

The Unmarried Characters in Mary Wroth's *Love's Victory* and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

Rieko Ishibuchi

Love's Victory (c1619–20) was written by Lady Mary Sidney Wroth, the niece of Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Sidney Herbert, the second Countess of Pembroke. It was probably composed for the celebration of the wedding of her sister, Barbara Sidney, to Thomas Smythe (Hannay 212). This play was the first pastoral comedy written by an Englishwoman. The pastoral comedies usually end with the marriages of the central characters and *Love's Victory* also has a happy ending. Musella, who is a shepherdess and the heroine, and Philisses, the shepherd whom she loves, finally get married despite various difficulties they encounter throughout the play. Wroth may well have been considerate of the context of the special occasion, avoiding any inappropriate expressions. And yet, there remain many unmarried characters at the end of the work. Among these are Silvesta, Forester, Phillis, Climeana, Lacon and Arcas, who are all characterized as shepherds and shepherdesses. Actually in this play, the number of the unmarried couples far exceeds that of those who get married. One thing which makes *Love's Victory* interesting is that three shepherdesses, Silvesta, Phillis and Climeana, stay single at the end.

Wroth's play has many similarities with Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599–1600) in terms of the setting, characters and themes. *Love's Victory* and *As You Like It* are both set in the forest, many characters in each play being shepherds and shepherdesses. In addition, one of the main themes of

each play is the process leading to marriage. In writing *Love's Victory*, Wroth may have referred to his work. However, in Shakespeare's play, there are only a few characters that stay single until the end. They include Duke Frederick, younger brother to Duke Senior, and Jaques, a melancholic traveler. It is noteworthy that all of the female characters are married by the end of the play, with the wedding ceremony presided over by Hymen, the god of marriage in the Greek myth, who first appears on the stage at that point. Therefore, it can be argued that Wroth had a different view on the concept of marriage from that of Shakespeare. While the latter adjusts his representations of marriage to the patriarchal ideology at that time, the former introduces a new perspective in her play.

As You Like It was probably first performed by the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the court on Shrove Tuesday on 20th, February 1599 (Dusinberre 37). Robert Sidney, Wroth's father, was a high commissioner of Flushing in the Netherlands and his family often stayed there (Hannry 30). They came back to England from Flushing in March 1598. Since then, they used to stay at Baynards Castle in London during winter and, Penshurst during summer. Adam Nicolson suggests that *As You Like It* might have been played at Wilton House on the 2nd of December 1603, at the invitation of Mary Sidney Herbert, the second Countess of Pembroke, who wanted to dissuade King James I from executing Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been imprisoned on the charge of treason (140–42). Sir Walter Raleigh was a distant cousin of Mary Wroth's mother, Barbara Gamage. At that time, King James and his court were temporarily in Wilton in order to avoid the plague in London. Wroth was a favoured niece of the Countess, whose eldest son, William Herbert, the third Earl of Pembroke, had been a patron of Shakespeare. Mary and William, both of whom loved poetry and plays, had been particularly close to each other since their childhood. Hence, she would have had a chance to see

the performance of *As You Like It* at least on one of these occasions. This essay will examine the representations of the unmarried characters in *Love's Victory* in comparison with those in *As You Like It* in view of the concept of marriage in early modern England.

(1) Theatrical Conditions of Wroth and Shakespeare

Shakespeare's female characters were played by boy actors who were generally aged between 10 to 17 years old. His original audience would have regarded them, including Rosalind and Celia, as fictitious women. The female characters in Shakespeare's plays were constructed upon the male bodies through acting, speeches and material objects such as clothes and stage properties. On the other hand, Wroth's female characters in *Love's Victory* would most probably have been acted by real women in a private house like Penshurst Place. Sidney's family members and Wroth's close friends almost certainly played the roles (Cerasano and Wynne-Davies 93). Isabella Rich, who was the daughter of Penelope Rich, a close friend of Barbara Sidney, is thought to have played one of the characters of *Love's Victory* at her wedding (Hannay 215). Most of Wroth's original audiences were people of high culture in the Sidney circle. Wroth's representations of women in the play could convey strong messages to them with regard to ideal womanhood in society in early modern England.

