

B. A. English (Honours) Part III

Paper: VIII (Literary Essays)

Shakespearean Comedy: A Short Introduction

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Shakespearean comedies manifest a movement from the normal world of conflict and trouble into 'the green world' –the forest of Arden in *As you Like It*, or the fairy haunted wood of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or the coast of Illyria in *Twelfth Night* - in which the problems of the ordinary world are dissolved, enemies reconciled, and true lovers united. In these comedies the characters fleet the time carelessly in the carefree world of imaginary settings. They all seem to propagate the philosophy of 'love and let other love' or 'forgive and be divine'. In Shakespearean comedy there is a combination of romantic main plot and comic sub-plot in which passion, misadventure, melancholy and folly coexist and help to define each other. Almost all his comedies are dominated by female characters because of their wit and intelligence as Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Miranda in *The Tempest*, and all of them seem to project the philosophy of love and life. The confrontation of romantic main plot and realistic subplot is another salient feature of his comedies. In it, it is not only hero and heroine that are in love but every character seems to be desperate for some love. Music and songs are inseparable part of his comedies help in the formation of a complete happy go lucky world in such comedies. The humorous vain is created by fools and the sombre aspect of life is presented by other characters.