

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME



SHAKESPEAREAN FOOLS AND BAHLOOL DANA
MA THESIS

AMEER KASIM MAJEED AL-CHALABI
19131306908

İSTANBUL, MARCH 2023

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İSTANBUL, MARCH 2023

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

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27/03/2023

AMEER KASIM MAJEED AL-CHALABI

PREFACE

I am so grateful for the excellent learning environment that the Istanbul Yeni Yuzyil University has provided me. My supervisor, Prof. Dr. Sedat İşçi, has been an invaluable resource for me throughout the research process, and I am very grateful for his advice and guidance. His insight and continuous support played a significant role in the writing of this study. I would like to send my special thanks to Prof. Dr. Günseli İşçi for her encouragement and support, as well. Her classes on Shakespearean comedy and tragedy helped me understand what I read. It is also due to her courses that I was able to realise the significance of the fools and their roles in Shakespeare's plays. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Uğur Diler for his helpful remarks. I should also thank Prof. Erendiz Ozbayoglu for teaching the course on classical mythology; I learned a great deal. I further want to express my gratitude to Prof. Saman Hashemipour for teaching the comparative study course. Next, I would like to thank Prof. Oliver Bevington, from whom I learned English rhetorical devices and the beauty of Shakespeare's language in his classes on writing poetry and literary modernism. Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my dear mother, Hanaa Abdulsahib Ali, who urged me to complete it.

ISTANBUL, 2023

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ÖZET

SHAKESPEARE APTALLARI VE BEHLUL DANA

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Bu tez, sarayı ve saray mensuplarını eleştirmede soytarılarn oynadığı temel rolü araştırırken aynı zamanda soytarılarn krallarla, din adamlarıyla, saray mensuplarıyla veya gayri meşru otoritelerle uğraşırken başvurdukları teknikleri ve özellikleri de araştırıyor. Soytarılarn istenmeyen gerçekleri herkesin önünde ceza korkusu olmadan nasıl özgürce konuştuklarını ve bu gerçekleri ne gibi stratejiler kullanarak dile getirdiklerini de araştırıyor. Bulgular, soytarılarn birçok gülünç özelliğe sahip olduğunu gösteriyor. Bu özelliklerden en öne çıkanları sözlü komedi ve çocuk taklitleridir. Bu özelliklerinden dolayı cezadan kolayca kaçabiliyorlar. Bu nedenle, yönetici sınıfla etkileşimde bulunurken soytarılarn bazı özelliklerinin gerekli olduğu sonucuna varabiliriz. Bunun nedeni, soytarılarn yönetici sınıfa istenmeyen gerçekleri söylemesine izin vermesidir. Yani soytarlara ruhsat verir. Soytarılarn önemini William Shakespeare tarafından yazılan metinleri ve aynı şekilde yazılı ve sözlü edebiyatta Behlül'ün hikayelerini yakından okuyarak keşfettim. Gülünç haller ve soytarılarn anekdotlarının yer aldığı bu edebî metinlerdeki retorikğin güzelliği, bu eserleri ölümsüz kılmıştır. Soytarının işlevi, İmam Cafer Sadık'ın tehlikeli durumlarda kendini koruma olan takiyye kavramına benzer. Dahası, soytarının işlevi hem estetik açıdan hoş hem de insani bir tavır olduğundan, zamanın geçişine dayanabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Saray Aptalları, Kahkahalara Neden Olmak, Lisanslı Aptal, Bahlool Dana, Shakesperan Bilge Aptallar, Körü Körüne İtaat, Kendini Koruma, İktidar Sınıfı.

ABSTRACT

SHAKESPEAREAN FOOLS AND BAHLOOL DANA

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This thesis not only investigates the fundamental role that the fool plays in criticising the court and courtiers, but it also investigates the techniques and characteristics that fools resort to when dealing with kings as well as tyranny, religious, and court authorities. It explains how wise fools freely speak unwelcome truths in public without fear of punishment and explores the strategies they use when expressing these truths. The findings demonstrate that wise fools have many laughable characteristics. The most prominent of these are verbal comedy and children's imitations, through which they can escape punishment easily. Therefore, we can conclude that some of the fools' characteristics are necessary when dealing with the ruling class because they allow them to speak unwelcome truths. These qualities give license to wise fools. I identify the significance of the fools through a close reading of the stories of Bahloul in written and oral literature and theatrical texts written by William Shakespeare. The beauty of the rhetoric in these literary texts, which contain burlesque situations and anecdotes about fools, makes these works immortal. The function of the fools resembles Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq's concept of Taqiyya, which is self-preservation in dangerous situations. Moreover, as the function of the fool is aesthetically pleasing and consists of a humane attitude, this figure can endure the passage of time.

Keywords: Court Fools, Provoke Laughter, Licensed Fool, Bahloul Dana, Shakespearean Wise Fools, Lind Obedience, Self-Preservation, Ruling Class.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
TEZ ONAY BELGESİ.....	i
ETHICAL STATEMENT	ii
PREFACE	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
1. WISE FOOL IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE	8
1.1. Bahlool Dana.....	8
1.2. Wise fools in the English Court	16
2. WISE FOOL IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S PLAYS.....	21
2.1. Hamlet and Touchstone.....	21
2.2. Feste in <i>Twelfth Night</i>	39
2.2.1. The Fool in <i>King Lear</i> and <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>	48
3. THE WISE FOOL IN <i>STORIES OF BAHLOOL</i>	57
CONCLUSION AND PROPOSALS	80
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.S: Alaih Alsalam

AC: After Christ

A.D: Anno Domini

ATON: Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative

BC: Before Christ

ECCLES: Ecclesiastes

etc.: et cetera

EXOD: Exodus

m: madness

INTRODUCTION

How can the wise fool speak unwelcome truths in a world where a ruling elite dominates civil, judicial, and religious authorities? The author Johnston McCulley created the character of Zorro in 1919. The masked, sword-wielding vigilante protects the helpless from oppression (Capek, 2019). However, unlike Zorro, the famous fictional character, wise fools did not have to hide their faces. Instead, they criticised their opponents face to face, displaying all their bravery to help poor people. This study examines the function of the fool in the plays of the English writer William Shakespeare. It also does so in a short story genre, *Stories of Bahloul*, which emerged in the Middle East, specifically in Baghdad. We can learn more about the significance of this function by reading the texts of Shakespeare's plays and contrasting them with real stories from different times, places, and cultures. Therefore, I highlight Shakespeare's fools and Bahloul Dana, the Islamic character who played the same role during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Harun Al-Rashid. This study investigates the characteristics of fools and the methods they employ to deal with those in positions of authority. In the study, I will focus on the ruling authority. Subsequently, religious leaders, who represent religious authority, are addressed, and finally, the study examines judiciary authority in the form of the courts and judges.

The purpose of this study is to determine the significance of the function of the fool in the court. It then discusses the reason for choosing the Muslim Imam, Musa Ibn Jafar Al-Kadhim, and the English playwright William Shakespeare to study this function with the ruling classes, such as caliphs and kings. As a result, the study concentrates on the wise fool in history and literature, first through Bahloul Dana and second wise fools in the English court. This paper discusses wise fool in William Shakespeare's plays in three sections: first, Hamlet and Touchstone; second, Feste in *Twelfth Night*; and third, the fool in *King Lear* and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Finally, it explores the wise fool in *Stories of Bahloul*.

In both the Abbasid era and Elizabethan England, the main feature of the court jester, or fool, was to offer professional entertainment for others, most notably the ruling class. One of the first studies on fools is Francis Douce's 1807 *Illustrations Of Shakespeare, And Of Ancient Manners: With Dissertations On The Clowns And Fools*

Of Shakespeare; On The Collection Of Popular Tales Entitled Gesta Romanorum; And On The English Morris Dance. This culturally significant work contains illustrations that clarify the comic appearance of the fools.

This research revolves around the historical figure Bahloul Dana, and historical studies are necessary to understand the role of fools in court over time. Such studies include Enid Welsford's *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*, which was first published in 1935. The author explains the clown's character in history across literature, cultures, theatre, and finally, on the screen. Welsford's book addresses the character of the fool starting with his first appearance in ancient Greece, passing through Bahloul Dana, and finally addressing Charlie Chaplin as the character's most recent heir. In the literary section, he analyses Shakespeare's fools, making this an essential reference for studying fools throughout literature and history. Welsford uses historical and fictional accounts to tell the tales of clowns. In part one, Welsford highlights Buffoon, the fool who is least unlike an ordinary man. He tries to tell the difference between how he looked in history and how he is pictured in people's minds, which is a difficult task. Part two concerns the foolish individual whose health problems, real or assumed, differentiate him from his peers and make him seem naturally suited to comedy. In part three, the author discusses the fool as part of 'fool-literature' in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The fourth and final part of the book concerns the stage clown, a type of fool whose folly is a case of make-believe. As the author explains, this role was purposefully assumed in a particular environment at a specific time (Welsford, 1935, pp.xii-xiii). Parts two and three of Welsford's book focus on the fools of the court, whether in reality or imagination. This study is essential for analysing court fools. Welsford concludes that Shakespeare uses the convention that the fool speaks the truth. However, the author also argues that when the audience sees the fool wearing a cap and bells, which refers to the 'punctum indifferens', the mouthpiece of true sanity is the impartial critic (Welsford, 1935, p.267). Welsford demonstrates that the fool's primary function is that of an actor and comedian.

In 1932, Barbara Swain published *Fools and Folly During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. She explains that the fool is a perennial figure who appears in literature and life in many ways and under many names (Swain, 1932, p. 1). This book is also a historical study of fools, including court fools. In addition, in 1923, Olive

Mary Busby published *Studies in the Development of the Fool in Elizabethan Drama*. This historical study addresses the evolution of the fool as a dramatic character. Busby traces the complete history of the English stage fool from its beginnings. The author suggests many reasons for the development of this character. One is that, during the early years of King James I's reign, fool plays were produced under the authority of the Master of the Revels. The court thus began to influence younger dramatists, and the output of fool's plays accordingly became frivolous and superficial. Busby therefore concludes that the rise and fall of the English stage fool accompanied the rise and fall of Elizabethan drama (Busby, 1923, pp.85-87). This study helps show why the fool appears and disappears in drama. Regardless of the causes, though, the fool remains a source of nuisance and embarrassment for illegitimate rulers. For instance, over time, *Hamlet* and *Stories of Bahlool* wax and wane in popularity for political reasons. For example, in the Soviet era, *Hamlet* was tacitly banned under Stalin, who did not want to be likened to Claudius. Following Stalin's death, there was a genuine 'Hamlet-mania' in the Soviet Union (Assay, 2017, p. 1). Similarly, Bahlool and his stories are considered sources of nuisance and embarrassment in the history of Islamic civilisation for the same reason. Such literary works are thus sometimes restricted.

In 1913, Fredrick Warde published *The Fools of Shakespeare: An Interpretation of Their Wit, Wisdom, and Personalities*. Warde portrays the fools in Shakespeare's plays as they appeared and as Shakespeare intended and considers the fool's relationship to the other characters. Warde discusses all of Shakespeare's wise fools, such as Touchstone in *As You Like It*, Trinculo in *The Tempest*, Launcelot Gobbo in *The Merchant of Venice*, Feste in *Twelfth Night*, the Fool in *King Lear*, Launce and Speed in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the Citizen in *Julius Cesar*, and the Grave Diggers and even Yorick in *Hamlet*. According to the author's introduction, aristocratic rulers had a fool or jester to entertain themselves and their friends in the early Middle Ages. Therefore, fools have privileges and liberties that are unavailable to others (Warde, 1913, p. 1). This study was helpful for my research because it considers at Shakespeare's wise fools, especially the court fools.

In 2007, Beatrice K. Otto published one of the most exhaustive studies of court fools, *Fools Are Everywhere: The Court Jester around the World*. As the title implies, the fool is widespread and appears at different times and places, such as ancient China

and the Mughal emperors of India. In addition, it addresses medieval Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and North and South America. Otto's book highlights the court fool's humanising effect on the most influential leaders in history. In an interview, Otto answered a question that is relevant to my study: 'How did jesters escape punishment when they told powerful people the truth in perilous circumstances?' Otto answers that most rulers enjoyed the company and closeness of jesters because they made them laugh. This is because they knew how to use witty logic to make things more palatable or to defuse situations. Jestors did not try to steal power for personal gain. Furthermore, they were not conspiratorial. In the epilogue, the author argues that we need jesters in politics, business, and industry today. Otto claims that political cartoonists and stand-up comedians continue to play the jester's role in society and politics. Overall, Otto concludes that the jester is more than a museum piece; he is an active member of the human community (Otto, n.d. para 16-45).

The review of relevant literature showed that no studies have been conducted on the crucial role of the fool in self-preservation when dealing with authority figures. Our work is based on the knowledge that most illegitimate governing authorities, such as civil authorities, the judiciary, and religious authorities, suffer from mismanagement and abuse of power. This project aims to investigate the extent of the influence fools have on these rulers as the voice of a living human conscience; it further examines how they create a safe environment for criticising social, political, religious, and real-life situations with impunity. The following questions were developed to achieve this aim: How could fools speak unwelcome truths to the ruling class? How did the function of the fool in literary works stand the test of time?

The present comparative study proposes to analyse the madmen of Renaissance humanism and the Abbasid era. Fools were considered sacred, so people did not harm them. These figures speak the truth, and there is a space of freedom for the madman, which is how the playwright William Shakespeare uses the function of the fool in his works. This paper analyses Shakespeare's plays, specifically how he used this function in theatrical works in terms of time, place, and the surrounding circumstances by analysing literary works such as *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear*, and *All's Well That Ends Well* and comparing them with the similar situation in *Stories of Bahlool*.

Wahab Bin Amr, known as Bahloul Dana, is a historical figure from the ninth century who was born in Kufa, Iraq. During the reign of Caliph Harun Al-Rashid, he was a wise poet who was well-versed in the arts of governance, knowledge, and literature. Before he feigned madness, his job was that of an ‘excellent judge’. This study compares Bahloul Dana with Shakespearean fictional characters, wise fools in general, and the court fool in particular. There are only five court fools concerned with the ruling class: Yorick in *Hamlet*, Touchstone in *As You Like It*, Feste in *Twelfth Night*, Lavatch in *All’s Well That Ends Well*, and the Fool in *King Lear*. Moreover, I add the characters who pretend to be madmen to escape punishment, like Hamlet in *Hamlet* and Edgar in *King Lear*. Shakespeare uses this function with rulers and influential people such as courtiers and the ruling class, such as King Claudius, Queen Gertrude, Duke Orsino, King Lear, and Countess Olivia. This means that I take into account the noble ranks of Shakespeare’s characters. The book *On the Nobility of the British Gentry: Or the Political Ranks and Dignities of the British Empire, Compared with Those on the Continent...* indicates that the ruling family knew the nobility’s ranks: king, prince, Duke, Marquess, Count, Viscount, Earl, and Baron (Lawrence, 1840, p.24).

It is important to define several terms for this research. The ruling class includes civil, judicial, and religious authorities, such as kings, Caliphs, princes, judges, religious leaders, and the nobility. Madness is an obsolete name for mental illness or legal insanity, and in law, it is a condition of the mind that renders a person incapable of being responsible for his or her criminal acts. A fool is a retainer formerly kept in great households to provide casual entertainment and is commonly dressed in motley with cap, bells, and bauble. Bahloul is the wise fool who laughs and pretends to be a fool for social, political, religious, or economic reasons, while Dana is a name that suggests someone wise, knowledgeable, and experienced (*Dana - Islamic Name Meaning - Baby Names for Muslims*, n.d.). People gave Wahab Bin Amr the nickname ‘Dana’ before he pretended to be insane, and it means ‘knowledgeable in judicial and legislative matters’. Al-Kadhim is one who controls his anger and does not act on it, that is, he ‘has patience’. Musa ibn Jafar Al-Kadhim is a descendant of Ahlul Bayt, the Prophet Muhammad’s family, and he is the legitimate heir to the leadership of the Muslims. Aalim was one of the nicknames of Al-Kadhim because of his erudition and

his unique knowledge about Islam. In his time, politically, the Abbasid era was a period of administrative consolidation associated with severe repression and the establishment of a spy network, particularly against Ahl Al-Bayt. Harun Al-Rashid incarcerated Al-Kadhim in the underground part of the building without any light in a move to curb the influence of Ahlul Bayt. Al-Rashid is a nickname for a person with a mature mind, one who is sane and makes good decisions; it was falsely given to rulers to glorify them. It also symbolises the perfection of the mind, in contrast to madmen. Finally, Hatun is an honorary nickname for the wife of the Muslim caliph.

This study provides in-depth insight into the significance of the function of court fools, particularly when they handle oppressive judicial and religious authorities. The problem I faced in my research was the difference between languages. There are linguistic differences between English and Arabic rhetoric. For example, when a translator wants to translate Bahlool's tales from Arabic into other languages, those translations do not accurately reflect the rhetorical devices used in Bahlool's stories. Arabic rhetorical devices such as rhyme, rhythm, assonance, and musical speech appear in the original texts; however, once translated, these rhetorical devices are lost. A fundamental limitation is that this study does not include all the stories of Bahlool in Arabic or those published in other languages, only those translated into English. Many stories consist of his biography, anecdotes, and conversations with the ruling class and judges, as well as lessons about humanity and pearls of wisdom. His preaching contains rhymed prose and improvisational poems that reflect his quick, sharp wit, which is similar to the poetry of the wise men. It is recommended that future research include all stories of Bahlool in Arabic and other languages.

The study exposes the tactics that wise fools employ to absorb the anger of those in positions of authority and discusses the characteristics that allow fools to make rulers laugh to avoid punishment. Shakespeare's fools are compared to Bahlool, and this study describes how fools send implied messages to those who do not want to see the truth. For example, it reveals fools' characteristics and techniques when closely reading the tale of Bahlool or the situations to which Shakespeare's fools are subjected. Moreover, studying texts closely is a way to highlight Arabic rhetoric. Similarly, a close reading of Shakespeare's texts reveals the beauty of language that distinguishes Shakespeare from his peers in the Renaissance.

To summarise, the function of the fool in Bahlool's tales and Shakespeare's plays is significant, and it makes those works immortal because it allows fools to criticise those in power with impunity. Therefore, this function deals with the ruling class and dignitaries, such as princes, judges, religious leaders, and members of the noble ranks. Fools enjoy many characteristics that make autocrats laugh, and they use sophisticated language with rhetorical devices, giving the text aesthetic value.



1. WISE FOOL IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE

A madman in his freedom is better than a sane in his bondage.

Bahloul Dana

1.1. Bahloul Dana

The people of freedom, such as prophets and regents, have struggled in different ways throughout history: they either suffer or are killed to achieve their freedom. The human mind seeks liberation from irrational thoughts and beliefs, but not all minds can be freed easily. Science may provide some answers and solutions, but it is still under development and needs more progress and time. However, religion seems readier to provide well-rounded answers to liberate the mind until science develops and presents logical explanations supported by evidence and proof. Religion fills the gaps in understanding the human world while we await sufficient scientific evidence. Psychologists also support the idea that religion might be the key to understanding the liberation of the human mind; one such psychologist is Carl Jung, who believed that the goal of religion is to maintain a state of psychological balance and the integration of the personality (Coward, 1989).

The Prophet Ibrahim was the first to try to free people's minds from illogical thoughts and beliefs, but the tyrannical ruler Nimrud and the temple of Ishtar rejected Ibrahim's teachings harshly. This rejection even included a death threat. In such an insecure atmosphere, Ibrahim had a unique way of addressing people and arguing with them according to their level of intelligence. One example is when Ibrahim wanted to prove that idols neither speak nor hear. The Prophet Ibrahim destroyed many little idols with an axe secretly at night and then placed the axe on the great idol. When the idol worshippers came and saw the scene, the Prophet told them to talk to their great idol and see if he could respond to them. In the Quran 21:63 (Translated by A. Y. Ali), the Prophet Ibrahim says: "Nay, this was done by--this is their biggest one! Ask them if they can speak intelligently!" (Holy Quran, 1987, 21:63). Ibrahim declares that the great idol destroyed the smaller idols. The prophet's dealings with the idol worshippers demonstrate his quick wit and intelligence, showing them the reality that the God they claim cannot hear or speak. However, the idol-worshippers, instead of accepting that their God cannot speak nor hear, pelt Ibrahim with stones and accuse

him of insanity. The Prophet Muhammad faced similar accusations of insanity as he built the Islamic civilisation. Comparatively, Bahloul Dana was stoned by little boys when he feigned madness, which he does to free people's minds of illogical thoughts and beliefs (Marzolph, 1983, p.13).

Bahloul Dana was born in Iraq, in the city of Kufa, in the ninth century A.D. Kufa was the capital of the Islamic caliphate during the era of the caliph Imam Ali. Kufa is distinctive due to its long history of civilisation. Because of its importance, Imam Ali moved his capital from Medina to Kufa to fulfil the Prophet Muhammad's path of imparting information and knowledge, a process that began with individuals and evolved into collective seminars. Louis Mansion, the preeminent French orientalist, refers to the city of Kufa as the home of many mystics and madmen who played the role of Bahloul (Massignon, 1935). The term *Taqiyya* means 'avoiding' and is associated with Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq. Al-Sadiq called for *Taqiyya* against Abbasid persecution (Crow, 2015, p.188). The purpose behind 'Taqiyya' is to protect someone from danger, keep secrets from the enemy, continue spreading the message, and expose the truth (Kohlberg, 1995, pp.345-346). Bahloul Dana was one of Imam Al-Sadiq's students, and he demonstrated madness through *Taqiyya* to achieve a pious goal. In his book *Al-Bayan and-Al-Tabyin*, Jahiz, one of the greatest Muslim writers in the Abbasid era, mentions that Bahloul is one of the madmen of Kufa, and he is a *Shiite*, but nothing further is known about him after 786 AC (Jahiz, 1998, p.230). According to H. T. Norris, Bahloul has Shiite tendencies (Norris, 1984, p. 279). The Quran 37:83 (Translated by A. Y. Ali) 'Verily among those who followed his Way was Abraham' (The Quran 37:83). The Prophet Ibrahim will stand by his side among those who share his values of honesty and loyalty. The term 'Shiite' refers to anyone who supports the Prophet Abraham and the following prophets, such as the Prophet Muhammad and his family. It also refers to those who spend their entire lives liberating people's minds from illogical thoughts and beliefs.

