

## The Shakespearean Roadmap for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

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Received on: 4-8-2022

Accepted on: 30-10-2022

### Abstract

Through an interdisciplinary lens of psychology, politics, environmentalism, economics and literary analysis, this paper explores intersections between the ethics embedded in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599) and the food for thought on what is known since 2015 as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The paper scrutinizes Shakespeare's criticism of unsustainable practices that thwart individual and collective prosperity as well as his advocacy of sustainability associated with the characters' thoughts and behaviours. Analytical and comparative approaches are applied. The paper argues that the conducted analysis can raise the reader's sustainable awareness and, consequently, accelerate his contribution to the implementation of the goals. The paper concludes that Shakespeare has managed to represent a roadmap for the implementation of the SDGs prior to the one proposed by the UN and that both roadmaps go beyond the fluctuating empathy gap between the wealthy and the impoverished to emphasize their partnership as pivotal for social welfare.

**Keywords:** drama; awareness; sustainability; roadmap; implementation

### Introduction

At the United Nations General Assembly Summit in September 2015, the member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda includes seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose aim is to achieve individual and collective multidimensional prosperity, equality and justice. The goals, which came into effect in 2016, build up "the latest expression of the evolving paradigm of sustainable development" (Stansfield 2017, 38). Three years later, the world leaders called for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. In compliance with this call, this paper uses English drama as a platform to raise awareness on the SDGs. It examines the proximity between William Shakespeare's promulgation of certain responsible thoughts in *As You Like It* and the contents of the SDGs with the aim to suggesting that such proximity may accelerate the implementation of the goals. Based on the assumption that the Shakespearean work "was already part of the *larger cultural discourse*" (Ruiter 2020, 3), the paper proposes that the more sustainable cultural discourse is elaborated in Shakespeare's play, a noticeable contribution the play can make to implement the assigned goals.

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\* Doi: <https://doi.org/10.47012/jjml.16.2.12>

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According to Elliot Krieger (1979), in each of Shakespeare's comedy one of two things happens. The protagonist moves from one location to another or the action begins as a group of characters arrive in a new location (1). Krieger adds that critics refer to the location characters move to as the 'second world', whereas they refer to the location characters depart as the 'primary world'. In the second world, the protagonists "transform the environment into a manifestation of their subjective needs" (4). Similarly, contemporary readers of Shakespearean drama can transform their respective societies into manifestations of their unprecedented need to develop amidst the crises of poverty, vulnerability, gender disparity, illiteracy, food insecurity and inequality as examples. This study proposes that the SDGs, which can be better understood through the rereading of *As You Like it*, constitute the mechanism inevitably needed for such a transformation so that societies can tackle contemporary crises and reshape their 'second world'.

This study tries to bring before the scholars of English drama the contents of international studies that discuss the SDGs from political, economic and social perspectives. These studies can be illustrated by the report published by The International Institute for Sustainable Development (2016) about the five criteria for successfully measuring progress on the SDGs as well as by the UN's Regional Roadmap for Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2017). Additionally, this research tries to fill the time gap in several studies on *As You Like It* due their publication prior to the UN's adoption of the SDGs. Different from John Shaw's (1955) explanation of the dramatization of the gifts of nature in comparison to the gifts of fortune, Andrew Barnaby's (1996) scrutiny of the political consciousness of the play, Tabassum Javed's (2012) elaboration of the psychological analysis of the characters of Orlando and Rosalind from a Jungian viewpoint, Joanna Rebeccah Grossman's (2014) and Naglaa Abou-Agag's (2016) rereading the play from ecocritical perspectives, Ramesh Adhikary's (2020) analysis of the reversal of gender roles, the present paper discusses the wider perspectives of solutions to contemporary global crises as artistically represented in the play. The solutions are put into a further stage as they are used as a basis to suggest an action plan that may contribute to the spread of sustainability among the readers of English drama.

Methodologically, this paper depends on the resolution No. (A/RES/70/1) adopted by the General Assembly of the UN on September 25, 2015 to assign the SDGs. The resolution is entitled *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The similarity between selected aspects of *As You Like It* and the UN goals is illuminated. In order to bring analysis into focus, the interdisciplinary, descriptive and comparative approaches are applied with bearing in mind that certain risks run as not all the goals are applicable to the play.

## **Sustainable Development Goals as Manifested in the Play**

### *Ending Poverty in All Its Forms*

The top ranked priority among the SDGs is to 'end poverty in all its forms everywhere' (United Nations 2015, 1). The goal is ambitious as it asserts the necessity to 'end' poverty rather than 'alleviate' or 'minimize' it. This is due to the timeless, limitless and endless catastrophic consequences of poverty. As Michael M. O. Seipel (2003, 191) elaborates, poverty, for generations, "has undermined the well-being of

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humanity. Victims of poverty often suffer from hunger, disease, violence, family disintegration, indignities and sometimes even death". The conceptualization of poverty has also moved on "from a focus on poverty in developing countries" to be "global in its perspective" (Gaisbauer et al. 2020, 1). Hence, ending poverty is inevitable for human prosperity. If absolute poverty is related to man's lack of basic needs, relative poverty means a human being's inequality due to his social or financial disadvantage. In *As You Like It*, the character portrayal of Oliver and Orlando as well as the symbolism of the 'sequestered stag' are illustrative of Shakespeare's depiction of some forms and manifestations of poverty to highlight subsequent misery.