Shakespeare wrote most of his plays to be performed at a public theatre, the Globe, especially before 1609, after which the Blackfriars theatre became another theatrical venue for the King's Men. In contrast, Wroth's theatrical space was small and private. She did not have to think of commercial success through her playwriting. Marion Wynne-Davies emphasizes the significance of Penshurst Place, where *Love's Victory* was probably first performed. According to her, for the women of the Sidney families, the house was particu-

larly important in terms of safety for their literary activities:

Penshurst, like all familial houses, functioned as a place where noblewomen could find pleasure in one another's company without the darker and more dangerous intrigues of the early seventeenth-century court. The picture drawn by [Anne] Clifford toys with the idea of a female 'academy': it is an image decorated with the embellishments of literary texts and toned to the liking of a companionate body of female wits; it is then an environment particularly and exclusively for women, a 'feminine' safe house. (*This Double Voice* 170)

Anne Clifford, the third Countess of Dorset and later the fourth Countess of Pembroke, the second wife of Philip Herbert often visited Penshurst Place in August 1617 (Wynne-Davies, *This Double Voice* 167–68). Anne's diary shows how intimate she was with women in the Sidney circle including Wroth. While dealing with Wroth's own familial relationships, she would have been conscious of the effect of her play upon her audience due to her intimacy with them. As has been pointed out by many critics, Wroth intentionally made unclear about the models of her characters in *Love's Victory*; rather, her characterizations are often allegorically multi-layered. However, it is this very ambiguity that enabled her to present her own views with regard to the concept of marriage in the play.

(2) Wroth's Use of Pastoral in *Love's Victory*

Wroth and Shakespeare use the elements of the genre in completely different ways. Sir Philip Sidney writes about one of the characteristics of pastoral in his *An Apology for Poetry* (1579–80): "under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep, [pastoral] can include the whole considerations of wrong-doing and patience" (97). As Juliet Dusinberre also points out, pastoral can function as a disguise for social criticisms in that period:

Pastoral allows the poet, the alter ego of all shepherds, to have his say about court and church under the stalking-horse of innocent country pastimes, as Spenser does in his 'satirical' eclogues in *The Shepheardes Calender*. *As You Like It* belongs to this literary and social context. (Introduction, 101)

Sir Philip Sidney made use of the genre to express his political views on contemporary court in his works (Kusunoki 74). C.L.Barber defines the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It* as "a region defined by an attitude of liberty from ordinary limitations, a festive place where the folly of romance can have its day" (223). This is particularly true for female characters, who can liberate themselves from the bonds of patriarchal norms.

In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare uses an ordinary function of pastoral to contain the female characters finally within patriarchal value system. By contrast, Wroth portrays the unmarried characters of *Love's Victory*, adding female points of view on marriage. These views highlight the difference from Shakespeare's use of pastoral. Barbara Lewalski notes Wroth's special use of the genre in *Love's Victory*:

Wroth makes pastoral a vehicle for women's voices, values, and vision.

Her pastoral drama challenges the norms both of the genre and of Jacobean society by its emphasis on *female agency, egalitarianism, female friendships, and community* (297; emphases mine).

In patriarchal society at that time, little attention had been paid to such female potentialities. However, as Lewalski argues, the female characters act independently by speaking their own thoughts in their own words. In particular, the women, who remain single, are given extremely important roles in various respects.