Jafar Al-Sadiq, the sixth Imam of Ahl Al-Bayt and the teacher of Bahloul Dana, lived during the fall of the Umayyad caliphs, when their shadow began to fade and diminish, and rivalries began to tear it apart. Umayyad caliphs attempted to instil hatred and enmity in the hearts of the people against the Ahl Al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet Muhammad). This caused the Umayyad caliphs to be eliminated.

However, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq propagated scientific culture during this period since the number of spies watching him in every step. As a result, his school produced many students, such as Jabir Ibn Hayyan in chemistry and Hisham Ibn Al-Hakam in theology, and other scholars (*Chapter 3: School of Imam Al-Sadiq*, 2018).

Regarding the interpretation of the Quran, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq is considered one of the first scholars to create unique mystical expressions. He did so by understanding the accurate meaning of terms and moving from words to meanings in light of the Quran. Noya underlines the significance of Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq's interpretation of the Quran and the effect of his inferences on subsequent mystics (Pouralkhas et al., 2019, p. 176). Features of Sufism appear in Bahlool's personality, as well, and they are one of the aesthetic elements. The combination of the Quran and Sufism allows him to transmit his stories and biographies through other mystics and spread them to distant countries.

The second period of Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq's life is when the Abbasid Caliphate Al-Mansur began to control the city. Al Sadiq's students hesitated to visit his house and feared attending conversations to exchange knowledge because of the strict measures taken to control him. These measures forced Imam Al-Sadiq to send many scientific answers to his students and other Muslims through his true friends. The Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq School is related to the Imam Ali School in Kufa (*Chapter 3: School of Imam Al-Sadiq*, 2018). Those schools followed the concepts of the Prophet Muhammad and taught students how to argue with anyone according to their level of understanding, as indicated by the Prophet Muhammad: 'We, the assembly of Prophets have been commanded to speak to the people according to their level of intelligence' (Al-Kulayni, 2015, p. 23). This is also what Imam Al-Sadiq did; he answered questions at a level that any questioner could understand. Bahlool noticed how his teacher answered questions, enabling him to develop experience and wisdom. Another example is when Hisham Ibn Al-Hakam, one of Al-Sadiq's students, faced a difficult question from an atheist. The atheist asked, 'Can God put the whole world inside a chicken egg without enlarging the size of the chicken egg or diminishing the volume of the world?' Hisham could not answer this question because he thought it required evidence, so it was passed to his teacher, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq. Al-Sadiq answered by saying that if he went to the top of the house and looked around, he could see the world

for miles through the pupil of his eye, which was much smaller than a chicken egg (*Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq [as] and another Atheist*, 2012). This answer convinced the atheist of its high level of accuracy and wisdom. However, from a scientific perspective, that is different because capacity is not related to inconsistencies. In other words, can God make himself incapable? (Al-Qummī & Al-Husayni, 2013, p. 560). Since science concerns what is observed and seen, providing scientific explanation in response to this question does not seem to be the best option and requires wisdom and knowledge of argumentation. For example, when someone is on the deck of a boat in the middle of the sea and watches the sunset, he sees the great sea swallowing the sun's disk. He cannot say that the sea is bigger than the sun because the sun is larger than the size of the sea, which is true according to science. What is observed may not always explain the truth. Thus, complex ideas and thoughts might require more explanation than what science can offer. This is where Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq's high morals come into play, as he allowed his knowledge to be shared with both friends and foes.

Due to the oppression of the Abbasid Caliph Abu Jafar Al-Mansur between 754 and 775 A.D, Imam Al-Sadiq opposed him. Autocracy and numerous upheavals marked Al-Mansur's reign. Al-Mansur was directly responsible for the assassination of one of the most potent Abbasid leaders who helped him rise to power. Many revolts occurred during his reign, but he suppressed this dissent. During this chaotic period, Bahlool, who shared the bloodline of the reigning family, closely watched the events outside and inside the palace. He observed the differences, arguments, and even impassioned debates between the Caliph Al-Mansur and Imam Al-Sadiq:

One day, the Abbasid ruler Mansur [is] in the presence of Imam al-Sadiq. Mansur [is] shooing away a fly which [keeps] bothering him. As the corrupt ruler [becomes] annoyed, he ask[s] the Imam, '...Why did the God create the fly?' Imam al-Sadiq replie[s], 'To humiliate the arrogant ones'. (Muzaffar, 2015, p. 108)

The Caliph Al-Mansur determined that the Imam's presence posed an obvious threat to his regime. Therefore, Al-Mansur killed Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq with venom. Before he died, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq recommended that his son, Imam Musa Al-Kadhim, spread awareness and scientific knowledge.

Imam Musa Ibn Jafar Al-Kadhim became increasingly popular and received more attention, particularly during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Harun Al-Rashid,

who realised his growing popularity and the threat he posed. Since the teachings of Ahl Al-Bayt do not have contradictions, the corrupt power did not want them. They believed that this questioning and argumentation style could damage their authority. Further, the Ahl Al-Bayt hoarded the authentic hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad and the sources of legislation and regulations in the Quran. The house of Imam Al-Kadhim was thus an open gateway to knowledge and provided answers to philosophical questions. Imam Al-Kadhim not only focused on ethics, but also on scientific education (Al-Qarashi & Baqir, 2005). Harun Al-Rashid rose to power after his mother (Al-Khayzurān) poisoned her eldest son. Harun Al-Rashid faced various government problems and internal tensions, and their repercussions led to the eruption of multiple revolts, but he repressed them. He had the authority to decide who lived or died, and Masrour, the cruellest executioner, usually accompanied him. He had luxurious items in his castle, such as tables with silver and gold pots and cups encrusted with precious stones. His castle was massive and had concubines, singing girls, numerous eunuchs, and female and male servants. He was a music and poetry enthusiast and gave lavish gifts to notable musicians and poets (Clot, 1989, p. 24). Al-Rashid's reckless actions did not appeal to Imam Al-Kadhim, and he strongly objected to them. When Imam Al-Kadhim's popularity as a person and a role model increased among Muslims, the Caliph Al-Rashid ordered his arrest and imprisonment. For eighteen years, Imam Al-Kadhim moved from one prison to another, and his followers were unaware of his fate. Because of his constant movement, the jailers did not even know that he was the victim of torture and harsh treatment. Finally, Imam Al-Kadhim was in Al-Sindi prison, which was considered one of the worst because it was underground, and night and day were indistinguishable. Caliph Harun Al-Rashid planned to kill Imam Al-Kadhim to avoid a public reaction. As a part of his misinformation campaign, he allowed a group of Baghdad dignitaries to see the Imam and learn about his health condition. Harun Al-Rashid then ordered the jail owner, Al-Sindi, to poison Imam Al-Kadhim's meals to kill him (Al-Qarashi & Baqir, 2005).

Al-Rashid developed another strategy to kill Imam Al-Kadhim, so he called Bahloul to become the head of the judiciary to pronounce and apply the death sentence. Bahloul quickly informed Imam Al-Kadhim of this matter and asked him for advice. From inside the prison, Imam Al-Kadhim answered only with the letter 'm'. Bahloul

attributed the meaning of this letter to the word ‘madness’ (Jafri, 2014, pp. 3-4) and concluded that he must be a madman. Bahlool was one of the students and companions of Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq, so he knew that the word madness was related to Taqiyya and its role in self-preservation. Bahlool then started to behave like a madman, riding a stick made of phragmites and imitating knights. He entered the Baghdad market while calling out, ‘Let me through! Out of the way so that my horse does not hit you!’ When people saw him and noticed his laughable behaviour, they all agreed that he had become a madman. Eventually, Caliph Harun Al-Rashid heard about him and announced that Bahlool was not a madman but acted this way for the sake of his religion.

Bahlool’s position on moderation is similar to that of the Ahl Al-Bayt, who rejected any kind of hyperbole or cursing. Welsford (1935) has shown that Bahlool made Harun Al-Rashid cry by showing up his ignorance:

When one of the Caliph’s followers rebukes him for this severity, he replies: ‘You, and people like Caliph’, meaning apparently that they have flattered him until he is unwilling offended, desires to bind Buhlul by a present, but he cites a theological tradition and refuses payment. (Welsford, 1935, p. 81)

Bahlool appeared to be a lunatic who provided brilliant answers that alleviated melancholy, relaxed and activated the mind, and encouraged reflection and self-reflection. Anyone could benefit psychologically from this kind of intellect and intelligence. Bahlool cited many Quranic revelations, and he used the famous, old sayings at the right time. When he spoke, he clearly referred to real historical events, but many thought he spoke with irony. He was familiar with judicial and religious matters. Bahlool was a Sufi poet, but he hid his poetic talent after pretending to be a madman. He replaced his poetry with singing that was characterised by strangeness and irony. He used his singing as part of his plan to influence the Caliph Al-Rashid, who also loved to sing. According to Jahiz, ‘to force him to sing for a single karat, and when he requests him to stop, he is not hushed unless given a double!’ (Marzolph, 1983, as cited in Jahiz p.236). Bahlool’s laughable behaviour won the admiration of those inside the palace, most notably Zubaida Hatun, the wife of Caliph Harun Al-Rashid. While outside the palace, the destitute came to him for all their food and clothing needs. Those who faced problems with authority asked for his help in finding

intelligent solutions.

Bahloul Dana lived a long life, about eighty years, and he is buried in the same cemetery that he frequently visited during his lifetime, as he requested in his will. Matrakçı Nasuh, a Turkish painter, engineer, and statesman of the Ottoman empire between 1536-1633 AD, mentions Bahloul's tomb as among those belonging to Sufis buried in Baghdad. The mausoleum is built in the Seljuk style, represented by a pointed conical dome. The tomb is built on a wasteland covered with grass, as shown in Nasuh's painting. Matrakci describe Bahloul Dana as Mad Bahloul under *Turkish and English Lexicon* by Sir James Redhouse (Matrakçı & Yurdaydın, 1976). In his book *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern*, Carsten Niebuhr, a German cartographer who participated in a Danish exploration trip between 1733 and 1815, indicates the tomb's position and lists it with the symbol 13 to the southwest of his map, near Zubaida Hatun's tomb. Niebuhr's map was drawn in 1766. His tombstone is engraved with the words, 'This is the tomb of Bahloul Dana, Sultan of the Fools, and a satisfied soul'. According to Niebuhr, Bahloul was a relative of Caliph Harun Al-Rashid, who defined him as the person who made the Caliph feel regret while simultaneously making him happy. Niebuhr mentions a large book containing many stories of Bahloul, which were narrated to people at a coffeehouse. It is through these stories that he was known to be quite intelligent (Niebuhr, 1778, pp. 301-302). Bahloul's way of dealing with others has aesthetic, social, cultural, and religious elements. He won widespread admiration, not only during his lifetime, but also after his death. The Ottoman sultans maintained his tomb, a task subsequently taken on by senior Indian dignitaries such as Gurū Nānak, an Indian religious leader who was influenced by Islam during his journey to Baghdad, Medina, and Mecca (Ménage, 1979). He read Bahloul's Sufist biography and was impressed. Welsford (1935), meanwhile, in his book, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*, mentions Bahloul Dana as an idiot-saint (p. 82).

Bahloul's tales and unique attitudes contained aesthetic elements that were passed on, whether by merchants via the Silk Road or by Sufis, and thereby spread both East and West. His stories and wise proverbs become lessons that were used in commerce, the judiciary, and in moral, religious, and cognitive behavioural studies. His stories were written and translated into many languages, including English,

Persian, Turkish, Indian, and his native Arabic. His readership is not limited to a specific age or social class because it had various purposes, including educational and political ones. *Stories of Bahlool* also won the admiration of children, as in the tales in the book *Sufi Comics: The Wise Fool of Baghdad*, published by Mohammed Ali Vakil. The book is lavishly illustrated in the Turkish-Iranian miniature style, with the images following sacred Quran verses and ancient sayings etched in Arabic. Further, newspapers, magazines, visual media, and critics have used Bahlool's stories to criticise political, social, and economic situations. These stories touch readers' hearts and make them think and laugh at the same time.

If we look at the map of folk literature, folktales are a prominent aspect of folk literature. The stories of Bahlool cover a wide range of subjects, including social, political, economic, religious, judicial, and human rights issues. Bahlool's stories are thus connected to humanity in general. His topics transcend time and space because his stories, written long ago, still help us understand the nature of human relationships. Folktales are notable for their number and variety, resulting in classification confusion because of their multiple versions and complexity, and scholars disagree about the main principles that should be adopted in this process. In *Behlül Dane: Child's Play, Saint's Way*, Barbara K. Walker, an American author and an expert tale, writes that, to determine the significance of a single figure in an oral narrative, a scholar would tend first consider standard indexes to find tales associated with that person. Barbara mentions the two most relevant type indexes. The first is *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography* by Stith Thompson and Antti Aarne, which was published in 1964, and the second is *Typen türkischer Volksmärchen* by Pertev Nailli Boratav and Wolfram Eberhard, which was published in 1953. Walker thinks this method is not useful for determining the significance of Bahlool Dane. She says that Bahlool Dana personifies a wide range of folk narrative motifs that cannot be confined to a single type (Walker, 1996, p. 809).

1.2.Wise Fools in the English Court

For more than a millennium, the Roman Catholic Church has been the undisputed leader in religious thought in Europe, demanding religious obedience from all and even attempting to control the most powerful kings. As a result of their strict demand for obedience, the Catholic Church faces widespread opposition that is partly religious and partly political. People think that some of the church's traditions are superstitions, such as the cult of holy images and miracles. They feel that performing rituals such as the sacrament of confession or Latin Mass is oppressive and unnecessary. For many, the established church's lavish decorations, including towering churches with magnificent stained-glass windows and gilded ornaments, contrast dramatically with the image of a humble Jesus. The sale of indulgences for purgatory is the most egregious example of church greed and abuse of power. Accordingly, clergy from all over Europe protested the Catholic Church and demanded reform. As a result, the Reformation movement became known as the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther, both a priest and a professor of theology at Wittenberg University, is the movement's most prominent figure. His *Ninety-Five Theses* criticised many of the Catholic Church's ideas (Mullett, 1986). When this opposition emerged, Elizabethan England suffered from unrest. Religion and politics in Elizabethan England are so intertwined that it is difficult to distinguish one from another, and Catholics had a difficult time during Elizabeth's rule, as did the dissenting Puritans. Even so, Elizabeth ensured that Catholics could attend church without feeling guilty or ashamed. She also does not punish those who hold secret services in their houses. Only when the Catholic threat from Europe became severe did the Elizabethan authorities feel compelled to adopt a stricter position against the Catholics (Sharnette, n.d. para 1-8).

English court life was not without agitation or internal conflicts. The War of the Roses is a clear example of a rivalry for power, and the only source of entertainment for kings was the court fools, who displayed both humour and wisdom. Welsford (1935) There was an increased interest in fools among kings, who often paid them and gave gifts and other benefits (p. 158). Warde (1913) says that a fool was part of the household or retinue of a powerful noble, prince, or monarch in the early and Middle Ages, and the fool's job was to amuse and entertain his master and his master's

friends (p. 1). Another example of internal conflict in England at this time is the dispute between King Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII. Henry VIII wanted to end his marriage with his first wife, Catherine, but Pope Clement VII refused his request. Henry VIII responded to the Pope by freeing the Church of England from papal authority (Scarisbrick, 1968). Cardinal Wolsey, who possessed both religious and judicial authority, served as Henry VIII's top foreign policy advisor. Even though Wolsey had unrivalled diplomatic skills, he was nonetheless removed from power when the Pope refused to grant the divorce between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon (Richardson, 2018). During these times of internal conflicts in England, there was a court fool called Will Sommers, a man of integrity and discretion. According to Robert Armin's *The Nest of Ninnies*, Sommers lifted Henry VIII's spirits when he was discouraged or sick (Doran, 1858, p. 134). Sommers has a bright intellect, which he uses against Cardinal Wolsey. Like Bahlool, he pretended to be a madman. Welsford (1935) introduces the idea that his madness allowed Wolsey to treat him as a mere chattel and thus dispose of him against his will (p. 159). Sommers sometimes drew the King's attention to extravagance and waste in his palace using jokes. He also occasionally overstepped boundaries. The King, for example, threatened to kill Sommers himself after an incident with Sir Nicholas, who insulted the Queen and Prince. Ultimately, the King decided not to kill Sommers, but rather Sir Nicholas (Weir, 2002, p. 365). Sommers was an endearing character despite suffering from occasional bouts of childish jealousy. He was loved by many. When he fell asleep on a stile in Greenwich Park one day, for example, the public adored him so much that all passers-by turn around to avoid disturbing him (Welsford, 1935, pp. 168-169).

Sommers was also skilled at rhyme games, and Henry VIII used Sommers in his conversation. Sommers could gently lift the King out of his gloomy moods. Wolsey held a grudge against Sommers for conning him out of ten pounds that were donated to the needy at the Cardinal's gates. It is clear that Sommers played a role in Wolsey's downfall; he entered the King's basement looking for some wine and found the gold-filled barrels, which King feared Wolsey would use to fund a revolt against him. Sommers played another important role when he quashed the unfair treatment of Eston Weston, who was accused of treason for sending eightpence and some shirts to a priest. Sommers resolved this when he spoke to the King, dropped some expressions during

his final illness and appealed to his conscience (Welsford, 1935, p. 168-169). It is thus evident that Sommers also used his moral authority when dealing with Henry VIII. In brief, Sommers's dealings with Wolsey show that this fool could utilise his abilities against judicial as well as religious authorities.

Another fool in Henry's court was named Patch. In his book *The History of Court Fools*, Doran (1858) argues that Patch was a jester who dared to make Henry VIII appear foolish. Cardinal Wolsey owned Patch but gave him as a gift to the King to regain Henry's favour. He could have sold Patch for 1,000 pounds, but that gift was Wolsey's plan to win the King's heart (pp. 132-134). George Buchanan, also a fool, was a scholar-jester to James I and VI, the King of Scotland and England. One day, Buchanan orchestrated a role-swap to teach the King to become more responsible. To stop the King from blindly signing contracts, Buchanan gave him a document that granted him fifteen days of royal power. After James signed and returned the document, he was shocked when he learned he had lost his throne to the fool (Otto, 2007, p. 51).

Robert Armin was an English playwright and actor who served as a member of the Chamberlain's Men from 1598 to 1615, and he was Kemp's substitute. Using a fresh comedic approach, he introduced the character of the 'world-wisely fool'. Influenced by Armin, Shakespeare created the character of Feste in *Twelfth Night*, and this character represents philosophical and social uprising. Feste belongs nowhere but has a place everywhere. Armin distinguished between a real mad character and a fake one. The character Jack Oates, for example, is a true fool. There is no attempt to save himself; there is only an attempt to upset Sir William. A fake fool always tries to please, and he is a lackey (Shakespeare, n.d. para 1-5). Welsford thinks Touchstone and his comrades were not figments of Shakespeare's imagination. Instead, the dramatist derived some of his knowledge of their job from Armin. In addition, Welsford emphasises the significance of Armin's book *Foole upon Foole*. The book was first published anonymously in 1605 and was published again in 1906 under his name with the title *The Nest of Ninnies*. The importance of Armin's book lies at the heart of Robert Armin himself. He was once a famous jester; his interest in fools stems from his previous career. Armin quoted from famous exchanges between Sommers and the King, particularly those in which the clown employed riddles for a specific

purpose. As Armin says, Sommers' burlesque situations were inserted into stage plays for mirth (Welsford, 1935, pp. 162-167). Armin's *The Nest of Ninnies* describes the tale of Will Sommers, a clown who provided Henry VIII both joy and wisdom through language games, rhymes, and puns (Armin, 1842, p. 41). Sommers has an aesthetic element in his biography, and Armin attempts to impersonate him on stage. The role of foolish characters in plays is interesting because the attitudes to which they are subjected have an aesthetic element, and they are part of the reason audiences adore Shakespearean plays.

According to the English churchman-historian Thomas Fuller, Elizabeth's famous fool, Dick Tarlton, was unlike most of her chaplains. Dick was honest with the Queen about her flaws and, of her physicians, was the best at treating her depression. Queen Elizabeth's other fools were fake fools, skilled and trained entertainers. As fools had a license, they could mock the excesses and ambitions of courtiers. One of her most famous fools was Thomasina, a true fool. The Queen liked Thomasina's behaviour and retained her as a source of entertainment, company, and unintentional insights that could be gleaned from her antics (*The Queen's Fools*, n.d. para 1-3). According to Hornback (2015), 'the state employs clowning for ideological ends. For example, Elizabeth's government exploits the subversive potential of boy bishops and satirical sermons to inflict anti-Puritan and anti-Catholic satire' (as cited in Hall, p. 14). The clergy and cardinals were at the very centre of exploitation and conflict. The clergy in Shakespeare's plays are far from perfect; they are outstanding diplomats and generals but not kind-hearted or spiritual people. When Shakespeare writes about a significant priest, he portrays him as a troublemaker and a schemer. In Shakespeare's *King John*, Cardinal Pandulph reignites the French-English war and serves both sides. In *King Richard II*, the clergy are at the heart of the conflict, scheming on both sides, but Shakespeare provides no evidence to determine which side is correct. In *Henry IV*, the priests launch an insurgency against the King; they do not work for peace at all. Cardinal Beaufort, one of the bishops, is arrogant and ambitious, and he lacks a conscience, especially when he resorts to murder to further his ambitions in *Henry VI*. The priest in *Henry V* appears to be more of a warlord than a peacemaker. The clergy, except for Cranmer, are heartless and scheming, like Cardinal Wolsey in relation to Henry VIII. This image of clergy, bishops, and cardinals as schemers and the source

of conflict also applies to *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Huhner, 1936, pp. 161-162).

