

Shakespeare



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Shakespeare The play, All Well that Ends Well has often been regarded as one among the popular comedies of the great playwright, William Shakespeare. The play centers on the maid, Helena whose attempts to win over her husband, constitute the major actions of the play. On fearing Helena, her husband Lord Bertram flees to Italy. The play is divided into five acts and the ' bed tricks' becomes the central action of the play. The five acts are arranged in accordance with the elements of Aristotle's Poetics. The setting of the play comprises wider areas namely Roussillon, Paris and Florence in Italy. The desire of Helena becomes true, irrespective of her low social position. The success of Helena in turning the king of France has caused for a turning point that helped her a great deal in attaining her dreams. Bertram's attempt to seduce Diana was well abolished by Helena and trickily she makes union with him in the bed scene and conceives his child. Moreover, she had asked Diana to get the family ring of Bertram. Helena in the play achieves both conditions of Bertram to become his wife in a tricky way. At the end, when Bertram sees his wife's great attempts to win over, makes him attached towards Helena and thus the play ends well as with the title. The play is not much attached to the unities like the unity of place and the unity of time as Aristotle propounded. But it has made some achievements with the unity of action. It can be seen that the Aristotelian logic of the action, as rebuilt by Frye is well established in the play. According to Aristotle it should have " proper beginning, middle, and end" (Kitano). In ' All Well that Ends Well' Frye finds the " material cause " of the comedy in the young man's sexual desire and the " final cause" in " the audience, which is expected by its applause to take part in the comic resolution" (Haley 19). All Well that Ends Well has gone through these levels

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as according to the Aristotle's theory. The first level is Exposition where a situation is made with some tensions. Here in the play the initial conflicts between Helena and Bertram make this level. The second point, Rising action is made when the marriage ends in turmoil. The third level, conflict takes in play with the trick played by Helena with Bertram in Florence. This becomes a turning point in the play. The next stage is the falling action. Here the things begin to clear up. Everything moves for the final culmination. But in the play the author has succeeded to implement some sort of tension in the hero. The play ends with happy knots of both the hero and the heroine, thus making the conclusion. All problems are solved and the audience sees the happy ending. Thus the play achieves comic catharsis as according to Aristotle's theories. So in some of the aspects the play acts in tune with Aristotle's rules on comedy. Works Cited Kitano, M. Aristotle's Theory of Comedy. Viewed 19 July 2011. <http://www.gpwu.ac.jp/~kitano/papers/comic.pdf> Haley, D. Shakespeare's courtly mirror: reflexivity and prudence in All's well that ends well. Ed. Illustrated. University of Delaware Press, 1993. Print.