Shakespeare does not only portray poor characters but also represents the circumstances of their vulnerability. The play starts with Orlando's extended disclosure to Adam about his dilemma (1.1.1-26). He conveys his sense of depression due to "the discrepancy between his noble birth and his current circumstances" (Barnaby 1996, 375) under the patronage of his elder brother Oliver. He challenges Oliver's "inhumane, legally irremediable treatment of him" (Hunt 2008, 27). Orlando is a 'gentleman' by birth as his father was a knight. However, he explains his 'sadness' and the causes of his destitution which 'grieve' him. Orlando is denied his inheritance of 'a thousand crowns' bequeathed him by his father's will. He criticizes 'the courtesy of nations' that manifests itself in the law of primogeniture.

Orlando is denied proper standards of living. He is 'bred' like Oliver's horses. Even the horses "are bred better" and they "are fair with their feeding". They are allowed to 'grow' and be trained to obey voice and hand commands. But Orlando is grown in seclusion like "the stalling of an ox". Thus, contrary to Oliver's animals which show loyalty to their master, Orlando has a strained relationship with his elder brother. Unlike his second brother, Jaques, who is sent to school, Orlando is "rustically kept at home" or, precisely speaking, he is stayed "at home unkept". His gentility is humiliated as he is permitted to be 'fed' with 'hinds' or farm servants. Orlando's sense of inferiority is evident in associating himself with the object pronoun 'me' in contrast to his associating his usurping brother with action verbs as 'gives', 'lets' and 'bars'. Orlando sums up the whole context as he emphasizes that Oliver 'takes' from him what nature 'gave' him and he concludes with reference to his inability to 'know' a 'wise remedy' for his suffering. For Orlando, seeking a remedy is the only hope he possesses to overcome the hostility Oliver practices against him, including calling him 'boy' and 'villain' (1.1.52,55), as well as to solve his aristocratic insolvency.

Shakespeare's opening speech signifies that Orlando, individually, suffers in silence from unequal rights to inheritance due to a socially acceptable norm that is legitimized, the law of primogeniture. The law has led to familial disintegration as Oliver's egocentric beneficiary is dominant. Orlando, generally, belongs to the impoverished who suffer from improper shelter, malnutrition, illiteracy, humiliation, passive existence and verbal insults. His agony can be associated with being "orphaned and disenfranchised at the start" (Lewis 1992, 16). Orlando seems to be socially invisible since 'social invisibility' is often "associated with the marginalised status of certain people who are neither noticed nor perceived by their community due to political or ideological reasons" (Alnawaiseh and Al-Tarawneh 2022, 610).

The logical consequence of Orlando's suffering is his disloyalty to Oliver symbolized by his attacking him as he holds him off by the throat (1.1.53). In parallel, Oliver's felonious thought is turned into practice as he coordinates with Charles, a wrestler at Duke Frederick's court, that Orlando is murdered during a wrestling match. Then, Adam informs Orlando about Oliver's secret plan to 'burn' Orlando's lodging while he is "within it" and if he fails, he will find other means to cut Orlando off. In all cases, Orlando's house becomes "but a butchery" (2.3.28). As a result, Orlando "escapes Oliver's murderous hatred" (Adhikary 2020, 34) by seeking shelter in the Forest of Arden.

The tackling of the roots of Orlando's misery constructs an image of the 'wise remedy' he aspires to free himself from the tyranny of poverty. The image comprises social, legal, educational, and familial pillars. The discrimination within the bequeathing system should reflect justice instead of primogeniture. The educational system should guarantee equal access to education based on its compulsory service as well as its efficiency to fine the patrons who do not send children under their patronage to school. Familial disputes should be shot at cradle through feeding the relationships among family members with tender-hearted attributes to life rather seeking individual privileges. The efficiency of the emerging image can be measured by its contribution to the minimization of hostility, violence and the sense of disloyalty as well as by its subsequent potentiality to reduce crime rates. Feeding the sense of security at home can also minimize a human being's thought of seeking refuge, like migrants, away from domestic life. Thus, at home indignities and disregarded gentility abroad could be evaded.

Jacques's moralization of the spectacle of the 'sequestered stag' symbolizes shared responsibility for the suffering of destitute people. The First Lord recalls before Duke Senior how Jaques was melancholic because he saw a stag that was separated from his herd and was wounded by a hunter's arrow. The physical description of the stag's suffering is intensified through the visual and auditory imagery of its wretchedness, heaving movement, groans, and big round tears which coursed down his innocent nose. Jaques is revealed to philosophize his view of the incident as he satirically relates the misery of the stag to the social acting of 'giving much' to the needless wealthy. Jaques says, "Poor deer... thou mak'st a testament, As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more to that which had too much" (2.1.49-51). The stag is brought to death because an irrational hunter blindly performs his duty to please his master. Jaques takes this opportunity to disparage both the hunter and his offstage master through his use of the term 'worldlings'. He criticizes the social attitude towards the stag which is left 'alone' and 'abandoned of his velvet friends'. Neither the owner of the herd nor the members of the herd paid attention to the stag's suffering. Jaques justifies their attitude on the basis that "misery doth part the flux of company" (2.1.54-55). In other words, happiness is collectively celebrated, whereas suffering is confined to the sufferer. No one is ready to share the tribulations of others.