King James VI's court jester Archy became one of the King's most popular courtiers after joining as a fake fool; however, the courtiers did not like him because of his views on the court. Soon, the clown came to occupy an unprecedented position in English social and political life. Archy used the pretence of madness to reveal the truth in a turbulent environment without being harmed. As Welsford (1935) shows, fools are immune to punishment: Once, when Buckingham and Archy argued, the former threatened to kill the latter. With unabashed impudence, Archy retorted, 'No one has ever heard of a fool being hanged for talking, but many dukes have been beheaded for their insolence' (p. 174). Readers love such court fool stories because of the foolish characters and the wise lessons they contain. The attitudes they display have both aesthetic and moral elements. It was common to publish a jest book with anecdotes related to a specific buffoon or court idiot. Throughout England and the Islamic World, such stories are now a popular kind of folk literature.

2. WISE FOOL IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

2.1. Hamlet and Touchstone

In this chapter, we focus on the comical methods and techniques of the wise fool through close reading and objective scrutiny of Shakespeare's texts. This will enable us to discover the text's meaning and aesthetic value. In *Hamlet*, we see a kind of drama known as a *revenge tragedy*, which gives this play a suspense advantage. For instance, Claudius is afraid of Hamlet's vengeance because of his crime against Hamlet's father. In addition, Hamlet describes the situation of a person living under oppressive circumstances. Hamlet remarks:

Ham.

For who would bear the whips and scorns of
time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's con-
tumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
(*Hamlet*, III. i. 70-76)

Hamlet uses insulting language, like 'proud' and 'contumely', to describe the King. One of the most common expressions to describe the agony of a failed love affair is to say that one is experiencing *pangs of disprized love*. Many spies monitor Hamlet. Polonius, Ophelia's father, is one of them. However, because Hamlet wants to appear insane, he has to keep his feelings hidden from Ophelia. The expression also alludes to Hamlet's father's life being taken from him unjustly. However, no laws exist to punish the killer (IvyPanda, 2021). Hamlet also draws attention to the unfairness of the judiciary, in that the laws do not seem to protect people from wrongdoing; they merely cause more injustices. There is thus judicial corruption. In Shakespeare's time, if a person did not die peacefully in his bed, a murder had likely taken place. Shakespeare uses his philosophical poetry to write against tyranny and the judiciary in

blank verse, thus bringing aesthetic value to his works. In *As You Like It*, Frederick takes the throne from his brother, Duke Senior, and sends him away. Duke Frederick calls Rosalind a mistress and a traitorous woman because she is the daughter of his enemy, and he threatens to kill her unless she leaves the palace. Duke Frederick tries to entice his daughter Celia by promising that she will become brighter and more virtuous in the palace if she abandons Rosalind. Duke Frederick accuses Duke Senior and his supporters of being traitors, but they merely seek justice. Although judges are expected to apply the law, Jaques claims that the bribes they accept impact their decisions. For instance, it was common for judges of that era to accept chicken or capon as bribes (Bloom & Loos, 2008, p.25). Duke Senior and his followers seek refuge in the Forest of Arden, as with Rosalind, Celia, Touchstone the fool, and other great men fleeing oppressive power. The court fool is the only source of entertainment for Duke Senior, Rosalind, and Celia. A wise fool such as Touchstone is a good companion for them because he shares his wisdom and tells them the truth. In his article 'Touchstone: Critic in Motley', Goldsmith (1953) refers to Thümmel's idea that Touchstone's tongue becomes happier and freer after fleeing to the woods. Thümmel thinks Touchstone wisely hides his intelligence at Frederick's court because he fears the usurper's power. However, Goldsmith thinks that the noble characters' comments about Touchstone have misled some intelligent critics (p. 885). In Act V, Scene IV, Touchstone reveals how much freedom he has at court when he tells Duke Senior and Jaques how he cleverly criticises the cut of a courtier's beard. In addition, in Duke Frederick's Castle, Touchstone strongly criticises Le Beau, arguing that breaking ribs is not entertainment for ladies. Moreover, in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act I, Scene III, the Countess of Roussillon says that there are numerous complaints concerning Lavatch's folly, and he is capable of committing it.

Fools use sophisticated language with puns, such as a pun called *asteismus*, 'a contrived turning or twisting of the meaning of something said so that it implies something else' (Cuddon, 2013, p. 64). For example, Hamlet could wake the King's mind by twisting the meaning of a word. He cleverly plays with Claudius's use of the word 'son', creating a pun and mocking at the same time. Therefore, fools are like clowns. As their name implies, they mock situations and show reality through mockery. The reality is beneath their mockery. Accordingly, Hamlet uses humorous

language:

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will !

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son , —

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

Ham. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

(*Hamlet*, I. ii. 62-67)

‘Son’ and ‘sun’ are homophones, and Hamlet makes a pun with this line. Hamlet establishes himself as a skilled wordsmith as soon as he appears on stage (Bross, n.d.). In *As You Like It*, Jaques describes the fool he meets in the forest. He lies down, soaking up the sun’s rays and mocking fate with eclectic expressions. There is also a reference made to the ascetic lifestyle. These philosophical comments show that man is a limited being. Further, an inner *monologue*, when a single person speaks alone in front of an audience, whether present or not (Cuddon, 2013, p. 444). The Queen and King do not hear what Hamlet says, but the audience does. When Shakespeare reflects on life’s injustices, he sometimes addresses the audience with soliloquy, as in *Hamlet*. In summary, Shakespeare’s fools are known to mock and tell the truth simultaneously. They are wise, humorous, clever, witty, and righteous; they tell the truth and want to do so. Hamlet begins his performance by showing the audience that he also performs the fool’s function in the play. Typical Shakespearean fools, such as the example in *King Lear*, give answers like, ‘A little more than kin, and less than kind’, which also reflects the fury and anger that Hamlet shows towards Claudius.

Hamlet does not yet know that Claudius, his uncle, is a traitor. but when he hears from the ghost that Claudius murdered his father, the first thought that comes to his mind is,

Ham. O my prophetic soul !

My uncle ?

(*Hamlet*, I. v. 40-41)

According to Welsford (1935), Shakespeare frequently employs the established norm that the fool tells the truth, which he knows by inspired intuition rather than reasoning (p. 267). I disagree with Welsford’s point of view. For instance, in *As You Like It*,

Touchstone tells the truth about those at court because he has direct contact with them, as when he states to Rosalind that for eight years, they were together, except for dinners, suppers, and when sleeping. Therefore, Hamlet considers the source of truth through reasoning because he is familiar with Claudius' worldly behaviour. Hamlet remarks:

Ham. The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up- spring reels ;
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

(*Hamlet*, I. iv. 8-12)

A typical Shakespearean fool performs the function of a fool, and Hamlet pretends to be a madman. He mocks Polonius in the same way he mocks Claudius. Hamlet also mocks his friends. However, he never mocks the actors or Horatio and always takes them seriously.

Hamlet plans to stage a play inside the palace to reveal the truth about Claudius. In Act III, Hamlet asks the players to perform a play called *Gonzago*, which features the killing of the King with poison. Hamlet wants to know the real reason behind his father's death. When the ghost appears and tells Hamlet that Claudius murdered his father with poison, he wants to make sure Claudius is guilty; he decides to watch Claudius's reaction to determine whether he displays any sign of guilty conscience. Hamlet prepares the players of a theatre company within the play. *Metadrama* refers to the act of describing aspects of the play. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare directly comments on his art, drawing our attention to the nature and function of drama. Hamlet discusses the theatre itself in a theatre, and he also talks about the drama itself in theatre. In addition, in many passages, he describes acting and gives guidelines to the actors:

Ham.

Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle ; I'll observe his looks ;
I'll tent him to the quick ; if he but blench
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil ; and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 634-644)

Hamlet becomes a critic of in terms of acting and other aspects. An adult player who has experience in acting can change the mood from one moment to another; he can be both a fool and a sarcastic critic simultaneously, like Bahloul. He can also, however, be a cruel commentator at one moment and a tender person the next. His mood alters suddenly, which necessitates a high level of acting. Hamlet focuses on this issue. He becomes the stage manager, like a typical Renaissance hero who is also an intellectual and knows the art of staging. Hamlet represents an Elizabethan aristocrat, such as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. He speaks to the actors and comments on how the clowns should act and what they should not overdo:

Ham. Oh, reform it altogether. And let those
that play your clowns speak no more than is
set down for them; for there be of them that
will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity
of barren spectators to laugh too, though in
the mean time some necessary question of
the play be then to be considered; that's
villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition
in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

(*Hamlet*, III. ii. 45-53)

Hamlet asks fools to say only what he has written for them, without improvising. Because Hamlet addresses an important issue, an essential question in the play, he does not want clowns to make the audience laugh. He knows the function of the clown is to make the audience laugh when they use their own words, but he has a question maybe in these lines that make the audience laugh. Christopher Roark argues that Lavatch, as a fool in *All's Well That Ends Well*, is the most superfluous and is expendable (Roark, 1988, p. 241). Hamlet functions as a clown and a fool in the play.

Shakespeare's characters indicate that a dangerous transformation occurs in Denmark. Both Horatio and Marcellus are worried at the start of the play. Hamlet also believes that some dishonest actions are being kept secret. After, they all want to know the truth behind the ghost's appearance and what he wants. They ask him, but the ghost cannot speak. Finally, only Hamlet responds to the ghost's beckoning, a gesture that makes Horatio anxious. Horatio remarks:

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness ? think of it ;
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.
(*Hamlet*, I. iv. 69-78)

Through Horatio, Shakespeare informs the audience that Hamlet's behaviour changes from sane to mad. In addition, Marcellus states that there is something rotten in Denmark. We can interpret 'rotten' to mean an abuse of power. Hamlet decides to pretend to be mad and convinces his friends to swear to hide his secret and not expose the real reason behind his strange behaviour. According to Ramji Lall, Hamlet pretends to be insane to protect himself. This is especially true when the ghost's confession reveals that his life is in danger, and his survival depends on his ability to take revenge. Revealing the truth, Hamlet confronts the assassin who killed his father without revealing his secret until his mission is complete. Accordingly, he maintains an antic disposition as a disguise (Lall, 2008, pp. 200-201). In *As You Like It*, Jaques wishes to be a fool to face his opponent and be free to speak his mind to cleanse the infected world's foul body. And he aspirant for a motley coat. Motley is the name of the court fool's costume.

One of the techniques used to draw attention to Hamlet's madness is his

comical appearance. This is evident in Ophelia's words describing Hamlet's new appearance:

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down- gyved to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

(*Hamlet*, II. i. 77-84)

Hamlet purposefully appears in front of Ophelia in a strange appearance. He cleverly exploits Ophelia's obedience to her father's orders to give everyone the impression that he has gone insane because of his love for her. He uses this to his advantage and finds opportunities to boldly criticise people in positions of authority without fear of punishment. For example, Hamlet makes a disparaging comment about Polonius's question to remind him of his unsavoury political job:

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 173-176)

Hamlet uses riddles as verbal comedy to mock Polonius, subtly insulting him. It would be nice if Polonius could be as honest as an ordinary merchant, Hamlet says. He also uses the word 'fishmonger', which could be interpreted as a pimp or a merchant of other kinds of flesh, another joke (Lall, 2008, p. 127). Hamlet uses verbal comedy to generate laughter when he mocks Polonius:

Ham. Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here
that old men have grey beards, that their faces
are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber
and plum-tree gum, and that they have a
plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak
hams ; all which, sir, though I most powerfully

and potentially believe, yet I hold it not honesty
to have it thus set down ; for you yourself, sir,
should be old as I am, if like a crab you could
go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is
method in 't.— Will you walk out of the air,
my lord ?

(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 199-211)

The phrase 'go backward' is an instance of wordplay. If Polonius' age went backwards like a crab walking, he could be as young as Hamlet. Because of the logical of Hamlet's speech, Polonius notices that Hamlet's madness has a method. He knows he is not a crab and cannot travel back in time to be as young as Hamlet, who mocks him for his age (Walker, 1972, pp. 45-46). Hence, Polonius gains insight because of Hamlet's clever wordplay. Another example of Hamlet's wordplay based on Polonius' lines is when he sings a song that was popular during Shakespeare's time:

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When

Roscus was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz !

Pol. Upon my honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 414-420)

Hamlet mocks Polonius's honour with the word 'ass'. Likewise, In Act V Scene I, the Gravedigger compares his co-worker to a donkey due to his slow thinking. When Shakespeare mentions the donkey, he amuses and alerts the audience.

Hamlet is a wise fool because he comments on the saying of others and takes advantage of every opportunity to criticise those with the most power. For instance, When Polonius makes fun of the actors, Hamlet promptly mocks Polonius' beard. Furthermore, he critiques his worldly conduct and authority. Hamlet responds to Polonius's talk, but differently this time:

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their

desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better ! Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity ; the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

(*Hamlet*, II. ii. 561-568)

Polonius' cruel treatment of others infuriates Hamlet. Shakespeare shows us that there is a misuse of authority. Hamlet uses the imperative form to provide wise counsel and guidance. Polonius shows blind obedience to the King and uses religion to win Hamlet's confidence. Polonius remarks:

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. [To Ophelia.] Read on
this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much proved,—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

(*Hamlet*, III. i. 43-48)

Hamlet mocks Polonius many times. He repeats his words to provoke laughter and criticise his sycophantic behaviour. Further, he employs puzzles to forewarn him of the tragic fate that usually befalls such flattered people.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital
a calf there.— Be the players ready ?

(*Hamlet*, III. ii. 114-115)

Hamlet predicts that Polonius will die because of his dishonest political job. A similar fate befalls Rosencrantz and Guildenstern when they die because of their impure mission. In Act IV, Scene II, Hamlet warns Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about the dangers of following the tyrannical king by using puzzling words such as 'soak', 'sponge', and 'dry'. We can interpret 'soak' to mean blind obedience, 'sponge' as courtier, and 'dry' as death. Practically, Shakespeare explains this to us in Act V Scene

I, when the Gravedigger tells Hamlet that water is the main factor that makes a human corpse rot. 'Water' thus means a worldly desire, and 'rotten' signals an abuse of power. In other words, Hamlet, the Gravedigger and Bahlool Dana can read others' thoughts by observing their behaviour. In *Bohlool's Advice to Fazl bin Rabi*, Bahlool predicts that Fadl Ibn Al-Rabi will die because of his political job (Jafri, 2014, pp. 18-19).

In Act I Scene II, Hamlet thinks the queen's hasty decision to marry is because of her worldly desires. The ghost also reveals to Hamlet in Act I Scene V that the King is guilty of incestuous relations and that Claudius' gifts seduce the queen. Hamlet wants to remind Gertrude of her mistakes to make her feel remorse and change her attitude to his advantage. In his article 'Hamlet and His Problems', T. S. Eliot argues that the play lacks an objective correlative. We cannot understand Gertrude's motives and emotions because of this lack. There should be an objective correlative to awaken the audience's emotion. There should be evidence in the text so that emotion is awake, but Gertrude does not awaken any emotions (Eliot, 1920). Gertrude is not given sufficient space in the play for audiences to understand her. Thus, we cannot understand her emotions. However, we can see that Hamlet can manipulate her; to do so, he poses as a lunatic. Hamlet is a fool who cleverly comments on the queen's words, as in the following example:

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

(*Hamlet*, III. ii. 117-119)

Because it has many meanings, Hamlet's answer contains a riddle. Hamlet cleverly plans his shocking comments before he makes them. For example, he deliberately sits near Ophelia to suggest a similar situation of the King sitting near the queen. In order to avoid drawing attention, Hamlet indirectly targets his opponent. He meticulously selects his words, including the text that actors should use for the play. Because he has in mind working to make a sarcastic comment to draw the audience's attention to a specific target. We notice this when Ophelia tells Hamlet that he plays the role of a chorus well. According to Kris Haamer, a chorus has many functions. First, the chorus comments on the action the audience sees. It also allows the playwright to achieve a level of literary complexity that is only possible when a literary device controls the

audience's mood and expectations. The playwright might use the chorus to prepare the audience for important plot points. Some features of a chorus include using elaborate language and moving between rational and emotional modes according to context and the playwright's goal. More significantly, the chorus reflects society's ideas about upholding moral and cultural norms (Haamer, 2015). Aristotle saw the chorus as one of the actors and as part of the overall performance. Albert claims that Aristotle thought that the chorus, like Medea, Heracles, and Oedipus, should have someone treat them as characters (Weiner, 1980, p. 205). Hamlet wants to play the role of a wise fool and comments on the actions and speech in the play:

P. Queen. *Nor earth to me give food nor heaven light !*

Sport and repose lock from me day and night !

To desperation turn my trust and hope !

An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !

Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,

Meet what I would have well and it destroy !

Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,

If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

Ham. If she should break it now !

(Hamlet, III. ii. 228-236)

Hamlet's sagacious comment in public is a philosophical question, a ploy to prompt the Queen to do some soul-searching. Hamlet employs a vocative case in his speech to alert the Queen, as in the following example:

Ham. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

(Hamlet, III. ii. 241-242)

Hamlet addresses the Queen in front of everyone childishly, ignoring her social status. In this way, he tries to convince everyone that he is insane enough to avoid punishment for anything he means or says. Through subterfuge, Hamlet hopes to discredit his adversary. Gertrude's answer means that she realises her guilt. Shakespeare uses rhetorical poetics; the line is in iambic pentameter, which gives the text an aesthetic value. The court fools reveal the ruling class's idiocy in order to warn them. Touchstone is a loyal ally to Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It*, and he is a safety

valve during their journey. He gives them advice and warnings, either directly or indirectly. At the beginning of the play, Touchstone swears on his honour to show them that such oaths are sincere and will not break his promises. As a result, when Duke Frederick makes a promise upon his honour to kill Celia, they immediately realise the gravity of the situation.

Bahloul Dana was the first wise fool to ride a toy horse to appear insane on Baghdad's streets. In his essay 'From Iraq to the English Morris: The Early History of The Skirted Hobbyhorse', Harris (2003) argues that Arabic hobby-horses appear centuries before their European counterparts. For example, in one story, Bahloul carries a reed that he uses as a hobby-horse and holds a whip in the other (Harris, 2003, pp. 72- 76). According to Natália Pikli, Will Kemp, the actor who played Jack Cade in *Henry VI*, was already famed as a Morris dancer and jester (Pikli, 2013, p.123). In Act III Scene II, Hamlet exploits childhood memories to pass himself off as a madman to strengthen his resolve and say what he wants freely and without being punished. Hamlet employs the hobby-horse in his indirect speech in full view of the public for this purpose. In her book *Shakespeare's Hobby-Horse and Early Modern Popular Culture*, Pikli (2013) states that the 'hobby-horse' was popular in the early modern period (pp. 119-120). Professor Pikli also notes that 'play-horse' was a more common interpretation of 'hobby-horse' at the time. This word has five related meanings. First, it is a child's toy with a horse's head on a stick. Second, it refers to whores or loose women, and third, it can describe the wickerwork costume of the half-man, half-horse ritual character associated with the Morris dance. Fourth, it refers to a pony breed known as the 'Irish hobby', and finally, it can mean a foolish person. According to Professor Pikli, the hobby-horse was a native tradition in Shakespeare's England. For example, Shakespeare uses the word 'hobby-horse' to mean a fool in *Much Ado About Nothing*, a whore in *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale*, and as a phrase in *Hamlet* and *Love's Labor's Lost* to refer to several meanings. When Hamlet asks Ophelia, 'Lady, shall I lie in your lap?' he is full of wild joking, acknowledging his role as the 'only jig-maker'. He also uses a pun on the word 'cunt'. Hamlet has a hidden goal, and his jibes at easy forgetfulness reveal the satirical meaning of jigs (Pikli, 2021, pp.1-20). Thus, the hobby-horse is essential for a wise fool's strategy.

Hamlet uses many tricks, all laughable, to act with impunity. For example,

when Hamlet kills Polonius by mistake, he exaggerates it, acting as if he were a child. As Gertrude describes him, he yells and repeats 'a rat'. It is as though some children had to cry. In addition, through Hamlet, Shakespeare uses a structural device, repetition, to emphasise that Polonius snoops inside his mother's room like a rat. Shakespeare also uses a metaphor for the same purpose, which contributes to the text's aesthetic value. Another example shows how Hamlet uses verbal comedy to produce laughter:

Ham. Of nothing : bring me to him. Hide fox,
and all after.
(*Hamlet*, IV. ii. 33-34)

Hamlet mimics a child's game of fox and hounds to prove to everyone that he is insane. He provokes a burst of laughter when he repeats the exact phrase that children chant while playing. In Act V Scene II, Hamlet tells Horatio the dramatic moments when Hamlet steals the packet, overcomes his fears, becomes bold, and does not care about manners. Because of his madness, Hamlet can enter any room he wants without permission. He uses his madness as a cover to excuse his strange behaviour, thus guaranteeing a lack of accountability. For instance, after Hamlet's humiliating play, the King has no choice but to leave the hall. Since everyone agrees that Hamlet has become a madman, the King cannot punish him for his misdeeds. In addition, when Guildenstern asks Hamlet about his insulting act, he does not receive a sufficient answer. Hamlet answers as follows:

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's
diseased ; but, sir, such answer as I can make,
you shall command ; or, rather, as you say,
my mother ; therefore no more, but to the
matter ; my mother, you say,—
(*Hamlet*, III. ii. 336-340)

Hamlet mocks Guildenstern as a fool for wanting to interrogate a madman. To avoid interrogation, Hamlet also uses quibbles, employing various forms of verbal comedy. For instance, Hamlet asks Guildenstern to play the pipe to pave the way for an argumentative dialogue that ends with Hamlet's victory. Hamlet insults Guildenstern and accuses him of lying. Hence, Hamlet is a wise fool who tells the truth and portrays

Guildenstern as a person with limited ability and no education. After Hamlet kills Polonius by mistake, the King cannot punish him by law because he is a madman, which earns him people's sympathy and adds to his popularity.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose !
Yet must not we put the strong law on him :
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes ;
And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause ; diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.—
(*Hamlet*, IV. iii. 1-10)

Liptak comments (2004) that, for much of the play, Hamlet pretends to be insane. Gillers argues that because Hamlet is insane, he should not be guilty.