(3) The Representations of Marriage in *As You Like It*

Shakespeare resolves conflicts related to marriage by reproducing the principles of patriarchy. All the female characters, Rosalind, Celia, Phoebe and Audrey get married at the end. But some difficult problems still remain. The most serious one is the marriage of Rosalind with Orlando. Although their union seems to be motivated purely by their love for each other, it would have been unrealistic in terms of their social rank in early modern England. While Rosalind is the only daughter of Duke Senior, Orlando's status is that of a gentleman. Even though the class system in that period was still fluid, the difference in social status between Rosalind and Orlando is too wide to be matched. In Act Five Scene Four, Duke Senior restores his ducal power as a result of Duke Frederick's abdication to join the hermit in the Forest of Arden. Rosalind is to be the princess and heir of the Duke, and consequently Orlando is getting married to a woman of great political status and wealth.

Moreover, Orlando is the third son of Sir Rowland de Boys. Primogeniture was a broadly accepted social system in early modern England. The play begins with Orlando's complaints about his misfortune as a younger son of de Boys. According to Louis Adrian Montrose, younger sons of the gentry had to enter a profession to earn their living in the fields of law, medicine, teaching, trade, the army or the church in that period (31). What is more, many of these younger sons were "regular playgoers" (Montrose 31). Among the audience in the Globe, there were many younger sons of the gentry who were in the same social position as Orlando. For them, the marriage between Rosalind and Orlando could well have been, as Montrose says, "a projection for the wish-fulfillment fantasies" (53). Orlando's social position is altered significantly due to his marriage to Rosalind, the princess; it would have been highly unlikely for such a union to take place in real life at that time. Such a fantasy is allowed to become reality in the Forest of Arden only by virtue of

the pastoral setting.

The second problem lies in the couple of Celia and Oliver, the eldest son de Boys. At the beginning of the play, Oliver is characterized as an evil man, who intends to kill his brother, Orlando, because of his intense jealousy toward the latter's popularities and virtue. Nevertheless, his personality suddenly changes in the Forest of Arden. One of the reasons for such a change is probably that Orlando has saved his life in there. In Act Four Scene Three, Oliver tells Rosalind and Celia that, while in his sleep, he was almost attacked by "A green and gilded snake" (4.3.107) and "A lioness" (4.3.113). What is especially interesting in terms of the gender is that both animals are specified as female. The snake "with *her* head" (4.3.108; emphasis mine), went off to the bush immediately after seeing Orlando. He fought against a lioness, which was about to kill Oliver, because he felt for his brother a "kindness, nobler ever than revenge" (4.3.127). As a result, when Celia tries to identify Oliver as the evil brother of Orlando in the scene, he answers:

OLIVER: 'Twas, I, but 'tis not I. I do shame

To tell you what I was, since my conversion

So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am. (4.3.134–36)

Oliver becomes a different person in the pastoral setting. Furthermore, the pastoral framework makes it possible for Oliver and Celia to fall in love with each other soon after meeting in the Forest. Celia is the only daughter of Duke Frederick, who, entering the forest, has just deposed his ducal power. The marriage of Celia, his only daughter, and Oliver, a gentleman, though the eldest son of the family, was also quite unlikely in terms of their relative social statuses at that time.

In the meantime, the couple that most clearly embodies the power of the pastoral setting of the play is Phoebe and Silvius. In Act Five Scene Four, Phoebe, who is in love with Ganymede (Rosalind in disguise), is forced by

Rosalind to marry Silvius, whom Phoebe used to dislike, since Ganymede is turned out to be a woman. Nevertheless, their marriage is included as one of the happy marriages, conducted by Hymen in the Forest of Arden at the end of the play. Soon after Hymen's speech in this scene, Phoebe delivers her vow to Silvius: "I will not eat my word, now thou art mine,/ Thy faith my fancy to thee doth combine" (5.4.147-48). Although Phoebe is forced into marriage in a way, her hatred for the shepherd is suddenly transformed into a serious love. Their previous conflicts thus disappear in the Forest of Arden. Taking advantage of the pastoral setting, Shakespeare resolves forcibly these difficult problems in relation to marriage in *As You Like It*.