Jacques's view is more elaborated as he attacks the careless herd which passed near the injured stag without greeting him. Jaques blames the herd as he says, "Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens. 'Tis just the fashion. Wherefore do you look, Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?" (2.1.59-60). The comparison between the dramatic incident and the age shows that human relationships are replaced by business ones. The satisfied social groups, indicated by 'greasy', are indifferent to individual sufferers

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who are starving because of financial difficulty denoted by bankruptcy. Thus, the fashion of the world dictates that labourers should serve their masters regardless of their improper practices. The masters are preoccupied with expanding their businesses. The masters' absence does not affect the operation of the business. The poor are helpless and usually neglected. The power relation between the capitalists and the working class is not balanced. Amidst these explicit views an implicit view can be constructed. The whole sorrowful spectacle could have been avoided if man's tenderness towards the other living creations as well as the other members of society had been identified as the best asset of life sustainability. The tenderness could have been turned into an anti-poverty action plan that could have enhanced ethical integration between the capitalists and the labourers. Harsh penalties for those who violate this equation could have been publicized. The foundation of an effective mechanism of social solidarity could have reinforced the fragility of the needy as well. If the hunter had had an alternative for his life sustenance, he would not have contributed to serving his master's capital interest based on hunting and negatively affecting the balance of natural life.

### *Ending Hunger, Achieving Food Security and Promoting Sustainable Agriculture*

According to the United Nations (2015, 3), ending hunger could be achieved through ensuring access by all people to safe and nutritious food, ending all forms of malnutrition, doubling agricultural productivity and income of small-scale food producers with special reference to women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers. The UN also advocates the spread of sustainable food production systems and the implementation of resilient agricultural practices as instances.

In Shakespeare's play, the Forest of Arden is dramatized as a place that offers food security for its inhabitants and new comers as well. It is also a promising place for sustainable agriculture. The journey from seeking sufficient food to the aspiration of sustainability can be traced in four dramatic incidents. The starving Orlando's attitude towards providing Adam and himself with food illustrates his sense of responsibility. Orlando's first meeting with Duke Senior depicts the emerging violence within a starving man and the potentiality to contain it. The portrayal of Corin's offstage master exemplifies egocentric landlords' contribution to the spread of unsustainability. Corin's willingness to serve Rosalind and Celia as his new masters implies his belief that sustainable agriculture is auspicious.

Orlando's extreme hunger after his journey to the forest represents the peak of his sense of food insecurity. However, he behaves responsibly. Though he is overwhelmed by saving his soul, he promises Adam to bring him food. Orlando tells him, "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). Orlando's starvation empowers him to challenge wilderness and it shows his readiness to sacrifice his youth for the sake of Adam. The development of Orlando's character takes an audacious curve compared to the noble Orlando who has once believed that man's hunger should not motivate him to humiliate himself or act against the law. In response to Adam's previous advice to quit Oliver's estate, Orlando has denied that he might 'beg' his food or use his 'sword' to have "a thievish living on the common road" (2.3.34). Orlando's words indicate how man's hunger may turn him into a beggar or criminal. But when he faces death, Orlando is ready to use his sword to

secure his being alive. He does not beg or commit a crime, but he is ready to humiliate himself by challenging the wilderness of the forest.

After leaving Adam alone in the forest in search for food, Orlando vulgarly intrudes into Duke Senior's dwelling place. The intrusion shows the influence of food insecurity on the behaviour of man. Orlando is described as "brandishing a sword" and ordering the duke and his companions to eat no more "till necessity be served" (2.7.94). Necessity, for Orlando, means providing Adam and himself with food. He tells the duke, 'I almost die for food, and let me have it'. Because of hunger, Orlando's character is associated with irrationality and violence. But, Orlando's fury is brought to an end once the duke graciously invites him to his dining table. The duke, who is banished and deprived of authority, realizes his responsibility for providing Orlando and Adam with food once he recognizes their suffering. He acts like a hunger-relief aid for the two men. The duke's tenderness becomes a means of containing the enraged Orlando. Orlando does not only 'sheath' his sword but also promises not to eat until Adam is 'first sufficed'. His decision is hard because he is starving while the food is present and edible. But, he does not forget his duty towards Adam. He explains that "age and hunger" are two "weak evils" that oppress Adam at the moment. Orlando's ability to philosophize the situation emphasizes his nobility, not in terms of parenthood but in terms of feeling his social responsibility. As a result, Duke Senior allows that Orlando should go out and find Adam with a promise that nothing is wasted until they return (2.7.139-40). Additionally, the same incident proves that the civilized side of man operates even amidst the savageness of nature. The duke's graciousness has led to Orlando's apology with no hesitation, though the two characters are temporarily powerless because Orlando is deprived of his social and financial rights by Oliver and Duke Senior is banished by Duke Frederick.

Shakespeare's criticism of self-centred landlords is detected in Corin's revelation that his master, who owns a cote, flocks and bounds of feed, has "little recks to find the way to heaven, By doing deeds of hospitality" (2.4.83-85). Commenting on Corin's master, Barnaby (1996, 388) demonstrates that:

A figure for the current destruction of the manorial economy, Corin's master is guilty of all these charges simultaneously: he is absent from the estate; he exploits the (once commonly held) land for profit; he threatens to sell the estate with no concern for his workers' future prospects; he refuses the ethical responsibilities of his class-hospitable living, the sustenance of the customary culture, leadership of the countryside.