Through 'The Mousetrap', Hamlet could shock everyone in attendance and plunge them into deep thought. For instance, Guildenstern describes the King becoming distempered, and he says that the queen has a great affliction of spirit. Hamlet also describes the King as a person horrified by false fire. In this way, Hamlet awakens the King's conscience and makes him feel guilt and remorse, and he resorts to retiring and kneeling, but Claudius will not repent:

King.
Can serve my turn ? “ Forgive me my foul
murder ?”
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence ?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,

And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law ; but 'tis not so above ;
There, is no shuffling ; there, the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?
(*Hamlet*, III. iii. 52-64)

Shakespeare wants to inform the audience that there is an abuse of judicial authority and that the only true justice is divine. Through Claudius' soliloquy, we notice his inability to admit his guilt, as true repentance requires confessing his crimes in front of everyone. In other words, he will lose his position as king. Shakespeare tells us that Claudius becomes hard-hearted because of the crimes he commits. We notice that the King's heart tends towards worldly desires, so he cannot repent. We can call Hamlet a holy fool because he knows a great deal about the Bible and warns those in power about death and the afterlife. In the disguise of folly, the holy fool holds the gospel as truth in front of high-ranking people, such as the world's rulers and church authorities (Stefon, 2011, p. 102). Hamlet makes an ambiguous comment with humour when he tells Rosencrantz that he compounds the dead body with dust. The Bible says, 'All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again' (New Revised Standard, Ecclesiastes 3:20). In Act III Scene IV, Hamlet employs verbs in the imperative form—such as 'confess, repent, avoid, throw away, assume a virtue, etc'.—to give advice and counsel the queen to promote virtue. He also uses verbs in the negative form, interpreted as 'to avoid', such as 'lay not, do not spread, go not' to prevent vice. He implies that bad actions should be avoided. Hamlet employs cynical and insulting humour towards the King to remind him of his fate. For instance, Hamlet answers as follows:

King. Where is Polonius ?

Ham. In heaven ; send thither to see; if your
messenger find him not there, seek him i' the
other place yourself. But indeed, if you find
him not within this month, you shall nose
him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.
(*Hamlet*, IV. iii. 35-40)

Hamlet establishes himself as a skilled person who can avoid providing a clear answer through verbal comedy. He chooses his words carefully to transfer the King from his earthly world to another, making him plunge into deep thought within a few moments. By pretending to be insane, Hamlet includes riddles in his comments aimed at the King and his court.

Shakespeare does not intend to portray Hamlet as half-mad or a madman. Instead, Shakespeare purposefully makes Hamlet's character pretend to be insane. With great accuracy and skill, Shakespeare creates Ophelia's madness, which is in contrast to Hamlet's, to represent true madness (Lall, 2008, p. 102). Madness in Shakespeare is employed as an effective tool to tell the truth. When people try to interrupt Ophelia's mad songs, she says, 'pray you, mark', which means 'please pay attention'. For instance, Ophelia sings as follows:

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia ?

Oph. [Sings.] *How should I your true love know*

From another one ?

By his cockle hat and staff

And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

Oph. Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

[Sings.] *He is dead and gone, lady,*

He is dead and gone ;

At his head a grass-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

O, ho !

(*Hamlet*, IV. v. 21-32)

Shakespeare also employs philosophy in verse in madmen's songs as he does with Hamlet and Ophelia to advise the ruling class. Additionally, Shakespeare uses rhetorical questions in the first verse to advise the queen and those in authority politely and gently. A rhetorical question is one that does not require an answer, especially when the speaker is trying to make the feelings stronger. Another type of rhetorical question that is difficult to answer is posed to another person or to oneself while

expressing rage, shock, or surprise (Cuddon, 2013, pp. 606-607). Overall, Shakespeare takes advantage of the characters' fake and real madness to turn their comments into riddles aimed at the ruling class.

As a playwright, Shakespeare also comments extensively on religious authority. We can see this in the comments characters make, as in the following example:

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.
(*Hamlet*, I. iii. 45-51)

Ophelia is a pure, chaste, and religious character; why, then, does she speak in this manner? Moreover, Laertes describes the priest as churlish. However, Laertes is a religious character who is adamant that his sister should receive all the church's burial rites. Because Shakespeare wants to drag the conversation to a critique of the clergy. According to Sigmund Freud, what a person says while under observation or in public does not reveal his genuine character; instead, what he says when caught off guard, his so-called slips, reveal his true, unfettered thinking. Through his slips, Shakespeare reveals his subconscious animosity toward the clergy (Huhner, 1936, pp. 163-166). In Act V Scene I, Shakespeare exposes the clergy's hypocrisy to his audience. The second clown, a gravedigger, condemns Ophelia's religious burial rites, which he believes she obtains only through her noble family's social status. The gravedigger is a wise fool because he tells the audience the truth and shows the dramatic contradiction between the clergy's words and deeds. In addition, a priest confesses to Laertes that he is doing his job to fulfil the King's orders. Here, Shakespeare refers to an essential point that the ruling power influences religious institutions.

In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare employs the cemetery to provide lessons learned and present sermons to the audience in an amusing manner. Hamlet uses the cemetery as a teaching tool when he sees each skull and describes specific human behaviour. For

example, he portrays the state leader's skull as a cunning politician who deceives everyone. Then, when a gravedigger mocks the skull of the state's leader, Hamlet describes the political man's unfortunate fate and humiliating end. Hamlet also gives a wise lesson when he sees the gravedigger insulting the skull of a lawyer who abused the judiciary during his lifetime. He also discusses historical figures such as Alexander the Great, who had great power but lost it all when he died. According to Lall (2008), Hamlet's speeches allude to the haunting mystery of life itself, which holds many secrets. Because this is the universal cemetery, the enigma of evil lives right here. The cemetery also reveals human limitations (p. 216). We can consider the gravedigger a wise fool who has extensive knowledge of the Bible. Through a song, Shakespeare gives advice to the audience in a simultaneously enjoyable and satirical way:

First Clo. [Sings.] *But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipp'd me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.*
(*Hamlet*, V. i. 78-81)

Shakespeare evokes a sense of heartbreak and regret in the reader or listener by transporting them from this world to the next. In addition, the gravedigger competes with his co-worker in a contest of wit, which he eventually wins. According to Lall (2008), three remarks have extreme significance (p. 214). First, a gravedigger constructs houses that will last until judgment day. Second, the gravedigger's song has a serious tone to it, as losing love's passion as one grows older is a sad idea. Third, Hamlet becomes perplexed when he hears the gravediggers' joyful singing as they excavate a grave.

2.2. Feste in *Twelfth Night*

The play is titled *Twelfth Night* because the twelfth night after Christmas is a religious festival in Christianity. The play starts with music and a fool on stage (Night, 2014). When there is entertainment on the stage, the play is festive. The origins of these twelve days date to the Roman festival of Saturnalia. The festival is a time of role reversals, when kings become fools and fools become kings (Chattopadhyay, n.d.). Shakespeare names the fool Feste, which relates to the festivity. According to C. L. Barber, the primary purpose of festive elements in Shakespearean drama is to create an atmosphere of joyful freedom against an archaic moral order or tyranny (Leggatt, 2002, p. 74). Disguise is a typical aspect of Shakespearean theatre, and Feste disguises himself.

Clo. Misprision in the highest degree ! Lady, cucullus non facit monachum; that's as much to say as I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.

(*Twelfth Night*, I. v. 56-59)

In his article 'Feste's Night', Alan S. Downer argues that Feste disguises himself in terms of behaviour and costume. He also carries the tabor with him as a part of his job. Feste responds to Olivia's characterisation of him as a fool by saying, 'cucullus non facit monachum', which means that the cowl does not make the monk. Just as the person under the monk's robe may not be a monk in spirit, Feste does not wear motley in his mind. For Feste, the disguise serves as a form of protection similar to Viola's; he is allowed to speak about things that others are afraid to (Downer, 1952, p. 260). In his chapter 'The Court-Fool in Literature', Welsford (1935) states that the court jester is one who acts as a wise fool and can speak and see the truth with impunity. From this perspective, Welsford thinks the fool is the one who tells the truth and whose truthful insight is thinly disguised as a form of madness (p. 237). In his book *Shakespeare's Great Stage of Fools*, Bell (2011) says that most Elizabethans could tell the difference between the two types of fools in their society: the true fool, who was either stupid or irrational, and the professional fool, who knew how to make other people laugh (p. 1). Shakespeare employs Feste, the court fool, to criticise the hypocrisy of the clergy sarcastically. Feste remarks:

Clo. Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself
in 't ; and I would I were the first that ever dis-
sembled in such a gown. I am not tall enough
to become the function well, nor lean enough
to be thought a good student ; but to be said an
honest man and a good housekeeper goes as
fairly as to say a careful man and a great
scholar. The competitors enter.

(*Twelfth Night*, IV. ii. 5-12)

According to Max Huhner (1936), Feste uses a clerical gown to disguise himself as a curate. Huhner also thinks Shakespeare's disdain for religious leaders extends far beyond the Christian church; it also includes clergy from other faiths (p. 164). Shakespeare uses the wise fool in *Twelfth Night* to freely and openly criticise the clergy and the aristocracy's corruption. As a result, the play's subtitle is *What You Wish*.

The corruption in the Roman Catholic Church led to a wave of religious reformation across Europe, including the English Reformation (Chattopadhyay, n.d.). Shakespeare employed theatre to ridicule the policy Queen Elizabeth pursued against the Roman Catholic Church. In Act III Scene I, Viola and Feste exchange words and talk comically. In response to Viola's question about whether Feste lives by his labor, he says he lives by the church. He deliberately misunderstands Viola's question: 'Do you gain your living by playing the small drum?' Through the pun, Feste intelligently changes the discussion towards the church and churchmen. Viola then misunderstands Feste when she believes that his livelihood comes from a church office. They speak wisely and comically, and each makes the other's sentence wanton or corrupts it. It is also a means of comedy, and only witty and skilful people can do this. They should also have sophisticated language that playfully uses words. To summarise, as a wise fool, Feste creates the conditions for a controversial discussion in which he emerges victorious and earns some money as a gift for his clever wordplay.

Through Feste, Viola, and Hamlet, Shakespeare discusses his art. For example, Feste states that a sentence is nothing more than a soft kidskin glove for an intelligent man. He also says that sentences are good traps or good bait for witty people. They can quickly and wittily catch a sentence and turn the glove inside out. So, take the

wrong side out and expose the sentence. In another example, in Act III Scene I, Shakespeare uses blank verse to make Viola describe and summarise the function of the wise fool in a metadramatic passage; he does this consciously. Viola remarks:

Vio. This fellow is wise enough to play the fool;
And to do that well craves a kind of wit :
He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
The quality of persons, and the time,
And, like the haggard, check at every feather
That comes before his eye. This is a practice
As full of labour as a wise man's art :
For folly that he wisely shows is fit ;
But wise men , folly-fall'n, quite taint their wit.

(*Twelfth Night*, III. i. 65-73)

Here, Viola provides a general definition of a typical Shakespearean fool. Viola remarks that being a skilful jester requires a kind of cleverness. It needs wit, and not everyone can play the role of the fool. Humour requires more intelligence than sorrow. Person to be humorous, he should have to be very wit. The fool must consider the rank of the people for whom he is to make jokes, as well as their mood and the occasion, to be able to mock them freely and humorously criticise them. If he does so at the improper time, there is danger. And like a hawk. Hawk is a clever animal. His eye sees all, which means that the fool never misses a mocking opportunity. This is the fool's manner, as a wise man's eye requires talent and intelligence to show people's foolishness sagely and in a suitable situation. Shakespeare is frequently ambiguous when commenting on sensitive issues. Something that is ambiguous has two meanings. Here, Shakespeare describes a typical Shakespearean fool. Most of Shakespeare's plays have a character-like that function. Viola provides a dictionary definition; she talks about Feste, but she also generalises. Shakespeare employs Viola to document his art and provide information about it. Shakespeare wants to make the audience think because it is not directly part of the action. Hamlet is a good fool because he is wise enough to play that role. Hamlet remarks to the players in Act II Scene II: We will do it as expertly as the French falconry experts.

Maria is Olivia's woman, and she knows her thoughts. Feste establishes

himself as a skilled person who can evade Maria's questions from the very first moment on stage. Ingeniously, for example, he chooses not to disclose to Maria the reason behind his absence or where he spends his time. Instead, he uses an aphorism to respond to Maria's words sarcastically. From the very beginning of the conversation, the jester is sarcastic. Feste tries to mock Maria's saying, and Maria also tries to make fun of Feste. Their mockery is thus mutual. When Feste says 'to fear no colours', it means 'to fear no enemy'. Feste no longer sees anyone when he dies, so he has no enemies to fear. However, as Maria notes, Feste's answer is good and plain. Maria tells Feste that his sentence originates in the wars. Maria thinks only brave soldiers can say such a brave sentence, and Feste works as a jester in the palace. He may be bold enough to make this brave pronouncement when playing the fool. Maria says that Feste should not say these words. Feste replies to Maria by saying that God gives wisdom to intelligent ones; smart people, then, can use their wisdom as a talent. God also gives some people the talent of a fool, like the jester. Hence, Feste can say whatever he wants because he is a fool in Olivia's palace. According to Maurice Hunt, the most prominent character who mentions God in the play is Feste, not Viola, which is surprising (Hunt, 1993, p. 190). In disguise, Shakespeare, describes the function of the fool. For instance, Maria says to Feste that he may be bold enough to say that when he plays the fool. As with Hamlet, when he becomes bold enough to steal the message from his enemy. In addition, Feste appears and disappears without the permission of his lady. As with Touchstone, he appears suddenly and interrupts Rosalind and Celia's conversation. Feste does not fear the penalty of hanging or being dismissed from service because he can save himself at a critical moment. According to Robinson (2016), Feste avoids answering Maria's question by making bawdy jokes to distract her (p. 16). Through verbal comedy, Feste keeps his secret with impunity. In Act V Scene I, Feste avoids answering Fabian's questions and refuses to reveal Malvolio's message, which he carries to Olivia by playing with Fabian's words.

The characters' comments show that the court jester is a source of pleasure for those in the aristocracy. Curio tells us that Olivia's father genuinely loves Feste's singing. In Act I Scene V, Malvolio expresses surprise at Olivia's fondness for Feste, and she finds pleasure in him. In Act II Scene IV, Duke Orsino wants to brighten his mood, so he orders that his courtiers find Feste, and Orsino becomes obsessed with

Feste's song. This presents an ideal opportunity for Feste to show Orsino's foolishness with impunity. Feste sings:

Clo. Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid ;
Fly away, fly away, breath ;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it !
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown ;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown :
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there !

(Twelfth Night, II. iv. 52-67)

A cypress is a mourning symbol that means a coffin made of a cypress tree, and it is traditionally associated with death (Impelluso, 2004, p. 69). Feste's song has many symbols, such as a shroud, grave, corpse, and yew trees, commonly found in the churchyard. Feste emphasises Duke Orsino's tragic fate and death due to his love. Feste deliberately intimidates Orsino and chooses his words carefully to transfer Orsino from one worldly realm to another, prompting him to consider the seriousness of the matter. Finally, because of his song, Duke Orsino gives Feste a coin as a gift. Feste makes insightful comments about Orsino's words, advising him that the price of pleasure is sufferance. In Act III Scene I, Feste tells Viola that he is not Olivia's fool, but he corrupts her words. Professor Günseli İŞÇİ suggests in his class on Shakespearean comedy that Feste corrupts Olivia's words and entertains her. According to the scholar, Olivia feels pleasure when Feste tries to corrupt her words with his language. She enjoys her time with Feste, who entertains her intellectually.

Orsino asks for music in a romantic pose to sate his appetite. Then, for a moment, he again orders his courtiers to stop playing. From the beginning of the play, Duke Orsino strives to achieve his worldly desires, and he has rapid mood swings, so no one dares to criticise him. Duke Orsino remarks:

Duke. Why, so I do, the noblest that I have :

O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,
Methought she purged the air of pestilence !
That instant was I turn'd into a hart ;
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.

(Twelfth Night, I. i. 18-23)

Here, Shakespeare refers to the Greek legend of Actaeon. Through mythological reference, Shakespeare conveys significant meaning with few words, making this an economical literary device. Actaeon is a hunter who accidentally sees Diana naked when she bathes. As a punishment, Diana transforms Actaeon into a stag to make his hunting dogs kill him (Barkan, 1980, p. 318). This symbol represents chastity. Orsino believes Olivia turned him into a stag, so his desires haunt him. He becomes a self-obsessed person. It is not Olivia's love but his romantic fantasy. In Act II, Scene IV, Feste makes a sarcastic remark about Orsino's changeable moods resembling taffeta. Taffeta is a woven lustrous fabric that changes colour depending on how the light strikes it. Feste also indirectly tells Orsino that his mood is changeable due to love, like opal, a precious stone that changes colour with the light. Feste's sarcastic conversation with Orsino is a form of psychotherapy. Feste covertly suggests to Orsino that he will not obtain what he wants. Feste employs humour not only to entertain the aristocratic rulers, but also to guide them. Mockery is the best way to teach Duke Orsino. In Act V, Scene I, Feste gives advice and guidance to Orsino. Feste plays with words and uses the word 'ass' in his indirect speech to refer to Duke Orsino's foolishness, that is, his inability to distinguish between friends and enemies. Another example shows that Feste uses sarcastic humour:

Duke. Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friends ?

Clo. Ay, sir ; we are some of her trappings

(Twelfth Night, V. i. 7-8)

Frederick Warde says that Feste's answer to Duke Orsino's question is rude and shows a lack of respect. In Warde's opinion, Feste's reply and justification show a sound and admirable philosophy as beneficial as it is. As a result, Duke praises the fool's cleverness and says, 'This is excellent' (Warde, 1913, p. 94). Being a lunatic, Feste oversteps polite boundaries with people of high rank. For example, when Ophelia asks Feste to read Malvolio's letter in front of Duke Orsino and those present, he reads it strangely, claiming that he reads madness.

Feste shows the foolishness of other characters and proves that they are madmen, not him. For instance, Olivia pledges to continue mourning the loss of her brother, so she wears a veil, a symbol of mourning. In Act I, Scene V, Feste sarcastically criticises her reckless vow and proves to everyone that she is mad. Feste remarks:

Clo. Good madonna, why mournest thou ?

Oli. Good fool, for my brother's death.

Clo. I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

Oli. I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

Clo. The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your
brother's soul being in heaven. Take away the
fool, gentlemen.

(Twelfth Night, I. v. 67-73)

Through his religious philosophising, Feste proves that Olivia's decision is wrong. However, Feste is aware of Olivia's pain when she loses her brother. Olivia feels hopeless. Accordingly, Feste uses religion and faith as a type of psychotherapy to help ease her pain and sorrow. This type of treatment proves to be effective. Consequently, after a short time, Olivia renounces her reckless vow and removes the veil in front of Cesario. In another example, Olivia seeks Feste's wise counsel to describe Sir Toby's condition. Feste makes a joke and says that a drunken man is similar to a drowned man. Therefore, drinking drives Sir Toby insane. Feste also mocks Malvolio and makes people laugh when he refers to him as a madman. In Act IV Scene II, Malvolio tells Feste that he is sane like him. Sarcastically, Feste replies, 'Only as well as I? So, you are indeed mad'. Feste is skilled at showing others' foolishness with impunity because he has a fool's licence. Olivia remarks that there is no malicious untruth in a

permitted fool, even if he uses abusive language. Warde suggests that many states and courts seek his influence. Because he is a fool, he tells the truth in a way that others cannot. He does so by telling a story or a parable. He also makes fun of any plan or project that he wants to target and does so under the mask of folly. Warde adds that, in the past, hitting the fool was considered a cowardly act (Warde, 1913, pp. 2-4).

Olivia's steward, Malvolio, is conceited and selfish. Before he notices the letter, Malvolio is preoccupied with daydreaming. He dreams of marrying Olivia to become Count Malvolio and having power over other people, thus fulfilling all his worldly desires. We also find that Malvolio demonstrates a blind obedience to Olivia. He executes everything in the letter exactly. Malvolio has a puritan attitude; in Act II Scene III, Feste observes Malvolio's strict behaviour toward other characters. However, in Act IV Scene II, Feste disguises himself as Sir Topas to show Malvolio's hypocrisy. According to Warde (1913), Feste offers some reflections that suggest that hypocrisy and sanctimony were just as pervasive in Shakespeare's time as they are, sadly, in our own (p. 91). Sir Toby notices that Feste is a skilled pretender because of how well he can act like a priest. Malvolio complains to Feste, who disguises himself as a priest, and people falsely accuse him of being crazy and lock him in a dark room. Malvolio finally decides to receive Feste's help in delivering his letter to Olivia. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Parolles also asks Lavatch for assistance in delivering his letter to Lord Lafew. In a satirical way, Feste takes advantage of Malvolio's situation to increase his awareness and reveal irrational doctrines to others. Malvolio insists that the house is dark, but Feste, who is knowledgeable about the Bible, tells him that his ignorance blinds him. Feste remarks:

Mal. I am not mad, Sir Topas : I say to you , this
house is dark.