It is notable that marriage is not necessarily depicted as admirable in *As You Like It*. A good example is the marriage between Touchstone, a courtly fool, and Audrey, a country girl. Their marriage is not based upon love for each other but upon Touchstone's one-sided sexual desires. It is apparent that Audrey lacks the intelligence to comprehend "what poetical is" (3.3.15). She seems to marry Touchstone because she is overwhelmed by his sexual aggression, understanding nothing about the institution of marriage. Touchstone's language is filled with sexual connotations ever since he first appears on the stage with Audrey. In Act Three Scene Four, they speak about their appearance and morality to each other in the Forest of Arden:

AUDREY: Well, I am not fair, and therefore I pray the gods make me
honest.

TOUCHSTONE: Truly, and to cast away honest upon a foul slut were to
put good meat into an unclean dish. (3.3.30-34)

Soon after their conversations, Touchstone woos Audrey. Even though she is insulted as "a foul slut" and "an unclean dish," she gladly accepts his marriage proposal. Shakespeare's representation of the marriage between Touchstone and Audrey omits any suggestion of a loving relationship. Since Touchstone is

a courtly fool, his social rank is higher than that of Audrey. Hence, Touchstone and Audrey would not have met each other if the setting of the play were not pastoral. Nevertheless, their marriage is contextualized within the happy ending of pastoral comedy.

In the Forest of Arden, Rosalind, who is in male disguise as Ganymede, acts freely and speaks eloquently, frequently even using expressions with sexual implications. And yet, in Act Five Scene Four, after Rosalind is married to Orlando presided over by Hymen, and reappears in female dress, she does no longer have her characteristic vivaciousness. She only speaks a few lines with formality: “To you [Duke Senior] I give myself, for I am yours” (5.4.102) and “I’ll have no husband, if you be not he” (5.4.114–15). Now that Rosalind’s disguise as Ganymede is revealed to the other characters. Strangely, none of them seem to be concerned about her male disguise. Although having thought that Ganymede looks like Rosalind when Orlando first saw him/her in the forest, Orlando does not mention at all about her disguise as Ganymede, who has offered him various advices for his love for Rosalind. Rosalind returns to court, which is the centre of patriarchal society at that time, leaving the Forest of Arden with Orlando and her father. Most probably, Celia and Oliver also go back there.

(4) Women’s Choice of Singlehood in *Love’s Victory*

In the case of Wroth’s *Love’s Victory*, by making an original use of the genre of pastoral, she intentionally leaves unsolvable issues related to marriage, including the female will to choose a lifestyle independently. In *Love’s Victory*, Silvesta, who speaks firstly among shepherdesses her lines in the play, remains single at the end. In Act One Scene Two, Silvesta, who has vowed her chastity to Diana, the Goddess of chastity in the Roman myth, delivers a long speech about her changed “habits” (1.2.83). During her speech, Silvesta sees

Philisses coming on the stage, and begins to speak to herself about the reason why she has decided to stay single for her entire life:

SILVESTA: I must away, my vow allows no sight

Of men, yet must I pity him, poor wight,

Though he, rejecting me, this change hath wrought,

He shall be no less worthy in my thought.

Yet, wish I do he were as free as I,

Then were he happy, now feels misery.

For thanks to heaven and to the gods above,

I have won Chastity in place of Love.

(1.2.111–18; emphasis mine)

Silvesta is well aware that her affection for Philisses brings no hope. This is because Phillises is in love with Musella, a shepherdess, who is Silvesta's best friend. Silvesta gives up her love for the sake of Musella and Philisses, saying "Though I withstood/ Good fortunes, this chaste life well pleaseth me,/ And would joy more if you two [Musella and Philisses] happy be" (3.1.56–58). Interestingly, unlike Helena and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Silvesta does not attempt to compete with Musella in order to obtain Philisses. However, she neither does find a sanctuary in the all-female world in the Temple of Diana. It is apparent that her choice to remain single is not based upon a quest for homo-social world. Nevertheless, she does not compromise to accept Forester, who loves her deeply. It is Silvesta's independent mind that makes her choose the lifestyle of singlehood.