In parallel, Corin's honesty forbids him from using his master's property to secure food for Rosalind, Celia and Touchstone who are exhausted after their journey to the forest. The juxtaposition between the indifferent feudalist and the responsible poor shepherd intensifies how the selfishness of landlords contributes to the hunger of the masses. Additionally, Barnaby's view establishes connection between the master's unsustainable agriculture and the "destruction of the manorial economy". Though the master enjoys the gifts of pasture and livestock, his business is not responsible. His absence means that the land is not properly supervised. The production system is based on the individual thoughts and practices of the farmers whose knowledge might be inadequate. No more investments are planned to enable the project to

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expand. The master's monoculture is centred on the manipulation of the resources to maximize profit. Thus, it is not an odd that the master is careless about his 'ethical responsibilities' including the possible sale of the land regardless of the exposure of farmers to economic and social risks.

Contrary to Corin's master, Rosalind, as Ganymede, suggests that she is going to buy the master's pasture and cottage and Celia adds that Corin's wage will be 'mended' (2.5.95-97). Corin's response is his immediate appreciation of their proposition. The whole incident can be linked to 'investment in agriculture'. Neither Rosalind nor Celia has experience in agriculture. However, their instinct to seek protection may have given them an alert that an agricultural plot of land is an asset that brings them prosperity. The scenario becomes promising once Corin asserts the availability of the three pillars of sustainable agriculture: soil, profit, and adaptation with rural life (2.4.101). His assertion reflects his personal full understanding of "the realities of extracting a living from the land" (Boyce 1990, 39).

Shakespeare's dramatization of Orlando's and Adam's approaching death in the forest shows that noble origin and sense of social responsibility are essential for a human being's identifying himself with goodness or evil. Nobility is redefined, during periods of hardship, according to man's contribution to social survival. Orlando could have turned into an irrational ruinous device or a selfish beneficiary, but he is overcome by his inherent dignity. He proves that sacrifice should replace egocentricity during times of severe food insecurity. Orlando's and Duke Senior's first meeting conceptualizes collective efforts as the only means to end hunger. Powerless people are involved in these efforts as they are motivated by their sense of duty. An individual's access to sufficient food is a key element for policy makers as it enables them to contain the impoverished and evade a prevalent risk to social disturbance. Anti-sustainable agricultural practices associated with Corin's offstage master are criticized as well. There is an implied attack on landlords' monoculture based on absent agricultural supervision, manipulation of farmers, exploitation of natural resources, rare investment in agriculture, and egocentric profitability.

### *Ensuring Healthy Lifestyle and Promoting Wellbeing for All Ages*

Reducing maternal mortality, bringing certain epidemics and water-borne diseases to an end, and achieving universal health coverage are instances promoted by the UN (2015, 16) on its path to raise awareness on the SDGs. In *As You Like It*, old Adam's disclosure to the adolescent Orlando of the causes of his physical strength, Corin's explanation of the roots of human tranquillity, and Duke Senior's ability to reduce the anxiety of his exile are three dramatic incidents which incarnate healthy lifestyles and their contribution to the improvement of physical wellbeing.

While persuading Orlando that he can be an aid to him after leaving Oliver's estate, Adam affirms that he is 'strong' and 'lusty', though he looks 'old'. He informs Orlando about the causes of his wellbeing. He says, "For in my youth I never did apply, Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood, Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo, The means of weakness and debility" (2.3.49-52). Adam states that he did not allow wine to spoil his body and health. He did not use the vigour of his youth to seek evanescent power. The effectiveness of this lifestyle is evident in Adam's ability to endure the hardship of his journey to the forest.

Psychological peace and content are dramatized as critical to man's wellbeing. Corin reveals the secrets of man's tranquillity. He informs Touchstone that "the more one sickens, the worse at ease he is" (3.2.23-24), which is an invitation to cure sicknesses at early stages. Corin adds that 'money, means and content' are three good friends (3.2.25). Thus, financial resources, mechanism and satisfaction can provide man with the utmost happiness. Corin also informs Touchstone that he is "a true labourer" who is content because he: (1) earns what he eats; (2) gets what he wears; (3) hates no man (4) envies no man's happiness; (5) feels pleasure for other men's goodness; (6) assures his content with his harm (3.2.73-75). Though Corin's words seem plain, they are multidimensional. Corin clarifies that the relationship between a human being's consumption of food and his resources should be rationalized. If Corin had said that 'he eats what he earns', he could have hinted at no saving. But, his sentence, 'earns what he eats', means that man should exert effort to afford his living. Man should not be overambitious in a way that leads him to be overburdened with excessive work on his path to achieve luxury. In this case, the luxury of money can replace the luxury of health. The same view applies to man's strategy to secure his clothing. Then, Corin asserts that man's relationship with others should be guided by reciprocal love and contentedness. He adds that life becomes less complicated when a human being shares people their happiness and is tolerant of his own misery.