Clo. Madman, thou errest : I say, there is no dark-
ness but ignorance ; in which thou art more
puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.

(*Twelfth Night*, IV. ii. 43-47)

The Biblical text says, 'So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was dense darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days' (New Revised Standard Version, Exodus 10:22). In the word 'madman', Feste employs a vocative case in his speech to

alert Malvolio. Feste can read the minds of others by observing their daily behaviour. Feste tells Malvolio that he never believes a madman until he sees his mind. Through Feste, Shakespeare describes his art. Feste wants to know if Malvolio is genuinely insane or only pretending because Feste already knows that pretending to be insane will save him from punishment.



2.2.1. The Fool in *King Lear* and *All's Well That Ends Well*

In his prose verse, the Fool uses verbs in an imperative form to instruct the King on good behaviour and discourage him from engaging in habits such as drinking and fornication. The Fool remarks:

Fool. Mark it, nuncle :

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest ;
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

(*King Lear*, I. iv. 111-119)

Lear's Fool appears and disappears suddenly without the permission of his master. Notably, the Fool appears at a time when no one criticises the oppressive King. Gillian Woods notes that the Fool does not speak or behave like others. For example, the Fool calls the King 'uncle', and Lear addresses the Fool as 'boy', likely suggesting the type of innocence linked to the fool, who has a mental illness. In addition, the Fool calls King Lear 'my boy' and uses this generational language as satiric irony. Lear's Fool is either a professional fool or a person with a mental illness. Both types could apply to Lear's Fool, who could be a professional in some productions and mentally disabled in others (Woods, 2016, pp. 1-2). The word 'nuncle' is short for 'mine uncle'. It is childish speech and is also a term licenced fools used to refer to his superiors (Lall, 2011, p. 408). According to Green (2010), Shakespeare humanises Lear's Fool by giving him childlike attributes that force the King to ask him to seek shelter when the Fool refuses to leave Lear during the storm (p. 10). Similarly, In *Behlül Dano Visits Hell*, Bahlool tells others that, during his visit to Hell, he saw that each person carries the fuel needed to consume them. As the author notes, Harun Al-Rashid calls Bahlool 'brother', and Bahlool also addresses him as 'brother'. Bahlool had free access to the Caliph's Court. However, he became famous for always telling the truth (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). From the beginning of *King Lear*, we find King Lear lacking patience and

wisdom. He punishes his daughter Cordelia with expulsion and deprives her of her rights solely because she tries to express her own opinion and her sincere feelings to him. Lear also punishes Earl Kent with expulsion and threatens to kill him because Kent criticises his reckless actions. When a father fails to enforce justice among his sons, he leaves behind a significant issue in the family with serious repercussions. The Fool is aware of the matter's seriousness, which is why he opposes Lear's decision about Cordelia. Because of the loss of Cordelia, he becomes sad and wretched. The Fool openly shows his depression and preference for solitude, which resembles a child's disobedience. The Fool alludes to Cordelia subtly through his indirect speech to remind the King of his unfair punishment of her. In Act I Scene IV, King Lear realises that he does wrong to his daughter Cordelia. This shows the significance of the Fool, who acts as a social reformer within the ruling family through the instructions he delivers.

In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Lavatch is the court fool and acts as a social worker for the ruling aristocracy. In contrast to the courtiers, the clown helps those in authority and dignitaries by giving answers to critical questions. In Act I Scene III, the clown claims that he needs to be married in order to ask fundamental questions. The clown finds human weaknesses and then provides radical solutions to them. For example, marriage allows someone to control their sexual desires because they know they can have sex anytime they like. As a result, he thinks that men do not become prey for the devil. Lavatch act as both an ethical and a spiritual mentor. When he says that children 'are blessings', he articulates a common belief among many religious people. Lavatch indirectly warns the Countess of Rousillon, the mother of Count Bertram, about one of her son's followers, Parolles. Parolles tries to lure Bertram into the vice and make him act like a demon. The Countess realises in Act III Scene II that Parolles is tainting her son's morals. In addition, In Act I Scene III, Lavatch insults the Countess by telling her that he is a wicked creature like her. Still, he quickly calms her anger when he tells her that everyone with flesh and blood has the same problem and that he wants to repent. The Countess describes the clown as a person who uses offensive language. He also mentions cuckolded men as one of the causes of people's aversion to marriage. In addition, he mocks the strict clergy and the hurdles they place in the way of marriage. In comparison, in *Behlül Danel as Marriage Counselor*,

Bahloul gives advice to a man who wants to choose a woman to marry. Bahloul answers that if a man marries a widow, the woman will be the knowing one, and if he marries a divorcee, he must be the one who knows. Finally, if a man marries a virgin, he will be the person who knows. As the author notes, Bahloul One of the crazy things the fool did was play with kids in the streets (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Bahloul employs epigrams in his speech, giving the text an aesthetic value.

The fool's function in *King Lear* is to mock King Lear and instruct him about his wrongdoing. Lear divides his kingdom and property among his daughters, although he is still alive and active. For this reason, the fool tries to show him his foolishness. King Lear then becomes the fool in the play and learns the art of foolery, and the fool disappears from the play. The Fool remarks:

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise ; draw the curtains :
so, so. We'll go to supper i' the morning.

Fool. And I 'll go to bed at noon.

(*King Lear*, III. iv. 81-83)

The Fool uses contradiction when he speaks to reveal the truth behind the paradoxes. He tries to teach the ruling class through mockery, and he shows them what real foolery through his actions. Typical Shakespearean fools use remarkably advanced language skills, and their language and rhetoric are excellent, much better than that of many people in the play. In *All's Well That Ends Well* Act II Scene II, the Countess wants Lavatch to demonstrate his breeding, but the clown tells the truth in a sarcastic and demeaning manner. Lavatch remarks:

Clo. I will show myself highly fed and lowly taught.

I know my business is but to the court.

(*All's Well That Ends Well*, II. ii. 3-4)

Lavatch uses 'brachylogy', and he thus conveys valuable wisdom with few words. The clown insults the court and describes it as a place that lacks breeding because of blind obedience. Then, he resorts to humour, such as the barber's chair and the Morris dance associated with the hobby-horse. In addition, the clown refers to old bad habits, such as giving a ring on the pretext of a fake marriage. Lavatch tells bawdy jokes to provoke laughter and thus absorb the wrath of the Countess. In comparison, Lear's Fool tells jokes to discredit the ruling class. Like Feste and Hamlet, Lavatch can evade the

answers to parlous questions. Additionally, Lavatch addresses the Countess in a way that resembles how courtiers choose to talk to their masters. Lavatch mocks the courtiers by imitating their speech patterns, and he mocks the Countess by playing with her words. Lavatch employs humour to entertain the aristocratic rulers, as in the following example:

Clo. Most fruitfully: I am there before my legs.

(All's Well That Ends Well, II. ii. 69)

The clown escapes whipping through his verbal comedy. In Act IV Scene V, the Countess says that her husband recommends that the clown stay in the palace because he is a source of entertainment.

In *King Lear*, Act I Scene III, the Fool watches Kent's service to the King. In a sarcastic manner, and with his quick wit, the Fool asks Kent to serve him, so he gives him his coxcomb as if he were a master. Then, the Fool gives Kent a piece of advice, telling him that since the King no longer has any authority, Kent should take the Fool's coxcomb. According to Clarke (1976), Lavatch is the only fool who carries a bauble, and Lear's Fool is the only one who wears the coxcomb (p. 29). According to Warde, the costume of the Fool is motley. The bauble and the cap have small bells that jingle with his movement to alert people to his impending arrival. The baubles are also an effective defence mechanism, allowing him to avoid the wrath of those he offends (Warde, 1913, p. 4). The Fool uses his comic appearance and physical antics to generate laughter. In this way, he escapes punishment. For example, in Act II Scene IV, when the Fool sees Kent in the stocks because Kent does not follow his advice, the Fool laughs sarcastically. He also mocks the hypocrisy of other courtiers, who desert the King when he is distressed. The Fool, unlike the others, is loyal to the King and helps ease his suffering by telling jokes.

In *All's Well That Ends Well*, the clown rudely criticises the courtiers, and he predicts their disappointment. For example, Parlous suggests to Helena that she lose her virginity, and he also encourages Count Bertram to abandon the idea of marriage. In Act II Scene IV, Parolles displays hostility towards Lavatch and describes him as a fool. In contrast, the clown mocks him with puns and indirectly informs him that he will acquire nothing because of his foolish acts. He also tells him that others will laugh at his foolishness. This is precisely what occurs in the plot against Parolles. In Act V

Scene II, Lavatch mocks Parolles by making jokes and playing with his words metaphorically, such as with the word 'muddied'. When he tells him that he cannot deliver a message from someone who looks like a close stool to a nobleman, he also plays sarcastically on his condition. The clown asks Parolles to stay away while he holds his breath to exclude Parolles's stench odour, which the clown pretends to be present. Lavatch generates laughter through his physical antics and verbal comedy, and this is how he manages to escape punishment. The clown teaches Parolles speech etiquette and warns him that malicious speech and gossip make people avoid him. Lavatch also uses the negative form in his indirect speech, which means *to avoid*, to advise and instruct the courtiers. For example, eat carp instead of fish that live in puddles or stagnant water. In other words, use only freshwater fish. The clown remarks:

Par. Pray you, sir, deliver me this paper.

Clo. Foh ! prithee, stand away : a paper from fortune's close-stool to give to a nobleman ! Look, here he comes himself.

Enter LAFEU.

Here is a pur of fortune's, sir, or of fortune's cat, but not a musk-cat, that has fallen into the unclean fishpond of her displeasure, and, as he says, is muddied withal. Pray you, sir, use the carp as you may, for he looks like a poor, decayed, ingenious, foolish, rascally knave. I do pity his distress in my similes of comfort, and leave him to your lordship.

(All's Well That Ends Well, V. ii. 15-26)

Lavatch wants people to focus on the food source; when those of Adam's race obtain food illegally, their morals are negatively impacted.

In *King Lear*, the Fool employs animals in his speech to convey ideas to the King in a sarcastic, simple way. This technique dissipates some of Lear's anger and saves the Fool from being whipped. For instance, in Act I Scene IV, the Fool tells Lear that in that castle, truth is like a dog that must relieve itself outside. Lear does not mind

when the Fool wants to teach him. In his speech, the Fool uses the word ‘ass’ to warn the King against taking foolish decisions. For example, the Fool compares King Lear to the man who carries a donkey on his back over a dusty path because he does not want to wear out the donkey. Later, in the same scene, the clown exposes Lear’s foolishness:

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the
horse ? Whoop, Jug! I love thee.
(*King Lear*, I. iv. 214-215)

In Act I Scene V, the Fool sarcastically shows Lear’s knights’ folly when he tells the King that asses have gone to bring the horses. This sarcasm worries the King and allows him to distinguish between his enemies and true friends. According to Welsford (1935), Lear’s Fool, like Feste and Touchstone, is an all-licensed critic who can distinguish a friend from a foe, and he tells the truth about those around him (p. 254).

In Act I Scene I, Goneril tells Regan that Lear has become fickle and moody in his old age. In Act I Scene III, Goneril claims that the King scolds the Fool, while in Scene IV, the King insistently asks his knights to call the Fool for entertainment. The Fool remarks:

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry ; thy wit shall ne’er go
slip shod.
Lear. Ha, ha, ha !
(*King Lear*, I. v. 10-12)

Using a joke, the Fool openly criticises the King without fear of retribution. Further, when the King is suffering, the Fool eases his pain, calms the King’s nerves, and enchants his ears with prose verse:

Fool. [Sings.] *He that has and a little tiny wit,*
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.
(*King Lear*, III. ii. 69-72)

According to Warde (1913), Lear’s Fool tries to distract the King from his overwhelming sadness with quaint replies and quips. As soon as one clever idea fails to attract his attention, the Fool moves onto another: a pun, a joke, a riddle, or anything

to stop him from crying or make him forget (Warde, 1913, p. 198). Hence, the King cannot dispense with the Fool because he consoles and entertains him.

Lear's Fool speaks the truth because he is highly familiar with others' behaviours. In Act I, Scene IV, The Fool states that the King's daughter beats him solely for telling the truth. Lear's Fool skilfully reads the minds of the King's daughters, Goneril and Regan, and this quality helps the Fool predict the King's fate. For instance, the Fool calls for the King's escort when the King intends to visit his other daughter. When the Fool shouts, 'Uncle Lear, uncle Lear, wait', he employs a vocative case in his speech to alert the King that he needs the Fool. Later, in the following scene, the Fool humorously warns the King that his daughter Regan will mistreat him like Goneril. The Fool then asks the King simple, fun philosophical questions to make the King think more deeply. For example, why does a man's nose stand in the middle of his face? Why does a snail have a house? In other words, what is the purpose of a snail's home? The Fool aims to remind the King of his mistake in giving his daughters all his authority. Shakespeare wants the audience to think, so he speaks to both to their minds and their emotions. According to Ramji Lall, Shakespeare uses Lear's Fool as a chorus starting with the earliest indications of Goneril's cruelty, drawing attention to the situation's absurdity. He is a good chorus in that he emphasises his humour while also heightening our suffering (Lall, 2011, p. 100).

Similar to the Fool in *King Lear*, in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Lavatch also reads others' thoughts well by observing their behaviours. He is familiar with their private lives. Hunter notes that Helena's request to the Countess to pursue Bertram follows Lavatch's request to marry Isbel. Later, the clown mentions his growing displeasure with Isbel, while the Countess reads Bertram's rejection letter to Helena (Hunter, 1988, as cited in Roark, pp. 241- 242). The clown informs Helena in Act II Scene IV that the Countess of Rousillon is not well for two reasons:

Clo. One, that she's not in heaven, whither God send
her quickly ! the other, that she's in earth, from
whence God send her quickly !
(*All's Well That Ends Well*, II. iv. 11-13)

Lavatch is a saint fool because he wants to remind people of the afterlife. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Lavatch demonstrates his knowledge of the Bible. For example, he

jokes about herbs, saying he is no great Nebuchadnezzar and does not have much expertise with them (Bloom & Gleed, 2010, p. 213). In Act III Scene II, the clown informs the Countess that Bertram is a sorrowful man. He also gives her an ominous hint that he will leave the palace. The Clown realises that Bertram has a problem when he hears him singing more than usual. Lavatch can also read the evil thoughts of courtiers. The clown sarcastically likens Lord Lafeu to the Prince of Darkness, referring to how they will burn in Hell. Lavatch makes fun of Lord Lafeu with jokes and wordplay. Through verbal comedy, the clown employs the term 'bauble' to convey a message with multiple meanings. The bauble is the stick of a court fool. According to Sheriko (2022), the bauble is a rod puppet like a marotte, and it is a short stick with the figurine of a fool's head on one end, depicting its bearer in a carving. The clown generates laughter through his comic appearance and verbal comedy. As a result, he is rewarded with purse from Lord Lafeu instead of starting a fight.

Even though Lear is a wavering man with a sharp style, and he can be tyrannical with others, he does not punish the ill. Shakespeare employs madness when the situation becomes dangerous. Therefore, pretending to be insane is a safe way to speak freely and reveal the truth with impunity. Lear's Fool and Edgar portray themselves as being insane through their comical appearances and infantile behaviours. Therefore, In Act III Scene VII, the Second Servant allows Bedlam to lead Gloucester wherever he likes. Because he is a madman and a vagabond in this way, no one can punish him for any mischief. In Act V Scene III, Edgar reveals to the Duke of Albany the moment he realises that he becomes a criminal and an outlaw. If the soldiers catch him, they will undoubtedly kill him; therefore, to ensure his survival, he must portray himself as insane. Shakespeare includes characters who pretend to be insane in the main plot and sub-plot. He does so because *King Lear* depicts the complicated life of the ruling class inside the court. Shakespeare comments on the fool's function as a flash that both appears and disappears in the text. For example, the Fool remarks:

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me. If I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't ; and ladies too, they will not let me have all the fool to myself ; they 'll be snatching. Nuncle, give me an egg, and I ' ll give thee two crowns.

(*King Lear*, I. iv. 144-148)

King Lear specifically targets the ruling aristocracy. Those ruling elites are primarily to blame for the widespread poverty, unfairness, judicial corruption, and abuse of power. The supposedly insane characters act as advocates for the disadvantaged, much like a volunteer lawyer might. For instance, Lear creates an independent tribunal in Act III Scene VI and turns to the 'madmen' to give him a fair judgement. King Lear describes Edgar as the most knowledgeable judge to conduct the trial. To put it simply, we have not forgotten. In Act III Scene IV, Lear portrays Edgar as a good philosopher from Athens. King Lear also describes the Fool as an intelligent gentleman and Edgar's partner in dispensing justice. Lear wants the Fool to sit on the bench next to him. Shakespeare uses characters with mental trauma, such as Ophelia, Lady Macbeth, and King Lear, to tell the truth. For instance, in Act IV Scene VI, Lear tells Gloucester, 'I shall preach a sermon to you: mark'. In Act III Scene IV, Lear expresses regret and acknowledges his guilt for having ignored the poor. Finally, in Act IV Scene VI, the King describes illegitimate holders of power and how they obtain blind obedience. He also discusses how the judiciary becomes a provocative institution and exposes politicians' hypocrisy and misuse of power. Through madness, Lear confesses his guilt as well as Lady Macbeth's. The feeling of guilt is a tremendous torment she suffers due to her actions, and her brain functions as an ethical critic. Lady Macbeth does not confess her crime until after she becomes insane. Herein lies the role of insanity in demonstrating the truth. After observing her unconscious behaviour and speech, the doctor realises that she needs a priest more than a doctor. Even though their madness leads to a sad end, it is still a source of truth and wisdom that criticises the political and social situation in the Renaissance.

3. The Wise Fool in *Stories of Bahlool*

In this chapter, we focus on the comical methods and techniques of the wise fool through close reading and objective scrutiny of Bahlool's stories. This will enable us to discover the story's meaning and aesthetic value. Bahlool is a devout Muslim who follows the rules laid out in the Quran. 'The Quran 9:112 (Translated by A. Y. Ali) that enjoin good and forbid evil'; (The Quran 9:112). According to that verse, Bahlool advises the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid. For example, in *Haroun Asks Bohloul for Advice*, Bahlool answers as follows:

Become just and equitable. What you don't think proper for yourself, don't think suitable for others. Listen patiently to the pleas and requests of the oppressed. Give answers nobly, prove yourself true to favours, rule with justice, and give just decisions. (Jafri, 2014, p.16).

Bahloul employs verbs in the imperative form in his dialogues, such as 'become, listen, prove, and give', to advise and counsel the ruling class to promote virtue. He uses verbs in the negative form, such as 'don't think', which means this action should be avoided, to prevent vice. This is an Arabic rhetorical style known as brachylogy, which uses fewer words but conveys more meaning, giving the text an aesthetic value.

A *motif* is something that appears repeatedly in a work of literature. It could be a key theme, idea, or character (Cuddon, 2013, p. 448). As Barbara K. Walker mentions, motifs that appear in ATON Bahloul Dana are found in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*. The Wise and the Foolish, classified as 'Adaptability', are J822. *Man plays fool to protect himself in dealing with king* is a tale that suggests Bahloul Dane's mysticism, his ability to transport himself and others into a spiritual world beyond time. Other anecdotes present the same case and conclusion, as in the motifs D2121.3, D1777, J156, and V223 (Walker, 1996, pp. 809-814). How does Bahloul play the fool with the Caliph? What methods and techniques does he use with him? In his chapter 'The Fool as Comic Device', Clarke (1976) suggests that 'The fools fulfil this function by means of a comic appearance, physical antics, different kinds of verbal comedy, including bawdy jokes, puns, wit contests with other characters, riddles, sophisticated arguments and nonsense, and ridicule of other characters' (p.24). Bahloul has all the characteristics Clarke mentions. However, before delving into the stories that depict Bahloul Dana and tyranny, it is necessary to

understand the perspective of Islamic civilisation regarding insanity and how Muslims deal with madmen. The Quran and Hadiths are the fundamental pillars upon which Islamic civilisation is built. As evidenced by the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad's Hadiths, Islam teaches compassion and kindness toward three groups of people in the Holy Book, including madmen, for whom religious responsibilities are not required:

No blame is there on the blind, nor is there blame on the lame, nor on one ill (if he joins not the war): But he that obeys Allah and His Apostle, -- (Allah) will admit him to Gardens beneath which rivers flow; and he who turns back, (Allah) will punish him with a Grievous Penalty. (The Quran 48:17)

In Quranic expressions, the word 'blame' refers to embarrassment. It is a tool for easing the burden of religious obligations and making them more manageable. Furthermore, according to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad regarding responsibility, the madman cannot be guilty for his actions when he is insane. The Prophet Muhammad said, 'The pen is lifted from three people: a sleeping person until he awakens, a child until he becomes an adult, and an insane person until he regains his sanity' (Elias, 2019). Thus, we find that Islamic civilisation considers insanity to be a pathological condition. Naturally, therefore, the insane are treated with kindness and care in the Islamic world. Consequently, they cannot be held accountable by the judiciary, whose legislation is based on the Quran and hadiths. For this reason, Imam Al-Kadhimi advises Bahlool to pretend to be mad when he refers to the letter 'm'.

One of the most important stories arguing against the authority of a tyrant is *Bohlool Sits on Haroun Rashid's Throne*; the story is rich with aesthetic, national, moral, and religious values. When Bahlool sees that the throne of Caliph Harun Al-Rashid is empty, he fearlessly and unhesitatingly sits in it. When the palace guards realise what has happened, they whip him and remove him from the throne. Bahlool begins to cry, and when Harun arrives, he notices this. Harun chastises them and attempts to cheer Bahlool, asking him why he does not stop crying. Bahlool says he cries not because of his condition, but because of the Caliph's. Bahlool comments to the Caliph that if only five minutes on the throne results in such a beating, what troubles must face the Caliph, who spends a lifetime on the throne? However, the Caliph does not fear the consequences (Jafri, 2014, p. 6). Bahlool uses a type of Arabic rhetoric called the interrogative form when he advises Harun because it combines

courteousness, tenderness, politeness, and softness. Bahloul employs the interrogative form to capture the caliph's attention.

