It waves me forth again. I'll follow it. (I.iv.64-68)

Thus we find in Prince Hamlet, a man who shows a saintly focus on the spiritual with no regard for his own temporal life.

We can see that the appearance of the ghosthas lead to premonitions that there is something evil and wrong, though most

think the ghost is an evil spirit. It is only Hamlet who is most balanced in neither presuming either way as to whether the ghost is good or evil.

This use of something (in this case King Hamlet's ghost), appearing from outside the play, that comes into the play matches the dramatic structure of Othello in how it is Othello's handkerchief that is brought into the play as a symbol of religious contention. Both the handkerchief andthe ghost are objects with which various characters react showing their position in the area of openness to epiphany versus the narrow fundamentalist focus on the object, as later we will see how the ghost leads Hamlet to become a fundamentalist in his narrow obedience and exclusive service to the ghost's bidding.

It is through the use of another form of narrative, the play within the play, that Hamlet becomes convinced of the ghost's authenticity as his father's ghost and of Claudius' guilt. For in Hamlet, unlike the other plays one message is not enough to bring about a full epiphany, especially as it comes from a ghost, a most dubious and potentially unreliable source.

In Hamlet having the production of *The Murder of Gonzago* in the midst of the play provides an interesting use of an outside

narrative as it serves several purposes. Most obviously, it moves the plot forward; it is a means for Hamlet to confirm Claudius' guilt. In terms of the theme of epiphany versus fundamentalism it has two sides. Firstly, it provides Hamlet with the emotional impetus that leads him down the path of fundamentalism in his narrow pursuit of justice. It must be noted that there are other forces that compel him and keep him on his narrow track, however it is the play that starts him in that direction. It is just before this play that we can see Hamlet unable to act and equivocating in his "To be or not to be"(III.i.56) soliloquy.

Besides giving Hamlet the impetus which starts him down the path that leads to his blind pursuit of justice to the detriment of all his relationships, secondly, it also provides an opportunity for Shakespeare to characterize both prince Hamlet and Horatio in greater detail.

With regards to the latter point, we find that Hamlet makes references to other performances he has seen when he directs the players in how to perform their play:

> O, it offends me
> to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow
> tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears

of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise.
I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing
Termagant. It out Herods Herod. Pray you avoid it. (III.ii.8-14)

At first Prince Hamlet is telling the players to act without an excess of emotion and expression; not to overact but act in a balanced way. This advice proves rather ironic as in the last lines there is a hint of the harsh uncompassionate fundamentalist Hamlet is to later become; "I would have such a fellow whipped for…"(III.ii.13). The double irony is that Hamlet would have them whipped for overdoing Termagant and Herod, as Termagant is a Saracen deity, famous for his ferocity and Herod a biblical king known for his violent rage. Thus Hamlet would have his tyrants and gods act in moderation and if not, he would act the tyrant. In this instance we can see that Hamlet would have a tyrant make him into a tyrant. It is this dark potential that, when actualized, turns Hamlet away from being a man in balance towards becoming a fundamentalist in singular pursuit of a narrow goal. But at this early point in the play Hamlet is still a man mostly inbalance as he tempers this advice to the players by saying that they must also, "Be not too tame neither" (III.ii.16).However, when

taking into account his threats to the players not to overact a tyrant we can find Hamlet to be leaning towards the fundamentalist side slightly though only ever so slightly.

The passage also shows how Hamlet views the less educated "groundlings" as being incapable of understanding anything except "inexplicable dumb-shows and noises" (III.ii.12). This elitist contempt for the uneducated or uninitiated is one of the hallmarks of an fundamentalistin how a fundamentalist would not consider that others could come to understand their own particular viewpoint or in how their viewpoint must be right without giving consideration to other possibilities. It is also a form of dramatic structure in the way that Hamlet here, is in essence insulting the very audience watching the play at the Globe Theatre. This insulting of the less educated is later contrasted with how Hamlet sees and treats Horatio.

After the players departs Hamlet calls for Horatio. At his appearance Hamlet addresses him:

> Horatio, thou aret e'en as just a man
> As e'er my conversation cop'd withal. (III.ii.53-54)

At first here, Hamlet is saying that he finds Horatio a fine

specimen of a man yet soon after he elaborates on this meaning saying that he is not aiming to flatter Horatio as Horatio is beneath Hamlet's station adding "Why should the poor be flatter'd" (III ii 58-59). Hamlet then explains that he sees Horatio as being a man of balanced passions who looks stoically upon both hardships and fortunate circumstances and thus would be a good judge of events. Thus though Horatio is below Hamlet's social status, Hamlet values his opinion and asks him to view Claudius' reaction to the play.