Duke Senior is portrayed as powerless in exile. He is separated from his daughter and his lords appear as foresters. However, the duke seems to enjoy a harmony-based happiness and he has the feeling of being tuned with the forest. The deposed duke describes rural life as 'more sweet' compared to the 'painted pomp' life of the court. His cheerfulness is explicit in his rhetorical question, 'Are not these woods, More free from peril than the envious court'. He recognizes that the winter's wind and its blows upon the human body make him smile and realize that "sweet are the uses of adversity" (2.1.12). His attitude is more elaborated in Amiens's exclamation before him, "Happy is your Grace, That can translate the stubbornness of fortune, Into so quiet and so sweet a style" (2.1.18-20). The duke's psychological balance is also shown in his reaction towards Orlando's vulgar intrusion into his dwelling place. The duke does not utter a word of violence. Then, he foregrounds for Jaques the concept of the world as a universal theatre and that they "are not all alone unhappy" (2.7.142).

#### *Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promoting Lifelong Learning*

As the United Nations (2015, 17) demonstrates, all girls and boys should "complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes". The UN also believes that the number of youth and adults who have 'relevant skills' should be increased and 'gender disparities in education' must be eliminated. Above all, the UN emphasizes that all learners should acquire the knowledge and skills needed to "promote sustainable development including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development"



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In *As You Like It*, the criticism of Oliver's attitude towards educating Orlando, Corin's elaboration of his perception of learning, and Rosalind's talk about her acquiring knowledge through her fictitious uncle are three instances that call for inclusive and equitable education and learning.

Whereas Oliver permits Jaques to enjoy access to education, he denies that Orlando acquires education. Orlando's exclusion from education is due to neither an overall economic stagnation within the country nor his own disability. It is the result of his elder brother's envy stated in his comment that Orlando is "gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device, of all sorts of enchantingly beloved" (1.1.163-65). Oliver's statement situates missing school among Orlando's other positive qualities. It differentiates between attending school and learning. Whereas the first means basic education, the second is linked to everyday experience. Though Orlando lacks formal education, he is able to: (1) compose romantic lyrics addressed to Rosalind; (2) identify Rosalind's accent and argue with her about love and its remedy (3.2.347-75); (3) speak French words like 'adieu' (4.1.210); (4) overcome his anger and reconcile with Oliver (5.2.13-16).

Shakespeare uses Corin to illuminate that 'nature' and 'art' are two sources for acquiring knowledge. Corin demonstrates that if man is not born with natural wit, he can acquire knowledge through education (3.2.28-31). Thus, a person with in-born intelligence can enrich his knowledge through instruction. Moreover, Rosalind, as Ganymede, speaks to Orlando about her religious uncle who taught her how to speak and who "knew courtship too well" (3.2.350-52). Though Rosalind was mocking Orlando, her words hint at the worthiness of women's education in male dominated societies. She implies that teaching is a process rather than a random activity. The process has theoretical and practical sides like the tutorials she exercises to teach Orlando the art of courtship. Thus, she increases the number of adults who have skills and promotes training for indigenous people in vulnerable situations.

### *Achieving Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women*

The achievement of this goal necessitates, according to the UN (2015, 18), ending all forms of discrimination against women, eliminating all forms of violence against all women in the public and private spheres, ensuring women's "full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life" as examples.

Celia and Rosalind attain superior qualities compared to the male characters of *As You Like It*. They are decisive, consistent and integral. They identify their obstacles and handle them. Once Duke Frederick orders Rosalind to quit his court, she argues with him over the reasons beyond his command. Celia tries to assist her cousin in her argument. But, when the two cousins realize that their argument is ineffective, they share their brainstorming before drawing their action plan. Celia decides to challenge her father's will and accompany Rosalind in her adventure. She solves the problem of choosing where they go by suggesting seeking her uncle in the Forest of Arden. Rosalind evaluates that their femininity could be dangerous when they go to the forest because "beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold" (1.3.116). She also recognizes that her tallness is against her safety. Therefore, Celia decides to have a dressing style below her class, whereas Rosalind decides to disguise as a man so that they can evade possible misconduct. They assume different names. Rosalind is able to penetrate men's pretence as well. She tells

Celia about their supposed mannish tendency, “We’ll have a swashing and a martial outside-, As many other mannish cowards have, That do outface it with their semblances” (1.3.127-29). The two young ladies determine to “steal the clownish fool” out of Duke Frederick’s court so that he can “go along o’er the wide world” with them (1.3.136-38). Unlike Orlando and Adam who starve in the forest, Rosalind and Celia negotiate with Corin to secure their food and shelter. They choose their future husbands and their fathers’ decisions become subordinate. All these illustrations prove that Rosalind and Celia are good crisis managers.

Individually, Rosalind plays the role of a tutor once as she instructs Jaques that exaggerated melancholy and laughing are two kinds of extremity and they make people “worse than drunkards” (4.1.6-9) and once as she teaches Orlando how he should behave towards his beloved. The later tutorial consists of a number of “delightful games” (Beiner 1993, 39). By the end of the play, Rosalind solves all marriage problems as she “makes for a festive conclusion” (Smidt 1993, 49). She speaks the epilogue as well. Commenting on Rosalind’s leading role, Harold Bloom (1998) associates her distinction with speaking blank verse and wearing a skirt for a few minutes, deserving a better lover than Orlando and “better wits for her conversation than Touchstone and Jaques”, standing “at the centre of the play in which no authentic harm can come to anyone”, and enjoying the endowment of ‘poise’ (202-207). Additionally, Lewis (1992, 182) demonstrates that the uniqueness of Rosalind’s mysterious appearance in the final act,

Depends not simply on the fact that a god appears and mingles with mortals in a way we have not seen before but that Hymen seems so obviously Rosalind’s factotum, presenting her to father and future husband, and endorsing her and her cryptic ways.