A prominent symbol in *Bahloul Sits on Haroun Rashid's Throne* is the throne itself; it symbolises authority, and the time spent on the throne is a time of rule. Bahloul meticulously plans his actions, as a playwright would, calculating when and where certain actions happen. There is context for this. The setting refers to the place and time of the story; it is a literary element found in short stories, plays, and films that may also involve the story's environment, such as the physical location, climate, or cultural and social surroundings (*Setting: Definition and Examples | LiteraryTerms.net*, 2017). In drama, the term is used to describe a serious play that falls somewhere between tragedy and comedy. According to Diderot, such plays are serious dramas because they focus on middle-class domestic problems. In England, domestic tragedy is their counterpart (Cuddon, 2013, p. 218). In *As You Like it*, William Shakespeare mentions this conception of tragedy, but practically, Bahloul is the first actor who lives this experience:

Jaq. All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players ;
They have their exits and their entrances ;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.

(*As You Like it*, II. viii. 139-143)

Bahloul's pretend madness indicates that he is a brilliant actor who plays a role in this world, which is a large theatre. We can then ask what kind of theatre Bahloul offers and what message he delivers. Bahloul creates a theatre within the theatre, which is known as a metatheatre. Lionel Abel invented this term in 1963 to designate serious plays that, in his opinion, do not qualify as tragedies (Cuddon, 2013, p. 434). It is genius that Bahloul chose his victims to be actors in his play without realising it. Bahloul is the fool who presents the facts of life in a way that is both amusing and insightful because he can reveal the truth without punishment. He imagines creating a theatre with characteristics very similar to what is now known as epic theatre. According to Brecht, epic theatre is more concerned with appealing to the intellect than the emotions (Cuddon, 2013, p. 241). Theatrical effects use arguments and

produce judgments. This stimulates the spectator's mental activity and makes him a critical observer. Hence, Bahloul believes that funny situations, stories, and memories should teach people about reality, not reflect it. To teach reality, dialogues are employed. Dialogue is based on two main factors: the first is that dialectics is a type of mental debate that aims to enlighten and change people's minds. The second is direct speech addressed to the audience. The characters express ideas, and there is a conflict between them. Bahloul continued the thought of the Ahl Al-Bayt. He thought that the true meaning of the term 'Caliph' was the extension of the message of Prophet Muhammad through the Imams to implement the rule of Heaven and thus the prosperity of Islamic civilisation. However, Bahloul had no desire for revenge. Instead, Bahloul defended Imam Al-Kadhim, revealed the crime committed against him, and showed the truth about the illegal method that brought Harun Al-Rashid to power. An expert must replace ignorant people to achieve equality and justice. Bahloul delivers his message indirectly through his physical antics and verbal comedy.

In the story *Haroun Rashid's Anger and Bohloul's Forgiveness*, we can see the fool's cleverness and the way he provokes laughter. Al-Rashid hires a spy to determine Bahloul's doctrine and loyalty. Afterwards, the spy informs Harun that his investigation has revealed that Bahloul is one of Ahl Al-Bayt's close friends and Imam Al-Kadhim's most devoted followers. Harun confronts Bahloul and informs him: 'The rumour has it you are one of Musa bin Jafar's closest associates and advocate for his cause while vilifying me! And pretend to be insane to avoid punishment?' Bahloul answers, 'Then how will you treat me if I believe that is the truth?' Harun becomes enraged and orders Masroor to remove Bahloul's clothes, put a donkey's saddle on his back, and kill him later. When Masroor does so, Jafar Barmaki happens to be present when it is time to kill him. When Jafar Barmaki sees Bahloul's situation, he asks, 'Bahloul, what went wrong?' Bahloul says the Caliph gave him his garments as a reward for telling the truth. Harun Al-Rashid, Jafar Barmaki, and everyone else in the room bursts out into laughter at Bahloul's response. The Caliph then pardons Bahloul and orders that the donkey's saddle and reins be removed, and finer clothes are brought to him (Jafri, 2014, p. 35). Using puns, Bahloul brings a smile to everyone's face. A pun is a way of conveying meaning through wordplay. As one of the earliest forms of wordplay, puns are found in various literary genres and are a source of humour

(Cuddon, 2013, p. 572). Bahloul is known in the court for his ability to tell the truth and for his wisdom. He saves Harun Al-Rashid from many situations that the courtiers cannot handle. In return, the Caliph gives Bahloul his clothes as a sign of respect, honour, and reciprocity. He takes advantage of this fame to save himself just in time, and this shows more of his wisdom than anything else. In his book *The Fools of Shakespeare: An Interpretation of Their Wit, Wisdom and Personalities*, Warde (1913) introduces the importance of wisdom in one's dealings with issues that require quick wit and judgment. He comments on Viola's description of the function of the wise fool:

To play such a part successfully required a man of more than ordinary wisdom. He could not be without learning. He must be a man of great observation, judgment, and understanding; quick to take advantage of every occasion for the exercise of his wit, with judgment of the time, and discretion as to what to say as well as what to leave unsaid. (pp. 2-3)

I agree with Warde's view that a fool must be educated. Bahloul's wisdom and quick wit demonstrate in various areas. Indeed, Bahloul receives an excellent education at the Imam Al-Sadiq School. Another example shows how Bahloul uses language as a tool for his witticisms. According to the folktale, Harun Al-Rashid sent some food to Bahloul. When the Caliph's servant brings the food to Bahloul, he says, 'This is the Caliph's special food. He has given it to you as a gift'. Bahloul throws the food on the ground in front of the dog to feed it. The Caliph's servant screams, 'Why did you do that?' Bahloul comments, 'Be quiet! As soon as the dog hears that the Caliph has sent this food, it will refuse to eat it also' (Jafri, 2014). It is clear that Bahloul suggests that money and power cannot win over people's hearts. Thus, through his antics and comments, Bahloul aims to convey his message through a quick witticism.

Bahloul used to ride a stick around like a brave knight riding a horse, and doing so, he even travels the Caliph's palace. He makes people laugh at his antics and hobby-horse. One day, Bahloul sits in a seat equal to that of the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid during the assembly. The Caliph is surprised at Bahloul's behaviour and says, 'Is Bahloul ready to answer my question? If you respond, I will reward you, but I will punish you if you fail'. Bahloul replies, 'If I answer your question, I want the Caliph to order that those insects do not bother me'. The Caliph's response is no. Then, Bahloul says, 'If you can't even control insects, what does the Caliph hope?' In the

end, everyone laughs (Jafri, 2014, p. 22). His antics always elicit reactions from others. In this way, he opens the door to active participation in wit contests with other characters, ultimately triumphing through a debate. In Islam, a debate is a form of discussion. Bahloul's comment resembles a philosopher's saying, and specifically, it is similar to that of the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes. In one story about Diogenes and Alexander, the latter, delighted to meet the famous philosopher, asks if there is anything he could do for him while Diogenes relaxes in the morning sunlight. Diogenes comments, 'Yes. Stand away from my light' (Morritt, 2010, p. 93). Aristotle wrote two works on disputation and logic. The *Sophistical Refutations* show how to identify flaws in other people's arguments, and the *Topics* demonstrate how to craft arguments in support of a pre-decided point of view (Sofroniou, 2017, p. 278). Thus, Diogenes and Bahloul use debate and sophistical refutations to criticise the people in power. However, Bahloul's life is also characterised by asceticism and mysticism. He does not rely on Harun Al-Rashid or others like him for favours. He wears rags, prefers desolate locations to Harun's palaces, and lives on stale bread (Jafri, 2014, p. 4). Bahloul's asceticism has a moral virtue to it, making him a role model for good behaviour. Bahloul's asceticism affects others' behaviour, but this does not explain why he can speak the truth without punishment. In the tale *Behlül Dane Teaches That Worldly Goods Are Worth But a Fart*, Bahloul employs trite words to advise the Caliph that all his worldly goods are worth nothing more than a fart (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). The Caliph enjoys himself by laughing at Bahloul's remarks, and this is how Bahloul escapes punishment.

Through the *Stories of Bahloul*, we find that the hero of comic stories is a character who defends Islamic principles. On one occasion, Harun Al-Rashid gives some money to Bahloul and instructs him to distribute it to the needy. At first, Bahloul takes it, then returns it to the Caliph, who inquires why he is not doing as he was asked. Bahloul replies, 'There is no one poorer than you; I see your guards whipping people in the shops, collecting tribute and donations, and bringing them all into your palace. As a result, I determine that you are the most in need, and I give you the money back' (Jafri, 2014, p.24). In a related incident, the prince of Kufa asks Bahloul if he could pray for the Caliph while he is on Hajj. Contrary to what he requests, Bahloul prays to God to increase the Caliph's wealth and property. Nonetheless, his prayer is amusing

and unflattering, as it implies that the Caliph only cares about money. Ultimately, the Caliph only laughs. In his *Bibliothèque Orientale*, d'Herbelot mentions such stories. Earlier references to Bahloul, for example, in the first phase of the legend, imply a pious idiot. According to Welsford, Jasei includes Bahloul among the saints. He also mentions Bahloul being kicked and mocked by the city's youth (Welsford, 1935, p. 81). According to Otto, the fool is mocked and whipped, but he is also revered as a potential spokesperson for God (Otto, 2007, p. 33). In another situation, when the Caliph asks Bahloul to deliver some meat to his palace, instead of doing so, Bahloul hangs it from a tree in the cemetery. The Caliph asks Bahloul why he does so. Bahloul comments that the cemetery is his real home. It is clear to the narrators that Bahloul has a unique ability to read others' minds, and he uses that ability to draw attention to both the misbehaving Caliph and to give the audience to a clearer understanding of spirituality and reality through storytelling (Walker, 1996, p. 812). Bahloul thus does what Imam Al-Kadhim instructs him to do.

Bahloul assumes the role of a psychiatrist in treating extreme psychological traumas through faith in God. For example, the Princess of Kufa gives birth to a daughter. Because of this, the prince is in a state of deep sorrow and despair. He no longer eats or drinks. Upon hearing this, Bahloul goes to the prince and advises him, 'Dear prince, why this sadness and grief? How would you feel if God gave you a mad son like me instead?' (Jafri, 2014, p. 28). Bahloul uses a literary device, the simile, with the word 'like'. This literary device enhances the text's aesthetic value. Often, a person faces a situation in which their faith becomes their only saviour. Henry Krystal, the seminal thinker in the field, thinks patients make desperate attempts to recover and sustain their trust in God. and how patients' faith and religious behaviour affect their mental health treatment. Faith becomes a system of psychotherapy, and religions are necessary for the survival of humanity (Marcus & Rosenberg, 1988). Bahloul is ideally suited to the task of using faith or religion to *treat and heal* his patients. Faith thus becomes a system of psychotherapy.

Bahloul can simultaneously offend and entertain the Caliph and his court. for example, A vizier once jokingly tells Bahloul that the Caliph has made him the prince of animals. Bahloul's response humiliates and offends the vizier, however, when he replies, 'That's why you'll have to obey my commands from now on' (Jafri, 2014, p.

29). The vizier's courtiers erupt in laughter when they hear this. Bahloul uses a metaphor to compare the vizier to an animal; both share the trait of foolishness. When it comes to opposing the political establishment, Bahloul's function as a fool allows him to play an essential role as a mouthpiece for the truth. Enid Welsford observes the following: 'It cannot, of course, be denied that fools and clowns have at times been made to serve political ends, but that in no way affects the essential nature of clownage' (Welsford, 1935, p.317). As much as his foolishness, As a mouthpiece for truth, Bahloul plays an essential role in showing the hypocrisy of courtiers. Welsford refers to a story that shows Bahloul advising the Caliph and making him cry:

[O]n one occasion [he] even reduc[es] him to tears by showing up his ignorance. When one of the Caliph's followers rebukes him for this severity, he replies: 'You, and people like you, have spoilt the Caliph', meaning apparently that they have battered him until he is unwilling to hear the truth. (Welsford, 1935, p. 81)

To achieve righteousness and truthfulness, Bahloul accumulates science and knowledge through his association with the Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq School. For instance, one day in Baghdad, a visitor arrives at the Caliph's palace. A visitor asks the Caliph's princes and viziers several questions, but no one knows the answers. The Caliph is deeply embarrassed. In his rage, the Caliph threatens his princes, viziers, and courtiers, who set out to find Bahloul; they believe he is the only one who can answer this foreigner's questions correctly. In the end, as they expect, Bahloul does so and does not disappoint them (Jafri, 2014, pp. 72-73). Illegitimate rulers often avoid appointing free and fair individuals to senior governmental posts for the fear that those persons might critique their wrongdoing. Instead, they prefer those who are eager to please the ruler. For this reason, Bahloul highlights their wrongdoings through indignity, but they cannot punish him or do without him because of his knowledge.

Bahloul's noble and honest attitude deeply impresses those in the palace, including Zubaida Hatun, the Caliph's wife. For instance, one day, Bahloul begins to construct a paradise in order to act as if he were a child. Zubaida Hatun, who happens to be passing by his so-called paradise, approaches him, inquiring what he is doing. He replies that he is building a palace in heaven and will sell it for one hundred dinars. When Zubaida Hatun pays for it, she dreams of a massive paradise that she has not seen before. When Zubaida Hatun awakes, she is thrilled and tells her husband about

her dream. The following day, the Caliph goes to buy a palace in paradise from Bahlool, who bursts out laughing and says he not going to sell it to the Caliph. Zubaida buys the palace because she has no greed for paradise, but now that you hear about it, you also would like to have paradise (Sheriff, 1988, pp. 18- 19). Through comic actions, verbal comedy, and nonsense, the fool conveys his message. For instance, the words 'I make a paradise' show Zubaida that Bahlool needs money, and Zubaida is willing to give it to him. She knows Bahlool provides it to the needy. However, this is not the case with the Caliph, and Bahlool conveys to the Caliph that he does not deserve paradise. He reminds him of his mistake through his understanding of religion.

According to Barbara K. Walker, it is precisely this childish manner that allows Bahlool to speak freely without fear of the Caliph's punishment; this manner also shows that his true nature is similar to that of a saint and is deserving of love and friendship. She also sees that Bahlool's madness, like that of Shakespeare's court jesters, has a strategy. The misbehaviour of the Caliph or anyone else leads to an understanding of time's relativity or necessity honest worship or the significance of faith or the obviousness of folly or mundane society's depraved influence or an individual's duty to accept death as a fact of life and the destiny of man or how material wealth is a fleeting thing. Further, folly opens the door to knowledge through the description of a the timeline of events in a fictional world. Bahlool is a saint who can transport himself and others to an enlightening situation outside of human time. Barbara K. Walker calls this 'frozen time' or 'time-within-time'. A person can dream or imagine long periods in only a few moments of ordinary time. Walker also mentions Bahlool avoiding punishment throughout this strategy (Walker, 1996, pp. 812- 815). I agree with this view. In addition, Bahlool knows that heaven, hell, and visiting the graves of one's ancestors are a reminder of the afterlife according to the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. In *Haroon Seeks Advice*, Bahlool alludes to graves as symbols:

Instead of hearing my words of advice, it would be better if you were to look at the magnificent palaces and also to the graves in the graveyard. Think of those palaces in which the kings of the past lived with all the pomp and splendour. And also think of these graveyards wherein the kings of the past are hidden beneath the earth. [...] Therefore, beware of your life after death. (Sheriff, 1988, p.37)

In *Behlül Dane, Friend of the Seven*, Bahlool constructs a small shack for himself

outside of Baghdad. He goes to a graveyard and digs up five or six human skulls, which he then hangs from a rope in front of his shack. Harun Al-Rashid asks Bahloul what he is doing with these skulls. Bahloul answers that they are for sale, but their prices are different because one came from a learned man, another from an ignorant man, and the cheapest one from a tyrant. As the author notes, Bahloul wore rags, feathers, and bits of bone, and thus he pretended to be mad. Other anecdotes present the same case and conclusion as in *Behlül Dane and the Parable of the Skulls* and *Jewels of Wisdom: A Parable* (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Bahloul employs meditation in his speech, thus giving anecdotes of spiritual value.

According to Otto in *Fools Are Everywhere*, Bahloul the madman is the most famous jester in Arabic because he is a model of the wise fool (Otto, 2007, p.35). According to Mayer, Otto's book title is not meant by precisely everywhere. However, he is not a product of any specific place or time. Instead, he explores a wide variety of examples, including the British clown and his ilk, as well as examples from China, continental Europe, and elsewhere in Asia. He argues that the fool descends from a lower social status and thus poses no threat to the king's authority. The fool could say whatever he wants because he does not fear repercussions. Kings realise the importance of cultivating such fools to serve as a mirror of their own folly. A fool's joke about the king's truth could save him from looking foolish. The fool also provides recreation for the king and his court. Renowned for his insulting wit, he is known as an unofficial councillor for the general public (Mayer, 2001, pp. 352-353). I agree with Mayer's point of view. For instance, Bahloul is honest in his reporting on the plight of others because he lives the same pain and agony. In addition, he roams the city on a stick, watching the impoverished and disadvantaged, and he feeds and helps them as much as he can. Bahloul's attitude and honesty captivate everyone in the palace; even though he makes fun of them, they do not think about dispensing him. For example, when the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid requests that Bahloul train his son in statecraft, Bahloul accepts the job. First, however, the spoiled child is forced to walk for four hours until his tender feet ache and swell. After, Bahloul beats him on his injured feet and sends him to the palace. The Caliph asks Bahloul why he whipped his son's feet. Bahloul answers that it is his job to teach him not to whip people who might come from miles away to ask about their rights. By acting as he did, Bahloul ensures that the

child will not be cruel to anyone else. He says, ‘When your son takes over as Caliph, he will remember everything he has learned from this experience’ (Walker, 1996).

Bahloul is a prototype of the court fool who deals with a person who is supposed to be a clergyman and a statesman. Harun Al-Rashid, the one who sets himself up to be an illegal Caliph, but the term ‘Caliph’ refers to a person chosen by God exclusively to serve as a cleric and the leader of the Islamic nation. This situation also applies to the Jester Boisrobert, Francois le Metel de, who deal with a French clergyman and the leader of the Christian nation, Cardinal Richelieu. Illegitimate rulers rely on religion to control their subjects and their resources. This pattern has existed throughout history, particularly among those who use religion to justify their actions and words. This is extremely dangerous because a ruler can gain a following if people believe they are associated with God and if they wear religious dress. Nonetheless, he uses religion as a trap to achieve his worldly goals. By doing so, he pollutes the most precious of emotions, religious tendencies, by exploiting them for worldly ends. This can be extrapolated from Napoleon’s speech: ‘Had no Pope existed’, he says, ‘it would have been necessary to create him for the occasion, as the Roman consuls created a dictator under difficult circumstances’ (Taine, 1891, p. 570). Napoleon Bonaparte used the term ‘ideology’ for the first time in political discourse. An ideology is a political system of thought that is all-encompassing; examples include democracy, fascism, and socialism. According to Karl Marx, a society’s ideology is defined by its people’s dominant beliefs. These concepts can be found in every aspect of a culture and social organization, including religion, art, laws, and politics. The ruling class depends on ideology to legitimise its riches and power (Cuddon, 2013, p. 353). In Islamic tradition, the Friday noon sermons and prayers are extremely valuable. In a sermon, a member of the clergy delivers a religious discourse to the congregation as part of the service. As a Muslim leader, the Caliph should lead it by himself. As part of his ideology, the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid used his prayer for political purposes. In *ATON Behlül Danel and the Padişah’s Horse*, Bahloul just to draw attention to the mistakes in the preacher’s words, and he does so by shouting (Walker & Uysal, n.d.).

Because of his ideology, Harun Al-Rashid ordered the construction of massive mosques to show his loyalty to religion. Fadl Ibn Al-Rabi was one of the most influential people in the Caliph’s court. In 795, he was granted the chamberlain’s

office. Harun Al-Rashid trusted Fadl Ibn Al-Rabi to bring someone to him in secret or organise a test for someone he suspected of being disloyal. He was also a jailer for high-ranking inmates (Kennedy, 2006, p. 33). Once, Fadl Ibn Al-Rabi constructed a mosque in Baghdad. When one of his assistants asked what they should write on the door plaque, Fadl stated his desire to include his name as the mosque's sponsor. When Bahlool learned of his intentions, he questioned him: 'For whose sake have you built this mosque?' Fadl replies, 'For the sake of God'. After, Bahlool suggests, 'Why not include my name on the plaque?' Fadl becomes enraged and yells, 'I engraved my name into the plaque. People should know who built this mosque, right?' When night fell, Bahlool replaced that plaque with another bearing his name. Fadl learned of this and asked Bahlool about why he changed the plaque. Bahlool replies, 'Why are you so worried? This mosque, you told me earlier, was built solely for God's sake. Because of this, God will reward you. But, if you constructed this mosque solely to boast, you would lose your reward with God'. Fadl was speechless after hearing these words (Sheriff, 1988, pp. 49- 50). Jesters do not target religion, as Otto observes in her book *Fools Are Everywhere*: 'Jesters did not set out to overthrow a religious institution, and they generally mock those who corrupt religion, not religion itself' (Otto, 2007, p.175). I agree with Otto's view. For example, people often laugh at Bahlool's antics because his debates expose the hypocrisy of religious and political leaders in public.