> I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
> Even with the very comment of thy soul
> Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
> Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
> It is a damn ghost that we have seen. (III.ii.78-82)

Thus we can see that Hamlet's opinion of Horatio balances out his harsh view of the groundlings he has seen before. We can see that Hamlet at times is harshly judgmental and looks rather disparagingly of the lower classes, yet at other times he looks favorably upon some as in the case of Horatio. This is rather fitting of Coleridge's description of Hamlet as being a melancholic; being rather extreme in his judgments and perceptions.It is

important to note that this is all brought about by the appearance of the players and Hamlets speaking of his past experiences of dramatic productions both narratives that occur or come from outside the framework of the plays own dramatic framework.

One other narrative structure that comes from outside the plays stage actions is the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. It first comes to us in the form of a letter from Hamlet to Horatio telling of Hamlets ship being overtaken by pirates and how he was taken prisoner by the pirates. He also adds that regardless, both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have continued on to England yet he has shocking news to tell Horatio regarding them (IV.vi.12-27). This mysterious letter in itself is a prelude to epiphany, a tool towards a potential revelation much in the way that Malvolio's love letter is in *Twelfth Night*.

A second enigmatic letter from Hamlet is sent to Claudius confounding him as Hamlet states in the letter that he has arrived back in Denmark and that he intends to ask Claudius' forgiveness.

The letter confounds Claudius much as the love letter at first confounds Malvolio, building suspense in the audience as Claudius asks:

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse and no such thing? (IV.vii.46-47)

Later on, Hamlet meets Horatio and relates the tale of how he discovered the letter ordering his execution in England and how he forged another letter ordering "those bearers [of the letter] put to sudden death" (V.ii.46). Hamlet then escapes the ship leaving Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to the bearing of the letter. To the ends of this outside narrative, Hamlet's reaction is rather cold. As Horatio digests the knowledge of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's death Hamlet replies:

Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
They are not near my conscience, their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow (V.ii.57-59).

As Northrop Fry points out that "for Hamlet to describe them so contemptuously to Horatio as the shabbiest kind of spies, whose death is simply a good riddance, is one of those bewildering shifts of perspective" (94). Indeed Hamlets coldness to the death of his old classmates shows us clearly how much a fundamentalist Hamlet has become regarding his focus on getting justice for his father's death. Indeed, he doesn't consider the possibility that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern might have been innocents,

completely unaware of the part they were playing in Claudius' machinations. As earlier in the play we can see Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's innocence. It is thus clear that Hamlets narrow focus on Claudius' evil has caused him to erroneously consider anyone outside of himself (with the exception of Horatio), an enemy and ally of Claudius'.

Conclusion

In examining Shakespeare's plays we find that Shakespeare gives us a realistic view of character that describes the roots of fundamentalist thinking as being founded in an excessive and exclusive passion such as self-love, anger, or an idolizing of a parental figure. In all cases there is introduced an object or character that acts as a physical symbol that introduces an outside narrative. These objects or characters present to other characters the opportunity to form either an idolizing attachment to a strict interpretation of the outside narrative or achieve a sudden broaderview of a greater reality which can be described as an epiphany.

These stories can be seen as the opportunity for achieving a sudden broader perspective beyond their idolatry depending on how the character receives and interprets such a symbol. It depends on whether or not the character presented with such a symbol and outside narrative chooses to react; either by relating the story to the broader narrative and the other characters' stories leading to an epiphany and integration into the community of the other characters or by fixating on the narrative and object leading the character to a fundamentalist idolatry and isolation from the others.

In *Twelfth Night* we have a love letter introduced to Malvolio which allows us to see his idolatrous side. We also find Feste telling a story of his sister and describing where he lives giving us a glimpse of his being a victim of idolatrous fundamentalism. In *The Tempest* we have Prospero speaking of his life before coming to the island and how he wrestles with his anger in order to become reunited with his brother and old friends as well we have various descriptions of the island from the survivors of the shipwreck. In *Othello* the handkerchief is introduced to us as an outside narrative which leads Othello to become a fundamentalist. In *Hamlet* King Hamlet's ghost is

brought to us as an outside narrative which brings Prince Hamlet to gradually become a fundamentalist. So too, withthe introduction of the traveling actors we discover a rather elitist side of Hamlet which is to become more prominent leading him to later speak of the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with cold indifference.

From an analysis of these outside narratives we find a Shakespeare that is critical of all in showing us idolatry opposed to epiphany. Thus the assertion of this thesis is that Shakespeare goes beyond his mere character's ideology and gives us their passion lead motivations making his stories realistic and at the same time carrying the message of support for a pluralistic society.

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