*Promoting Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full of Productive Employment and Decent Work for All*

Shakespeare’s juxtaposition of Orlando’s lamentation over the decline of the real motivation for work with Corin’s pride of his husbandry can be reinterpreted as a call to achieve sustainable economic growth. Meanwhile, Rosalind’s decision to buy the pasture of Corin’s master shows her ability to afford Corin a decent work with more privileges.

In a pessimistic dialogue with Adam, Orlando recalls “the constant service of the antique world” when “service sweat for duty, not for meed” (2.3.59). He expresses his sorrow over the absence of people who exert effort out of their sense of duty in contrast to those who work for either wages or promotion. Orlando criticizes “the fashion of [his] times” through his attack on the person who works hard to be promoted and once he is promoted he takes his promotion as a shelter not to work. He condemns that promotion hides featherbedding especially among upper-level management because, in this case, economy is expected to show a downward trend and higher productivity becomes far-fetched.

In an optimistic and funny dialogue with Touchstone, Corin reveals that his greatest moment of pride is when he sees his ewes graze and his lambs suck (3.2.76-77). This image symbolizes how crop and animal husbandry is promising once it is taken care of. The productivity of the husbandry is expected to

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flower and the availability of both animal-based food and plant-based food adds to the diversity of production. Thus, Corin's humble life becomes dependent on the mobilization of resources from a variety of sources as well as on his success in turning his work into a productive project. Moreover, Rosalind's decision to buy the pasture and increase Corin's wage can be reinterpreted, on Corin's behalf, as an act of securing his 'access to paid work'. It empowers him to promise that he will be her "very faithful feeder" (2.4.103). It also signifies Rosalind's agricultural entrepreneurship.

Thus, sustainable economic growth becomes imminent as long as labour is perceived as duty, featherbedding is minimized, crop and animal husbandry is promoted, lower wages are mended, varieties of resources are mobilized, workforce is empowered, faithfulness is promised, decent work is secured, and entrepreneurship is given opportunity. All these aspects can be related to the intangible metrics of developing sustainability within modern societies such as local economic growth, local and small business growth, greening real estate, sustainable work force, equitable growth, advancing the quality of life and green economy (Dile 2017, 3).

### *Reducing Inequality Within and Among Countries*

The fictional world of the play is characterized by two parallel aspects whose aim is to reduce inequality among involved characters: the criticism of social and economic disparities among people whose interests are presumably shared, and the advocacy of parity especially at times of crisis.

Shakespeare attacks the social inequality included in Oliver's statement to Orlando, 'Know you where you are, sir?' (1.1.40), which is "an expression of the primacy or absoluteness of his own power, bestowed by the inheritance of Sir Rowland's position" (Gottlieb 2016, 138). The playwright also criticizes primogeniture as a form of legislative and social inequality, Duke Senior's exclusion from governance as an example of unequal power relations, and the hunting of the stag as an instance of environmental inequality. In parallel, Shakespeare dramatizes Duke Senior's address to the banished members of the nobility as his "co-mates and brothers in exile" (2.1.1). Additionally, the philanthropic relationship between Adam and Orlando is reciprocal. Whereas "the old man volunteers his life's savings to help Orlando flee the evil intentions of his brother Oliver" (Boyce 1990, 3), the young master rescues Adam in the forest. Sarkar (2020) explains that Duke Senior is "a noble, ideal kind of old soul of that particular society" (31), whereas Adam is "crazy old and crazy loyal" (38). The duke and Adam fulfil their duties regardless of their social ranking. The vividness of the play depends on the alertness of the younger generation as well as the philosophical views spoken by the aged touchstone and Adam. The happy ending of the play brings equal cheerfulness to all romantic couples regardless their urban and rural origin.

### *Making Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable*

Shakespeare represents the forest as a place that is all-inclusive and safe. It hosts vast varieties of people: the amiable and banished Duke Senior, the gently-born suffering Orlando, the devoted servant Adam, the melancholic Jaques, the witty fool Touchstone, the light-hearted Rosalind disguised as Ganymede, the intimate Celia under the name of Aliena, the lovesick shepherd Silvius, the disdainful

shepherdess Phoebe, the reconciled usurper Oliver, and the spiritually-driven Duke Frederick. All these characters enjoy access to the green forest and they represent the coexistence between urban and rural tendency. Additionally, Shakespeare asserts that safety is a 'sense' rather than a mechanism of protection. Amiens, Jaques and others sing together (2.5.37). Touchstone enjoys his life 'basking' himself in the sun (2.7.15). It seems that the exiled nobles are happy to evade the intricacies of dukedom. Furthermore, Jaques reviews the causes of human anxiety. He believes that the roots of melancholy differ among social groups and that they manifest themselves in 'emulation' among scholars, 'fantasy' among musicians, 'pride' among courtiers, 'ambition' among soldiers, 'politics' among lawyers, 'pretence' among ladies, 'all of these' among lovers (4.1.13-18). Thus, society can be inclusive and safe, if these causes are put under surveillance.

Duke Frederick is portrayed as a despot. However, he has a certain degree of fineness. Alexander Leggatt (2005, 186) points out that,

In Frederick's nature there is a similar fusion of the arbitrary and the explicable. He is not simply a cardboard tyrant: through most of his first scene he behaves quite decently, pitying Orlando, trying to dissuade him from his rash venture with Charles, and insisting 'You shall try but one fall'.