The new mosques introduced new religious leaders who created new beliefs in line with the government's ideology. According to Acemoglu, Verdier, and Robinson, for kleptocracies to succeed, they must be able to employ a strategy known as 'divide-and-rule' (Acemoglu et al., 2004). In *Fools Are Everywhere*, Otto introduces the following idea:

Squire Peter (Junker Peter), jester to Duke Wolfgang Wilhelm zu Neuburg, was asked to drink to the health of three ecclesiastics—a Catholic, a Lutheran, and a Reformist—so he feigned a stomach-ache, saying that since such people caused so much discord in the church it was hardly surprising they should disagree with his stomach. (Otto, 2007, p.167)

In another example, one day, a Muslim *Faqih*, a person who is well-versed in Islamic religious laws, teaches at the mosque. Bahlool sits in a corner, listening to him. The Faqih states that he disagrees with Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq's ideas. First, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq claims God will punish the Devil with the fires of Hell. The Faqih rejects this

idea because he thinks God created the Devil from fire; thus, it is impossible to torture him with fire. Second, he claims we will not see God in the afterlife. The Faqih rejects this idea because he thinks that, if God exists, it must also be visible, and therefore, God can be seen by the human eye. Third, he claims that anyone who commits an act does so of his own volition. The Faqih rejects this idea because he thinks that God does everything, and a person has no say in what they do. After hearing his speech, Bahloul picks up a clod of mud and hurls it at Faqih's head before fleeing. The Faqih complains to the Caliph about Bahloul's actions. Bahloul then requests permission from the Caliph to question Faqih. He says, First, where is your pain? I can't see it. Bahloul goes on, Second, how does Faqih feel pain because of a clod of mud, while God created him from the same material? Third, because God is capable of anything, he is the one who struck Faqih and not me. Therefore, why are you blaming me? The Caliph laughs and says, where did you come up with these new ideas? Bahloul replies, those ideas came from Faqih, which he believes to be correct (Jafri, 2014, pp. 45- 46). Through practical experience, Bahloul shows the contradiction in Faqih's words, enabling him to prove that Imam Al-Sadiq's views are correct. According to Bahloul's doctrine, humans are limited, while God is not. Mathematical evidence supports this point of view. For example, the limit does not exist when it never approaches anything (Ostow & Fey, 2017). In mathematics, the ratio of the limited to the unlimited is zero. Therefore, we cannot see God. If a man cannot bear a fleeting glance at the sun's disk, how can he hope to see the sun's creator? In addition, God's reality is unknown to others, so we cannot feel God by our human senses, and we cannot imagine what God looks like.

Bahloul uses foolishness to defend his religion. For example, Barbara K. Walker notes that Bahloul Dane frequently interrupts prayer service at the mosque to give the Imam advice on where to tie his horse or donkey. The narrators consistently view Bahloul as extremely worried about the hypocrisy shown by worship leaders and individuals ostensibly immersed in prayer but who ruminate about their worldly desires while praying. This prompts Bahloul Dane to interrupt the religious ceremony on several occasions to correct this infraction against true worship. Ten per cent of the ninety-two ATON Bahloul narratives reflect this worry. These are V223.3, D1714, D1819.1, D1817.05, and V223 (Walker, 1996, p. 812). Bahloul distracts those in

attendance by shouting. Through his childish behaviour, Bahlool defends his doctrines. However, Bahlool is not the only one who engages in this type of behaviour. In *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*, Welsford (1935) states the following:

[F]rom the similar story told in the earlier *Life of St Kentigern*, we learn that the madman used to come and interrupt the services of St Kentigern's clergy, by shouting prophecies which were all apparently inconsistent with one another, since he foretold his death by drowning, stoning and piercing. (Welsford, 1935, p.103)

This quote proves that other madmen that display behaviours similar to Bahlool's to convey their doctrines and ideas.

In Islam, the Imam must be conversant with all Islamic traditions because he serves as an example for other Muslims to follow. For instance, the Caliph takes his ceremonial ablution one day to prepare for Friday prayer. However, his ablutions are unlike those of other Muslims because he takes wudu through water from his pool instead of using running water. Suddenly, Bahlool appears, riding a stick like a horse in the manner of children, and he tells Harun that 'an hour in God's presence equals a thousand ordinary hours'. The Caliph does not take Bahlool's words seriously, and Bahlool shouts, 'Oh, God!' After, the Caliph feels guilt when he imagines himself as a naked woman taking a bath. The Caliph realises his mistake and the worth of Bahlool's words. According to Walker (1996), Bahlool's words are related to what she calls frozen time, which means that Bahlool could transfer the Caliph, court, and even the tale's readers from man's time into God's time. The frozen time tales include P3193, A1485, D21213, D1777, and D661.2 (p. 817-818). Such Sufi expressions, which Bahlool learns from the school of Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq, call for the love of God, and through them, true worship occurs. By saying 'Oh God', Bahlool employs a rhetorical style known as the vocative, which can convey various rhetorical meanings, such as warnings, advice, guidance, and regret.

Bahlool Dana is a source of wisdom because he can control his instincts through the power of his faith. On one hand, he believes in God and his books, and on the other, he believes that prophets and the Ahl Al-Bayt are wise people due to their excellent qualities. Therefore, according to Bahlool, a wise man must follow sagacious people. For instance, one day, Bahlool sees the Caliph in a good mood, and he advises him as follows:

When Ali (A.S) was a Caliph of the Muslims, he rested neither during the day nor at night in the service of the people. He did not allow wastage or over-spending of the treasury lest the rights of the needy and poor were ignored. (Sheriff, 1988, p.52)

When Bahloul invests his religious knowledge to give advice, the Caliph's mood is important to him so that he can avoid punishment. Bahloul believes God chooses the Caliphs, who are prophets and righteous men, because of their noble qualities, such as asceticism, justice, and patience. Therefore, in Islam, the Caliph must be conversant with all positive attributes, as he serves as an example for other Muslims to follow. However, the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid surprises many by lavishing money on courtly luxuries such as ornate palaces, banquets, and silk clothes. As a result, Bahloul criticises such behaviour.

Bahloul relaxes the Caliph with his poetic skills, thus creating a safe environment. For instance, when Harun Al-Rashid builds a new palace for himself, the Caliph asks Bahloul to suggest some appropriate words. Instead, Bahloul makes the Caliph remorseful using mystical expressions. In *Haroon's New Palace*, Sheriff translates Bahloul's verses from Arabic:

You have raised the earth-bricks whilst you have lowered your religion (subordinated religious principles). If you have raised this building from your own money, then you have acted extravagantly. And if you have built it from the money belonging to others (public treasury) then verily you have committed oppression and Allah does not like the oppressors. (Sheriff, 1988, p.56)

Bahloul speaks in what we call contradictions. A contradiction paradox because paradoxes have meanings behind them. The fool strives to teach by mockery, and Bahloul labels others as fools. The fool shows the Caliph what real foolery is. The original Arabic text contains the phrase 'And Allah does not like those spendthrifts', which Sheriff does not translate into English. Due to differences between the two languages, the translation from Arabic to English does not fully reflect the text's aesthetic. In Arabic, the word 'earth' is pronounced 'teen', and the word for 'religion' is pronounced 'deen'. In addition, the word for 'oppressors' is pronounced 'zalimeen'. These lines are written in prose. We also note the similarity of the last letters, known as *saj*, a type of Arabic literary rhetoric. Its benefit is that it gives the speech beauty and vocal rhythm. This rhythm helps listeners follow the speech with

ease, and it helps with memorisation and understanding while adding an enjoyable aspect. The Quran contains saj, and Bahloul cites both phrases directly from the Quran: 'And Allah does not like those spendthrifts' and 'And Allah does not like oppressors'. In this way, Bahloul makes his speech more musical and meaningful. Tarki (2013) states the following:

Saj' of the Quran for its qualities and the position of letters phonetically has a great impact on the music of verses and also their meaning. By thinking about the Quran letters, words, and the beauty of the tone influences your spirit and makes you relaxed, you will realise the greatness and magnanimity, authority and punctuality of the speaker of the Quran who is God. (p. 833)

Bahloul uses rhymed prose to please the Caliph's ears with soft, musical speech. According to Tarki, the Quran saj' is named *faselah*. In contrast to rhymed prose, this type of saj' does not follow the words. In the Quran, saj' is used not only for aesthetic purposes, but also to convey meaning to the listener or reader in various ways. This review of the Quran reveals a major distinction between human-rhymed prose and the Quran (Tarki, 2013, p. 831).

Bahloul Dana is a source of truth because he sees two contrasting life paintings. In the first, he sees a painting of destitution drawn by the poor, while in the second, he sees a painting of ungratefulness drawn by the rich. During the Caliph's annual pilgrimage to Mecca, Bahloul sees the Caliph traveling in luxury in his convoy. As a result, Bahloul screams, 'Harun! Harun!' at the top of his voice. The furious Caliph turns to his soldiers to find out who dares to address him in such a derogatory manner. Bahloul replies and says, 'When the Prophet Muhammad was on his annual pilgrimage, there was no barrier preventing people from approaching him, and he walked in perfect humility. In contrast, you continue to show pride and be supercilious and bumptious during your pilgrimage'. In the end, when the caliph hears this, he collapses and cries (Sheriff, 1988, pp. 42- 43). Bahloul uses vocative with 'Harun! Harun!' because this rhetorical style awakens the soul and attracts the mind. We see another example of this with a different fool. During Elector Friedrich III's reign, the famous court jester Claus amused several Saxon electors and an archbishop, all of whom attended one banquet in Leipzig. After lunch, they narrated many of the wonders they observed. Claus stated that he wished to share some of the wonders he witnessed. The first is that poor monks could construct magnificent homes. The second

is that those monastic institutions made enormous profits from the vast amounts of maize they owned without ever farming the land. Finally, some local monks who vowed to remain single appeared to have children, which must have been grown in the parterre or borne by the friars themselves (Otto, 2007, p. 167). These examples show that fools see contrasting life paintings because they know the behaviours of those with religious authority and perceive the apparent contradiction between their words and actions. Therefore, fools like Bahloul and Claus resort to verbal comedy to ridicule religious authorities and show those contradictions.

Bahloul becomes a role model for other Muslim clerics because of his affiliation with the Imam Al-Sadiq school. One day, Abdullah Mubarak, a Muslim Faqih, visits Bahloul. Abdallah asks Bahloul for advice on how to control his instincts effectively. Bahloul is astonished and asks, 'What do you expect from me? If I had a brain, people would not call me crazy. So go find some intelligent people'. Abdullah Mubarak insists and tells him that those who claim to be insane are only deceiving others. They are clever, and it is the madman who speaks the truth. A few minutes later, Bahloul nods his head in agreement and states that it is time to awaken from the slumber of ignorance and hear the four truths from a lunatic. First, you should not eat God's food if you have sinned or disobeyed his command. Second, you should not stay in God's kingdom if you have sinned or disobeyed his command. Third, if you have done something wrong, find a place where God cannot see or hear you. Fourth, ask the Angel of Death to give you some extra time when he comes to take your soul as God orders him to. When Faqih hears these conditions, he admits that he is powerless. Thus, Abdullah realises he must control his instincts. Finally, the Faqih thanks Bahloul for his advice (Jafri, 2014, pp. 50- 52). Bahloul employs verbs in the imperative form, such as 'not eat', 'not stay', 'find', and 'ask', to advise religious people. Bahloul's ability to freeze time, as Walker (1996) describes it, shows that he is a saint. Hence, Bahloul assumes the role of a psychotherapist through dialogue. In his *Psychotherapy and Catholic Confession*, Worthen (1974) notes the following:

The problem of easing human anguish and guilt most often falls upon two categories of individuals—psychotherapists and the clergy. As the problems present themselves in increasing proportion and complexity, both psychotherapists and clergymen are forced to examine their calling a little more closely. (p. 275)

Another example involves a Faqih named Junayd. The Faqih asks his students to find Bahloul because he wants to hear his wisdom. When Bahloul first meets Junayd, he inquires about his job, and the latter replies that he is a spiritual guide. Bahloul then tests Faqih's knowledge by asking him questions about etiquette at the table, in speech, and in relation to sleeping. Faqih replies, 'I wash my hands before and after eating, I speak in a way that the audience can understand, and I go to bed immediately after reciting supplications'. Bahloul is unsatisfied with his answer, as these customs are only a secondary consideration. Bahloul answers that the most crucial table etiquette is to eat legitimate morsels to avoid blackening the heart. The most important aspect of speech etiquette is that it is critical to have good intentions and a pure heart before starting a conversation. Finally, the essential sleeping etiquette is to keep one's heart free of hatred, jealousy, and hostility and remember that God is always watching. After hearing this, Faqih Junayd grasps the essence of this etiquette and expresses gratitude to Bahloul for his wisdom (Jafri, 2014, pp. 53-55). Bahloul uses brachylogy in speech, which thus contains profound wisdom, as if he were a philosopher. For example, Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, suggests that 'educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all' (Estell, 2013, p. 32). The peacefulness of the heart reflects positively on the education of future generations and vice versa, making it an essential component of the educational process. Hence, some clergy need Bahloul's wisdom because he is a trusted source of knowledge.

The judicial authority is crucial because of its role in ensuring social justice. Bahloul demands social justice because it is a fundamental principle of humanitarianism. Nevertheless, unfortunately, those in positions of illegitimate authority seek to exert control over the judiciary by appointing corrupt judges. Moreover, when judges purposefully overlook essential issues and favour less important ones, the judicial institution becomes a provocative one and thus becomes useless. People have never been redressed by a judicial authority when they face trouble. They have no recourse but to turn to Bahloul, who was familiar with judicial affairs before pretending to be insane. Anecdotes abound about people seeking Bahloul's help and benefiting from his judicial experience and understanding. For instance, one man plans to travel to Mecca to make a religious pilgrimage. To protect his children's rights, he goes to court and gives 1,000 dinars to the judge. His will

states that he wants the judge to be his children's guardian if he happens to die while on this journey. He also tells the judge, 'If you want to give my children what you want, do so'. After some time, the man dies on the pilgrimage. When the children come of age, they petition the judge to return all their money. However, the judge only awards them one hundred dinars. The children become sad and turn to Bahloul for help. When Bahloul comes, he asks the judge to give the reason behind his decision. The judge insists that he has to give the children whatever he desires under the will. Bahloul argues, 'You want nine hundred dinars! According to your statements, the deceased wants anything you want to present to his boys. Therefore, offer the late person's children the same amount you want'. Bahloul's remark leaves the judge speechless (Jafri, 2014, p. 57). Through a play upon words, Bahloul tries to remind the judge of applying human justice, which the founder of Islamic principles, the Prophet Muhammad, calls for when he says: 'Wish for your brother, what you wish for yourself, and wish that what you do not desire for yourself should not befall your brother' (Shomali, 2014, p. 1939). The judge should have morals and human principles to avoid causing harm. According to De Vries (2016), the damage principle of John Stuart Mill is a general moral principle that aims to define the limits of one's freedom (p. 128). As a result, a wise judge must prioritise significant damage over minor damage before deciding.

Bahloul's ingenuity in judicial matters embodies Islam's humanitarian principles. He was aware of Islam's core principles, such as justice and compassion, and honed his abilities at the Imam Al-Sadiq school. In addition, he learned the significance of transferring knowledge as part of his religious trust. For example, among the ATON Bahloul Dane narratives is XXXVIII, 1080 *Behlül Dane as Advocate of All Mankind*. One year, there happens to be a shortage of bread in Baghdad. The Caliph orders the provision of bread for all Muslims, but many people in the city are not Muslims. When Bahloul learns this, he immediately goes to the mosque leader to allow him to lead noon prayers. After obtaining approval, Bahloul heads to the front of the prayer rows to lead the service. When Bahloul reads the *Fatiha* sura aloud, he says, 'Thanks to God, Lord of the Muslims', rather than 'Thanks to God, Lord of the Worlds'. Several minutes later, congregants from the mosque gather to express their displeasure with Bahloul to the Caliph. This news surprises the Caliph,

who believes Bahloul is unerring in religious matters. The Caliph asks Bahloul, ‘Why did you change the words in the Fatiha Surah today?’ Bahloul answers, ‘As far as I know, you have ordered the provision of bread for all Muslims. You did not, however, account for those who are not Muslims. As a result, it is you who changed the Fatiha Surah’. The Caliph finally understands his error of judgment (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Through a play with original texts, Bahloul reminds the ruler of the need to apply human justice. The Quran is the primary source of legislation in Islamic civilisation. ‘The God in the Quran (4:58) orders Muslims to treat all people with trust and justice’.

Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things. (The Quran 4:58)

When there is no evidence or witness to prove who is right in a dispute, it is up to the individual’s conscience. A person denies the rights of others when he cannot control his worldly instincts. In addition, emotion sometimes tends to the believer over the non-believer. Here, God commands that people apply justice to return things to their rightful places. God orders Muslims to apply justice among people. This shows the humanity of Islam. If society knows that justice protects people’s rights, oppressors will not dare harm them. According to Bahloul, characters such as the Prophet Muhammad and Caliph Ali are examples of wise rulers in applying human justice. For example, the advice given by Caliph Ali to Malik Al-Ashtar after he is appointed as the governor of Egypt’s Wilayat represents the path to good governance; he says, ‘A person is either your brother in religion or your equal in humanity’ (Weiss, 2020, pp. 235-236). Taking away people’s rights is one of the ruler’s primary strategies for subduing the populace. In *Bargaining over Behlül Dane’s Appetite*, The Caliph asks Bahloul, ‘Who is the closest person to your heart?’ Bahloul answers, ‘I love a person who can fill my stomach with food’. Next, the Caliph asks, ‘Do you love me if I fill your stomach?’ Bahloul replies, ‘I don’t sell my religion for food’ (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Bahloul uses wise advice to soften the ruler’s heart towards others.

If judicial authority allows people to achieve their worldly desires, society could suffer in the long run. Through his antics, Bahloul criticises society’s behaviour. For example, in *Behlül Dane Shows That The Leg Is The Sheep’s But The Stench Is Society’s*, Bahloul complains to the Caliph about the behaviour of some people. The

Caliph says to Bahloul, 'That is none of your business because each man is responsible for his own sins with God'. When Bahloul hears this, he buys a sheep from a butcher and hangs it on a tree branch, where it quickly decomposes and emits a foul stench. Several minutes later, people from the city gather to voice their displeasure with Bahloul to the Caliph. The Caliph asks Bahloul to explain his behaviour. Bahloul replies, 'You told me that each individual is accountable for his own misdeeds, but still, the sheep's bad stink may discourage others from going near to it'. By introducing valuable practical experience, Bahloul exposes to the Caliph the flaws in the justice system. In this way, he establishes a boundary between freedom and anarchy. Additionally, in *Behlül Dane Awaits Pick-Pocket at Cemetery*, Bahloul chooses to go to the cemetery rather than the judiciary to retrieve his stolen money, alluding to divine justice (Walker & Uysal, n.d.).

It frequently enacts land laws for personal gain rather than for the benefit of the public. Therefore, Bahloul plays the role of a lawyer defending the oppressed. According to Walker, Bahloul can read the thoughts of the Caliph and even the viziers and foresee their evil plans. For instance, once, the Caliph grows tired of being criticised and humiliated by Bahloul. He seeks the advice of his viziers on how to be rid of him. One of his viziers suggests that they all eat lunch at Bahloul's house. If he apologises for the poor quality of his food, they can charge Bahloul with ingratitude and deny God's blessing. Then, they believe they can impose a death sentence on him. However, Bahloul, contrary to their expectations, thanks God for his blessing and asks them to punish the minister, who denies God's blessing. Thus, their plot fails (Walker, 1996, pp. 818-819). Bahloul's ability to read other people's thoughts stems from his extensive knowledge of human behaviour. When, for example, the Caliph offers to allow Bahloul to lead the judiciary and issue an illegal ruling killing of Imam Al-Kadhim, Bahloul is already aware of the Caliph's bloody behaviour. Likewise, in the tale *Behlül Danel and the Padişah's Horse*, Bahloul's ability to read other people's thoughts enables him to help ordinary people (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Many stories show people turning to Bahloul rather than the judiciary because of his quick wit. One day, for example, a poor man strolls by a neighbourhood bakery. The smells of many delectable treats fill the air. The poor man takes a piece of stale bread from his pocket and eats it after softening it with the steam. The baker stops him and demands payment.

The poor man wants Bahlool's judgment. Bahlool pulls some coins from his pocket and presents them to the baker one by one, then drops the coins on the ground and picks them up. After that, Bahlool says, 'We made you hear our coins for the cost of the smell of your food' (Jafri, 2014, p. 71). This shows how quick-witted he is even in situations that require an immediate solution.

In *Behlül Dane Saves a Guest from Execution*, Bahlool plans to save his friend from execution because of his folly. One day, Bahlool hosts his friend at his home. That day, the Caliph sends a letter to Bahlool inviting him to come to his feast. Bahlool takes his friend to the palace and provides him with three helpful hints along the way. The first is that, while attending a large social gathering, he should avoid sitting in a location from which he is likely to have to move. Second, he should keep the answer in his heart if he hears questions that are not for him. Third, he should not interfere or interrupt other people's conversations. However, the man ignores all Bahlool's advice and takes a knife from his bag to cut the food. To punish the man, the Caliph orders his vizier to fabricate a false accusation. After being accused of stealing a knife, the Caliph becomes enraged and orders the man's death. Bahlool acts quickly and obtains permission from the Caliph to take the man to his residence for one night only because he is Bahlool's guest. The Caliph agrees and tells Bahlool not to give any advice to his friend. The next day, Bahlool strikes the animal with a stick and says, 'Oh, you donkey, didn't I advise you on three things that must not be done? They now want to put you to slaughter! I will leave you with one more piece of advice'. Then, in front of his friend, Bahlool speaks with his donkey and advises him to tell the Caliph that the purpose of carrying the knife was to discover who killed his father. In the end, the man does as Bahlool teaches him. The Caliph has only one choice: to forgive him or kill his vizier (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Bahlool uses the imperative form in his dialogue to advise people. However, he also employs indirect speech when giving advice and guidance. For example, he speaks with his donkey to make his friend understand what he should do. Bahlool often talks with his fake horse in front of people to convey specific advice indirectly. In addition, Bahlool's physical antics make people laugh.

