

### Article Abstract

Leah S. Marcus's article "Anti-Conquest and *As You Like It*" examines the Shakespearean play about romance, comedy and the pros of living in the countryside rather in a city. Marcus's opened her article with a quote from Horace Howard Furness's preface to "New Variorum *As You Like It* (1980)", describing how everything about *As You Like It*, based in England, played by English roles "-Nowhere else on the habitable globe could its scene have been laid but in England". Through her article, she addresses those well versed in Shakespearean literature and history, focusing on mainly one individual character, specifically Jacques or Melancholy Jacques, and with the plays disagreement to Jacques; a well-traveled man who represents colonialism in an anti-colonial setting.

If somewhere to read Marcus's article and have not a single ounce of knowledge about Shakespeare and his plays, specifically *As You Like It* the reader would be lost. Despite Shakespeare's works are present in almost every form of entertainment and literature. The reason for this is that Marcus does little to explain what the play is about, and whoever is reading her article is likely to have already read *As You Like It* and should have prior knowledge of Shakespeare and his previous plays. Such as the setting for example, in the forest of Arden, the namesake of Shakespeare's mother's maiden name before marriage. Focusing mainly on the fact he, Shakespeare; was an English play writer whose plays that take place in England or about English people create a sense of national pride, and superiority from other peoples/nations.

Even though Shakespeare has written plays taking place in Italy like the *Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo & Juliet*, and more. There's a sense of English superiority in his plays, specifically in this one. In *As you Like it* the play takes place in the forest of Arden, Marcus focuses on the character known as Melancholy Jacques who's dismissed by Duke Senior and his band of followers, another English archetype portrayed in the play as Robin Hood and his Merry Men. Despite that Jacques delivers one of the greatest lines in not only Shakespearean literature but in literature itself, describing the world is like a stage and we are but actors on it. He's considered a fool amongst these men; even though he is far more, well traveled than all of them and has seen the world outside Arden. But his conflict among the exiles is not unfounded for when he says them "Ducdame, ducadame, ducdame!" (2.5, 54), explaining, rather unhelpfully that it is a Greek term, for fools in a circle. Marcus goes into further depth about if truly that's what the term means. As well as how scholars like Horace Howard Furness, have studied what the word really means from Celtic to Roman origin. But despite all, Jacques is still ridiculing the group, and basically calling them a bunch of idiots. Later, when Orlando storms into the camp demanding food, and making fun of Jacques at first as "A fool or a Cipher" (3, 2, 290). at the end of the play when the four couples all agree to get married, and everyone celebrates, Jacques is not among them. Also with the continued comparison of animals and humans in the play, such as when the deer is slain for its venison and Jacques doesn't understand they needed it for food. Showing him, Jacques apart from the other exiles in the woods. The Dukedom and Arden is a representation of England and Duke Senior and his men the English who give off an anti-colonialism sentiment to anyone who is not English, with the celebration of the English people and by comparison Jacques representing foreigners as something to avoid.

In the beginning of the article Marcus refers to Jacques personality and desire for the others in his party to travel as the “French Disease”. The idea in Marcus’s article, that other nations would contaminate it, by any source or ideals outside their own borders, from a foreign country or people. This is the main argument of Marcus’s article and her idea of “Anti-conquest” in *As You Like It*, threw out the play seen through the continuous differences of the exiles of Arden and Melancholy Jacques as not a “inland bred” denizen. Though the play’s main focus is on Rosalind, Marcus refers to Jacques more because of the two are opposite reflections of one another. With Rosalind going to live in the forest of Arden/England where everyone/the people of England except Jacques/colonialism, is truly happy to live out their desires of love, and pleasure. Marcus continued to show any ideas of colonialism in negatives.

In conclusion, Leah S. Marcus’s article is meant to be read by someone with an understanding not only those well versed in Shakespearean literature and history, but also about the author William Shakespeare himself. Focusing mainly on Jacques or Melancholy Jacques/colonialism and his colonial versus anti-colonial dispute amongst the exiles/English of Arden, representing England. Reflecting the ideals of the time, and Shakespeare himself about how a nation should not mix with other nations, unless they would loose the happiness and joy that they have; which the exiles represent in the forest of Arden, named after Shakespeare’s own mother.