When Frederick fails to persuade Orlando not to play the wrestling match, he asks Celia and Rosalind to speak to him (1.2.154-55). Celia also reminds her father that he was pleased to keep Rosalind at court after his banishment of her father (1.3.73). These instances prove that Frederick is motivated by political necessity rather than his evil nature. His dissatisfaction with Orlando and Oliver is due to socio-political obligations. He believes that the world has esteemed their honourable father who has had acquaintance with the banished duke (1.2.220-21). The goodness in Frederick's character is the basis for his reconciliation afterwards. Thus, the resilience of society is related, to some extent, to the ability of its ruler to regain his philanthropic nature marginalized amidst the complexities of governance.

#### *Ensuring Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns*

According to the Norwegian Ministry of Environment (1994), Oslo Symposium on Sustainable Consumption defined sustainable consumption as,

The use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life-cycle so as not to jeopardize the needs of further generations (Lorek and Fuchs 2011, 2).

Meanwhile, 'sustainable consumption', as a discourse, is related to the presentation of 'a solution to the ecological problems associated with industrial economic production' (Dolan 2002, 2).

The achievement of sustainable consumption patterns can be brought closer to Adam's saving strategy and one of Amien's songs, whereas attaining sustainable production is evident in Corin's diligence to establish a good husbandry. Though Adam has served a rich family for years, he has led a modest life. The play does not depict Adam's everyday activities at Roland De Boys' estate. However, it

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surprises the reader that Adam has managed to provide Orlando with ‘the thrifty hire’ he has saved (2.3.39-40). The term ‘thrifty’ relates Adam to the careful use of money and wise utilization of resources. Adam’s strategy seems close to ‘consumption’ rather than ‘consumerism’. Whereas the first refers to the fulfilment of everyday basic needs for survival (United Nations Environment Programme 2015, 10), the second signifies the fulfilment of “needs related to identity, aspects like self-esteem, status, sense of belonging” (UNEP 2015, 9). On his behalf, Orlando appreciates Adam’s long-term endeavour and promises him that they will use the financial resources wisely in the forest, “We’ll go along together, And ere we have thy youthful wages spent, We’ll light upon some settled low content” (2.3.67-69). Overall, though Adam does not represent the concept of institutional financial support, he incarnates the notion of financial saving. The incident also represents the collaboration between the promising younger generation with no money and the experienced monetary providers. On another occasion, Amiens sings a song that calls for people to seek the food they eat and be pleased with what they get. (2.5.38-39). He invites people seeking satisfaction not to favour a special kind of food but to enjoy what is available. This equation is vital for the management of consumer’s behaviour. It also leads to minimize degrowth. It foregrounds the trend of need-driven consumption rather than choice-driven consumption. Corin’s husbandry, which has been discussed earlier, is illustrative of sustainable production.

### *Protection, Restoration and Promotion of Sustainable Use of Terrestrial Ecosystems*

Shakespeare seems to relate the protection of the forest to maintaining its divine harmony. This is evident in one of Amiens’ songs, Jaques’s criticism of the lords, and his anger with Orlando. In the forest, Amiens sings,

Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me  
And turn his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird’s throat,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither.  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather. (2.5.1-8)

Amiens’ song is an invitation to maintain the divine harmony of the forest. Whereas the ‘greenwood tree’ represents the terrestrial ecosystems, the use of ‘love’ shows human willingness to be part of the harmonious ecosystem by singing happily in compliance with birds’ songs. The whole scene includes no violation of the system as there is ‘no enemy’. Even the rough wind and the weather are parts of the system and the other species know how to adapt with them. The use of the long vowel sounds indicates that the forest usually celebrates prolonged beauty rather than shortened calamity.

The First Lord informs Duke Senior that Jaques describes them as “usurpers, tyrants, and what’s worse” because they “fright the animals” and “kill them up” in their “assigned and native dwelling place” (2.1.64-66). Jaques’ description includes several implications. He invites mankind not to bring forms of fauna to extermination indicated by the use of ‘kill up’ and exemplified by the incident of the sequestered

stag. He calls for people to halt biodiversity loss especially that the stag is left alone and it is not taken by the hunter. Thus, there is probability that the stag was shot in a poaching game. He emphasizes that man should not disturb animal habitations. On another occasion, Jaques expresses his disapproval of Orlando's writing his love lyrics to Rosalind on the barks of the trees (3.2.264-65). Consequently, Jaques' attitude advocates the rational management of the forest based on the respect of its flora and fauna.

## Conclusion

Though *As You Like It* was written in 1599, it dramatizes targets comparable to those of the Sustainable Development Goals declared by the UN in 2015. The endeavour to advance individual and collective welfare is shared. Shakespeare's dramatization of the character's thoughts and interactions is used to draw an action plan whose aim is to raise the reader's awareness on the goals and, thus, accelerate their implementation.

The eradication of poverty is the first step towards prosperity. It can be achieved through the reconsideration of unfair norms and the amendment of discriminatory legislations, including inheritance and bequest laws, concerned with the distribution of lands and properties in a way that guarantees equality among beneficiaries; the promotion of integration between affluent landlords and healthy farmers; the foundation of effective mechanism of social solidarity for the vulnerable. In parallel, the subsequent positives should be promulgated as people can enjoy prevention of familial disputes, decrease in crime rates, engendering the sense of loyalty, economic growth, open-mindedness.