In *Bahlool Instructs a Friend*, one day, the commander of Kufa obtains a new donkey. Someone quips, 'I can teach the donkey to read'. The commander becomes enraged and threatens to kill him if he does not do as he promised. The man then has

no choice but to turn to Bahlool. Bahlool advises his friend to bury barley grains within the pages of a book so the donkey will find and eat them. He also orders him to repeat this every day except on the last day, when he must introduce the book to the donkey without barley. The man follows Bahlool's advice and places the book in front of the donkey. On the day of the lawsuit, the donkey turns the book's pages to search for barley grains. When those watching hear the braying jackass, they think the donkey is genuinely interested in reading the book (Jafri, 2014, pp. 60-61). Examples like these highlight Bahlool's exceptional skills and show his impeccable decision-making processes, as well as the devices he uses to influence, shock, and impress those he encounters. Bahlool creates bizarre comedic scenes to elicit laughter and thus soften hard hearts and achieve impunity. Bahlool lives in Baghdad and is a devoted follower of Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq. He enjoys a jester's license, as did European court jesters of later centuries (Marzolph, 2020). Bahlool's judicial acumen, honed during his time at the Imam Al-Sadiq School, sets him apart from the rest of the fools. Bahlool's ability to fully understand the Quran appears in the judicial rulings he issues. For example, in *Behlül Dane Nullifies a Divorce*, after the advisers fail to overturn Zubaida Hatun's divorce decree, Bahlool intervenes to save her from unfair judgement by citing a verse in the Quran (Walker & Uysal, n.d.). Bahlool is skilled at witty repartee, and he is a shrewd judge of character (Welsford, 1935, p. 81). Many stories show Bahlool's ingenuity in saving the lives of others at a critical time. For example, in *Haroun Asks Bahlool a Question*, Bahlool waives his reward to free his friends from the prison (Jafri, 2014, p. 14). Bahlool achieves his noble goals by defeating the ruling class in contests of wit.

CONCLUSION AND PROPOSALS

And (O people!) your Companion is not one possessed.
(The Quran 81:22)

The findings of this study reveal the potential of the wise fools to criticise the ruling class and spread good governance with impunity through their pretended madness. Throughout history, people have often accused some characters of madness, but those characters caused intellectual revolutions that helped build human civilisation. Some characters are falsely nicknamed Al-Rashid, but ultimately, it is clear that they are foolish. Hence, a wise man (Al-Rashid) is someone who can control his worldly desires, unlike a fool. These fools or madmen are sometimes called idiot saints, and sometimes they are thought to use madness as a cover to escape punishment. As Bahlool's experiences show, he could talk to people on their level of intelligence, just as prophets do. Bahlool learned about the concept of Taqiyya at the Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq School. Imam Al-Kadhim advised him to follow that conception in times of danger. Since madness is considered mental illness in Islam, it is forbidden to punish madmen. Bahlool takes advantage of this and can thus criticise anyone, even the Caliph, and not be punished. Similarly, Shakespeare invents fools or characters who pretend to be insane to obtain licence to speak unwelcome truths in public with impunity. This means that both Bahlool and Shakespeare's fools are free to criticise the court. For this reason, Imam Al-Kadhim and Shakespeare resort to the idea of 'fake madness' for characters in contact with the ruling class. Overall, the functions of the Fool, Taqiyya, and Disguise share the same purpose: self-preservation when the environment becomes unsafe.

Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq was one of the first people to create mystical phrases. Hence, one might see that Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq focuses on the text of the Quran and creates mystical expressions. He does this by understanding the accurate meaning of the terms in the Quran; thus, he teaches his students its aesthetic value. Stories about Bahlool in Arabic text have an aesthetic element because of their rhetoric. Closely reading the stories of Bahlool and Shakespeare's plays helps us understand what they mean and what makes them beautiful. *The Stories of Bahlool* and Shakespeare's texts convey scientific knowledge through an aesthetic experience.

In both the Arab and English courts, the role of the wise fool is crucial because he dares to tell the unwelcome truth and criticise the ruling class. Wise fools give authoritative advice and guidance to aristocratic rulers, which in turn might improve people's lives. Moreover, the court views the Fool as a source of entertainment because he lessens the severity of its pressures, which include political, social, and power struggles. Like Shakespearean fools, Bahloul's answers in court are so insightful and thoughtful that they put the mind at ease, uplift the mood, and inspire introspection. Bahloul awakens people's unconscious minds at the court. Barbara Walker notes that Bahloul can transfer the Caliph and his court from man's time to God's time, which is referred to as *time-within-time* or *frozen time*. She also notes that Bahloul can read others' minds. When he does so, he acts childishly to avoid the Caliph's punishment. Naturally, this earns him the Caliph's sympathy. A similar example occurs with Will Somer, the fool, who occasionally displays signs of infantile jealousy, but eventually he earns the King's sympathy. Bahloul assumes the role of a psychiatrist in court when he heals severe psychological traumas through the principle of faith in God. This also applies to Will Sommers. When Henry VIII felt dispirited or ill, Sommers could lift his spirits. Bahloul Dana knows the plight of others because he is familiar with their daily lives. He dares to criticise court policy, and he is also brave enough to speak out against state practices. David Mayer argues that the fool serves as an unofficial councillor for the commoner. From that point of view, Bahloul and other fools play a pivotal role in the lives of those who come to them for help.

The primary function of a fool is to point out the ruler's mistakes and criticise them. George Buchanan, the jester to James VI and I, urges the king to become more responsible. Similarly, Will Sommers warns Henry VIII when he observes him acting extravagantly. It seems that kings need those fools; thus, they do not punish them. The rulers do not shy away from the fools' criticisms because the people already know they are both mad and wise. Even though Bahloul, for example, insults the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid several times, the Caliph chooses not to execute him. Similarly, this applies to English court clowns and Shakespearean fools. Fools such as Bahloul Dana, Will Somers, Archy, Dick Tarlton, and Shakespeare's fools sharply criticise courtiers and expose their hypocrisy by pretending to be insane while improving the rulers' moods and avoiding punishment.

In *Stories of Bahloul*, Bahloul Dana tries to apply the irrational opinions of religious leaders to actual life in a sarcastic way. He also employs his understanding of religion through debates. As a result, Bahloul shows the contradiction in religious leaders' words; he refutes their opinions and exposes their hypocrisy. Walker notes that Bahloul Dana frequently interrupts the prayer service at the mosque to correct the infraction of that prayer. As a result, he demonstrates his concern for true worship. By shouting, Bahloul Dana draws attention to his points and highlights the misuse of religious authority. Regarding religion, Bahloul is more knowledgeable than some religious leaders. Still, he is wise because he prioritises what is most critical, such as table etiquette, about which he advises the Faqih that Adam's race should obtain Halal food, 'legitimate food'. In other words, one should not give one's loyalty to someone for money or sell one's religion for food. Bahloul defends his doctrine and the reputation of Islam by ridiculing religious leaders and through physical antics and verbal comedy such as shouting, paradox, and playing with words or original texts. In the English court, Will Sommers used his wit against Cardinal Wolsey. Similarly, Elizabeth's government used clowning against Puritans and Catholics.

Bahloul learns the Quran's rulings at the Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq School. His cleverness in the courtroom brings the Islamic religion's humanitarian principles to life. Welsford says that Bahloul is a shrewd judge. Because of judicial corruption and abuse of power, people resort to Bahloul Dana to provide fairness. Hence, fools act as advocates for the disadvantaged, much like a *pro bono* lawyer would. Regarding the judiciary, Bahloul is more knowledgeable than some judges. For example, he advises that the judge prioritise significant damage over minor damage, or he teaches the Caliph how to distinguish between freedom and anarchy in his judgment. In judges, Bahloul always receives the ruling he wants by employing simple but ingenious tricks; he has shrewd intelligence and quick thinking. There are many stories about how Bahloul uses his wit to save himself and others in dangerous situations. Bahloul's judgements demonstrate his profound knowledge of the Quran and prophetic hadiths. For instance, Bahloul protects Zubaida Hatun after the advisors fail to repeal the divorce judgement. He intelligently cites the Quran to extract a fair judicial ruling.

Fools can speak unwelcome truths to those in political, religious, and judicial positions of authority and reveal their foolishness because they have many

characteristics that help them do so. Bahloul Dana uses verbal comedy similar to Lavache, Feste, and Hamlet to avoid answering parlous questions. He uses mystical phrases to make the Caliph and his court feel remorseful. Thus, he gives them advice and preaches. Through their dialogue, Bahloul, Hamlet, and Lear's Fool cause those in authority to feel regret. Both Bahloul and Shakespeare's fools provide sound advice and assistance, both in and out of court. Similar to Shakespeare's Fools, Bahloul twists familiar texts for people to convey a particular idea that serves a noble purpose. Bahloul Dana is a source of wisdom in court because he embodies the qualities of sage people, such as prophets and Ahl Al-Bayt. He is also a source of truth in the court. He provides the truth about people's sufferings because he is familiar with poor people's lives. Further, he speaks the truth about evil people because he observes their daily behaviour. Bahloul plays the role of a psychiatrist who uses religious dialogue to treat psychological trauma and relieve pain. In comparison, Bahloul did that, just like Sigmund Freud, who used religious dialogue with his patients. However, Freud's actions appear to contradict his ideas.

Verbal comedy is one of the fools' most effective methods of making rulers laugh and achieving impunity. Bahloul uses literary devices such as metaphor and simile when comparing other characters to animals. Similarly, Bahloul, Hamlet, the Gravedigger, and Lear's Fool use the word 'donkey' to denote the folly of others. Wise fools employ similes in their indirect speech to convey a specific thought or an idea. When Shakespeare's fools and Bahloul want to compare a sane and an insane person, they also use similes. The fools use the simile 'like me', which enhances the text's aesthetic value. When giving counsel and instruction, Bahloul also uses roundabout methods of communication. For example, he speaks with his hobby-horse or with a donkey to send a hidden message to others. Bahloul Dana and Shakespeare's fools use symbols such as tombs, shrouds, and death to remind the ruling class of their final fate, and they use symbols such as Hell and Heaven to alert them to their end point if they follow or abandon their worldly desires. Shakespeare's fools use simple, funny mythological symbols to convey their indirect messages to the ruling class. Bahloul Dana and Shakespeare's fools use riddles as a form of verbal comedy to insult the ruling class subtly. Bahloul Dana and Shakespeare's fools use other kinds of verbal comedy, such as puns, jokes, riddles, funny comments, childish speech, nonsense,

comic words, trite words, and wit contests, with other characters.

In *Bohlool Sits on Haroun Rashid's Throne*, Bahlool reveals to everyone that Caliph Harun Al-Rashid came to power illegally. Similarly, in Hamlet's *The Mousetrap*, Hamlet wants to show everyone that King Claudius illegally ascended to the throne. Bahlool, Hamlet, and Shakespeare's fools can imitate personalities such as those of rulers, dignitaries, courtiers, religious leaders, a chorus, and even children. Bahlool uses discussions such as debates to criticise those at the top of the power pyramid when possible. Shakespeare's fools, meanwhile, deride the ruling class through both sophisticated arguments and refutations. In *Haroun Rashid's Anger and Bohlool's Forgiveness*, we see that Harun Al-Rashid is afraid of Bahlool's vengeance because of the Caliph's crime against Imam Al-Kadhim. The Caliph knows that Bahlool suffers from the loss of the Imam. Therefore, the Caliph sends his spies to watch him. In *Hamlet*, we see that Claudius is afraid of Hamlet's vengeance because of Claudius's crime against Hamlet's father. The King knows that Hamlet mourns the loss of his father. Therefore, Claudius sends his spies to watch him. In *Hamlet and Haroun Rashid's Anger and Bohlool's Forgiveness*, we see a kind of drama known as a revenge tragedy, which gives these works the advantage of suspense. By feigning insanity, Edgar, Hamlet, and Shakespeare's fools hope to gain the freedom to speak unwelcome truths without fear of retribution. Hamlet uses verbal comedy such as puns in the palace to awaken the King's mind. By playing with the double meaning of words, he shows the public that he disagrees with the King's policies. Hamlet employs *Gonzago* as a play within a play as an indirect means to achieve an end with impunity. In comparison, as Barbara K. Walker explains, Bahlool uses the strategy of *time within time* to escape punishment. Hamlet takes advantage of his fake madness to achieve enough freedom to comment on the actions and sayings inside the palace, as is the case with *Gonzago*, who appears to play the role of a chorus.

In *As You Like It*, Touchstone is a source of entertainment at Frederick's court. Similarly, the fool becomes a source of amusement in the Forest of Arden for Duke Senior, Rosalind, and Celia. In *Twelfth Night*, Feste entertains Duke Orsino, Olivia, and her father. Feste tells Viola that he is not Olivia's fool, but he corrupts her words. According to Professor Isci, Feste corrupts Olivia's words and entertains her. Countess Olivia feels pleasure when Feste tries to corrupt her words with language. She enjoys

herself with him. In *King Lear*, the fool can ultimately alleviate some of the King's distress in difficult times, as Edgar does with the Earl of Gloucester. Lear insistently asks his knights to call the fool for amusement. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Countess Bertram says that her husband recommends that the clown remain in the palace because he is a source of amusement. At court, Lavatch is a source of entertainment because he uses jokes to produce laughter, while Hamlet generates laughter by pretending to be a madman. Furthermore, Bahloul, Touchstone, Feste, and Lear's Fool cause those in authority to feel delighted through their satirical singing. The songs of the insane are simultaneously instructive, meaningful, sarcastic, and entertaining. Through verbal comedy, such as humour, sophisticated arguments and refutations, and wit contests with other characters, Hamlet reminds those at court of their destiny and of humans' limited ability.

Bahloul Dana and Shakespeare's fools use numerous techniques to provoke laughter and thus avoid punishment, such as a comic appearance, physical antics, and childish behaviour. One of the essential characteristics of wise fools is their comic appearance. Accordingly, Hamlet does not wear the hat on his head, and his stockings are dirty and ungartered. Feste and Touchstone both wear motley, and Jaques also wishes to. Bahloul wears rags, feathers, and bits of bone to disguise himself as a madman; Edgar wears rags for the same purpose, and Feste carries the tabor. Kelly Clarke remarks that Lavatch is the only fool who carries a bauble, and Lear's Fool is the only one who wears the coxcomb. Max Harris has noted that Bahloul holds a whip in one hand and a reed in the other, and he uses the latter as a hobby-horse. Through their comic appearance, wise fools can provoke laughter and escape punishment. Lavatch entertains others by making jokes and playing with the word 'bauble', which is a court fool's stick. Through verbal comedy, Hamlet also uses the term 'hobby-horse' and the children's game of fox and hounds when pretending to be a madman. Hamlet deliberately performs strange behaviours, such as mentioning his desire to sleep in Olivia's lap or jump into Olivia's grave, in addition to childish behaviours such as screaming, running, and hiding. Touchstone and Lear's Fool have childlike attributes that enable them to earn the sympathy of others. Bahloul, Hamlet, and Shakespeare's fools use riddles to send hidden insults to rulers and their followers, causing them to think deeply. Bahloul, Lavatch, Feste, and Hamlet avoid answering

perilous questions using quibbles and different kinds of verbal comedy. In addition, Bahloul, Hamlet, and Shakespeare's Fools mock others as fools for wanting to interrogate a madman. They also pose philosophical questions and comments that make the rulers think carefully.

In *Twelfth Night*, Feste can provoke laughter and escape punishment through his comic appearance. Alan S. Downer has argued Feste disguises himself with his behaviour and costume. As part of his job, he carries the tabor with him. A disguise is an effective tool in the fool's arsenal for criticising aristocratic rulers and exposing the hypocrisy of the clergy. Like the rest of Shakespeare's fools, Feste also uses complex language, including wordplay, to his advantage to avoid punishment. Feste and Lavatch also use aphorisms to provoke laughter. In addition, Lavatch employs adages to convey ideas to others in a sarcastic, simple, and fun manner. Robinson has said that Feste diverts Maria's attention with bawdy jokes to avoid answering her questions. Fools can thus escape predicaments through verbal comedy. Feste is smart enough to know when it is appropriate to tell a joke in front of the elite ruling class. In addition, he uses Duke Orsino's desire to hear his song as an opportunity to offer humorously sarcastic advice. Feste mocks Duke Orsino's mood swings by comparing him to opals and taffeta. Through his religious philosophy, he mocks Countess Olivia's reckless vow. Similarly, he criticises Malvolio's irrational doctrine, thus showing how knowledgeable he is about the Bible. Meanwhile, Hamlet demonstrates his biblical knowledge through cryptic comments. Harold Bloom has noted that Lavatch is familiar with the Bible. Bahloul cites Quranic verses to make his speech more musical and meaningful, and Feste uses jokes to suggest the courtiers' foolishness and he imitates madmen. For example, when he reads a letter from Malvolio, he cries out strangely, claiming that he reads madness. Feste can provoke laughter and escape punishment through his antics.

Lear's Fool can provoke laughter and avoid punishment by using infantile speech and actions. He instructs the King about his wrongdoing in a simple, entertaining way, thus proving to the King that he is a loyal companion. The fool offers the King advice and addresses difficult matters. Therefore, the King cannot do without him. Lear's Fool and Lavatch both indirectly alert aristocratic rulers of impending dangers. The Fool uses paradoxes as a form of mockery when he tries to teach Lear.

As Bahloul ends speeches with valuable wisdom in few words, Lavatch uses brachylogy. Lavatch provokes laughter by citing humorous examples, such as the Morris dance associated with the hobby-horse or a barber's chair. In addition, Lavatch uses bawdy language as a kind of verbal comedy to provoke laughter. By imitating the courtiers' speech, jokes, and wordplay, Lavatch mocks them. He also uses puns to mock the Countess of Rousillon and a bauble to insult the ruling class. However, he also uses humour to entertain people at court and avoid punishment. Lear's Fool imitates the ruler when he wants Kent to serve him. For example, he gives Kent the coxcomb to provoke laughter. Lear's Fool thus mocks an incompetent King and his entourage through his antics. In *King Lear*, the Fool tells jokes to denigrate his rival and simultaneously lessen Lear's suffering. Lavatch mocks Parolles, one of Bertram's most potent vassals, through his physical antics, puns, and jokes. The fool in *King Lear* uses the word 'donkey' to make people laugh and expose the myopia of the King and his court. Further, he absorbs the wrath of Lear's anger by singing a song in prose verse that soothes his nerves and makes him think calmly. The fool's use of puns, jokes, and riddles helps Lear in a difficult situation. The philosophical questions the Fool asks also help Lear see his errors. Finally, Bahloul, Hamlet, Edgar, and Lear's Fool employ fake madness to elicit laughter with impunity through their infantile behaviour, comical appearance, and verbal comedy.

Bahloul, like Will Sommers, is a paragon of virtue because he uses his wits to obtain money from his opponent and then gives it to the needy. For example, he obtains money from Zubaida Hatun. However, Al-Jahiz mentions that when people force Bahloul to sing, he asks for a single karat, and when they request that he to stop, he refuses to be quiet unless they pay double. In *Twelfth Night*, Feste uses his wits to extract money from his opponent. For example, he uses nonsense with Sir Toby and Sir Andrew and sings to earn money as a gift. Feste obtains money from the Duke of Illyria by playing words and singing. Through a joke, he receives money from Viola. Moreover, Feste repeats Sebastian's words as part of his plan to obtain money. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Lavache uses verbal comedy and sophisticated refutations to obtain money from Lord Lafeu, who praises the clown's cleverness.

The fool's role in literary works can stand the test of time because of its aesthetic element. The *Stories of Bahloul* are rich with aesthetic, national, moral, and

religious values. Furthermore, the *Stories of Bahlool* contain Arabic rhetorical devices that give the text an aesthetic value. Saj' is a type of Arabic literary rhetoric. Its advantage is that it adds a lovely vocal rhythm to speech. This rhythm facilitates listening, memorisation, and understanding for both listeners and the readers, giving the text an aesthetic element. Bahlool also cites phrases directly from the Quran because it contains saj'. Therefore, he quotes Quranic verses to make his speech more musical and meaningful. Finally, in the *Stories of Bahlool*, the main character has features of Sufism. Therefore, Bahlool's popularity as a person and a role model increases among Muslims. Because Bahlool is a poet, he employs Arabic rhetorical devices in his dialogue with the ruling class when preaching, and this gives his rhetoric the advantage of beauty. For example, he uses rhymed prose to appeal to the Caliph. Bahlool uses soft musical speech that pleases readers, as well. Further, when Bahlool preaches to the ruling class, he uses Arabic rhetorical devices such as interrogative, vocative, imperative modes, as well as negation and brachylogy. Similarly, Lear's Fool, Hamlet, and Lavatch use the imperative form in their dialogue with rulers to promote virtue, and they use negation to prevent vice. As a mad character, Bahlool uses an interrogative form to advise the Caliph because it combines politeness and softness. On the other hand, Ophelia uses rhetorical questions in her song to advise the queen and other people in power gently and politely. The wise fools absorb the ruling aristocracy's rage by singing songs in prose verse that calm their nerves and make them think calmly. Through Hamlet's character, Shakespeare uses his rhetorical poetics; his lines are in iambic pentameter, giving the text an aesthetic value. Bahlool's human situation makes him a role model. His wise sayings are passed on and become lessons. Bahlool's tales and noble attitudes are still alive in our minds because knowledge also spreads through aesthetic elements. Bahlool's anecdotes are popular with children and have become part of children's literature because of their aesthetic elements. Bahlool's stories appeal to children because the characteristics that fools possess are laughable. Children like the infantile behaviour of foolish characters who pretend to be crazy by using hobby-horses, playing, singing, dancing, screaming, running, and telling jokes. Finally, Bahlool's stories address significant issues that are beneficial to all of humanity.

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