Ending hunger is possible when the sense of social responsibility is perceived as an asset, nobility is measured by contribution to social welfare rather than origin, egocentricity is replaced by sacrifice during hardship, access to sufficient food is not negotiable, fair collaboration between the rich and the poor is presented on the table of policymakers, landlords' exploitative monoculture is diminished in favour of sustainable agricultural systems, and entrepreneurship is given opportunity especially among women.

Healthy lifestyles should be promoted as fundamental to the decrease in mortality rates. A human being should abandon alcoholics, give up seeking evanescent power, maintain inner peace, avoid excessive work, and adapt with unpleasant circumstances.

Equitable quality education can be accessible through the implementation of state-funded compulsory educational system, and the issuance of harsh penalties for patrons who do not conform to the system. In parallel, education should be differentiated from learning with emphasis that both are basic requirements for a civilized society. Education should be viewed as edification rather than a strict systematic process. Its influence on private and public life as well as on politics, religion, economics and ecology should be publicized.

The empowerment of women is a must especially when they are qualified. Their qualification can be measured by their individual and collective ability to take decision, manage crisis, evaluate their weaknesses and strengths, penetrate male pretence, endure physical and psychological hardship, perform theoretical and practical tutoring, maintain poise, and control actions.

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Economic growth can be made imminent as long as service is perceived as ‘a duty’ rather than ‘promotion’, featherbedding is considered a plague among upper-level management, resources are mobilized from different sources, lower wages are mended, access to decent and paid work is secured, indifference is replaced by faithfulness, production is increased and diversified.

Reducing inequality can be achieved through the evanescence of discriminatory inheritance systems, reciprocal appreciation between the servant and the master, enhancement of man’s sense of duty regardless of social ranking, and promotion of integrity between the alert youth and the experienced aged.

Human societies could be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable provided that every citizen appreciates the variation within society, perceives safety as a sense of belonging rather than a harsh mechanism of protection, advocates cooperativeness rather than competitiveness, and boosts heads of the socio-political system to regain their philanthropy amidst the complexities of the status quo.

Consumption and production patterns should be guided by rational use of resources to fulfil basic needs, advocacy of consumption rather than consumerism, wise use of savings during adversity, collaboration between monetary providers and entrepreneurs, ‘need-driven consumption’ rather than ‘choice-driven consumption’.

The use of the terrestrial ecosystems should encompass man’s willingness to be harmonious with the natural world, appreciation of flora and fauna, understanding of the importance of biodiversity, recognition of the necessity to give up improper practices like poaching games.

## خارطة طريق شكسبير لتنفيذ أهداف التنمية المستدامة

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### المخلص

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى بحث إمكانية رسم خارطة طريق لتنفيذ أهداف التنمية المستدامة التي أعلنتها منظمة الأمم المتحدة عام 2015 في ضوء ما رسمه وليام شكسبير من شخصيات جاءت أفكارها وسلوكياتها داعمة لتحقيق مفهوم الاستدامة في مسرحيته (كما تحب) التي كتبها عام 1599، وتستعين الورقة بالمنهج متعدد التخصصات والمنهج التحليلي والمنهج المقارن لبيان أوجه التشابه بين أهداف التنمية المستدامة للأمم المتحدة ومفهوم الاستدامة عند شكسبير. وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن استخدام شكسبير لأدواته المسرحية من رسم للشخصيات وصياغة للحوار وتضمين للأسلوب الرمزي واختيار لمسرح الأحداث وكتابه لبعض الأغاني قد حمل دلالات وأخلاقيات تتوافق مع دلالات وأخلاقيات عشرة أهداف من أهداف التنمية المستدامة هي: (1) القضاء على الفقر بجميع أشكاله في كل مكان، (2) القضاء على الجوع وتوفير الأمن الغذائي والتغذية المحسنة وتعزيز الزراعة المستدامة، (3) ضمان تمتع الجميع بأنماط عيش صحية وبالرفاهية في جميع الأعمار، (4) ضمان التعليم الجيد المنصف والشامل للجميع وتعزيز فرص التعلم مدى الحياة للجميع، (5) تحقيق المساواة بين الجنسين وتمكين كل النساء والفتيات، (6) تعزيز النمو الاقتصادي المطرد والشامل للجميع والمستدام، والعمالة الكاملة والمنتجة، وتوفير العمل اللائق للجميع، (7) الحد من انعدام المساواة داخل البلدان وفيما بينها، (8) جعل المدن والمستوطنات البشرية شاملة وأمنة ومستدامة، (9) ضمان وجود أنماط استهلاك وإنتاج مستدامة، (10) حماية النظم الإيكولوجية البرية وترميمها وتعزيز استخدامها على نحو مستدام، وإدارة الغابات على نحو مستدام، ومكافحة التصحر، ووقف تدهور الأراضي وعكس مساره، ووقف فقدان التنوع البيولوجي. وقد اقترحت الدراسة خطة عمل مستمدة من أحداث المسرحية لتعجيل تنفيذ أهداف التنمية المستدامة المشار إليها.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مسرح شكسبير، الوعي، الاستدامة، خارطة طريق، تنفيذ.



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