In *As You Like It*, at least two of the unmarried characters, Jaques and Duke Frederick, voluntarily seek to live within a homo-social world. In particular, Shakespeare characterizes Jaques as representing the misogyny, which was prevalent in Elizabethan England. In Act Two Scene Seven, Duke Senior, who is banished from his court by his younger brother, Duke Frederick, and now

lives in the Forest of Arden, suggests that Jaques was “a libertine” (2.7.65). However, Jaques, who also came to the Forest of Arden, rejects the romantic relationships between men and women. In Act Three Scene Three, he criticizes Orlando for spoiling trees by carving love poetry for Rosalind in the Forest of Arden: “I pray you mar no more trees with writing love-songs in their barks” (3.3.252–53). Jaques keeps warning Orland against falling in love with a woman: “The worst fault you have is to be in love” (3.3.274). In other words, he refuses the heterosexual human relationships of love. Jaques’s pursuit of homo-social world is emphasized by the fact that he talks with only the male characters except for Ganymede, who is actually Rosalind in male disguise.

What is more, Jaques wants to be a hermit at the end of the play, joining Duke Frederick, who is said to have regenerated by “meeting with an old religious man” (5.4.158) in the Forest of Arden. In Act Five Scene Four, the play comes to a happy ending with the appearance of Hymen, the Greek god of marriage, who presents four couples, including Rosalind and Orlando, Celia and Oliver. During the mirth of their wedding ceremonies, Jaques de Boys, the second son of Sir Roland de Boys, brings to them the information about the reformation of Duke Frederick: “[Duke Frederick] was converted/ Both from his enterprise and from the world,/ His crown bequeathing to his banished brother,/ And all their lands restored to them again/ That were with him exiled” (5.4.159–63). According to Dusinger, “world” (5.4.159) means “earthly and material concerns” (342). The news therefore implies that Duke Frederick will spend the rest of his life as a hermit in the Forest of Arden. Having heard about this news, Jaques decides to stay with Duke Frederick: “To him will I: out of these convertites/ There is much matter to be heard and learned” (5.4.182–83). The courtly world is the centre of patriarchal society, from which Duke Frederick has withdrawn. Both Jaques and Duke Frederick have chosen to seek for a homo-social world at the end of the play, abandon-

ing to live in the heterosexual sphere.

In *Love's Victory*, the unpaired characters are not attracted to relationships within the boundaries of their own gender, despite their unrequited loves. In Act One Scene Two, although Forester, a shepherd, knows that Silvesta, whom he loves ardently, has vowed life-long chastity, he still swears his love for her, insisting that this can be fulfilled, not by gaining her, but only by looking at her:

FORESTER: Not seeking gain, but losing, did surpass

Those that obtain; for my thoughts did ascend

No higher than to look. That was my end. (1.2.223–25)

Forester's love for Silvesta remains unfulfilled. And yet, instead of escaping to the exclusive company of men, he keeps on loving her in a hetero-sexual world.

Wroth's representations of the unmarried shepherds and shepherdesses offer her audience various new perspectives upon the concept of marriage at that time. Wroth proposes that staying single is one of the alternative ways of life to marriage for both men and women. This viewpoint eventually leads to liberating men and women from the social constraints of marriage in patriarchal society. Particularly, for women marriage was the most important part of their lives in early modern England. Silvesta makes a choice about her future life, deciding that she will pursue singlehood through her life. Wroth's portrayals of Silvesta, who is consistently characterized as a single woman with autonomy, would have been encouraging for female audience in that period.

Wroth's empowerment of Silvesta is the most important aspect in her representations of the unmarried characters in *Love's Victory*. Even though Silvesta has vowed her chastity to Diana, she does not lead a secluded life as might, for example, a nun. By contrast, in *As You Like It*, none of the unmarried male characters including William, Corin and Adam contribute much to

develop the plot. For instance, Adam does not appear on the stage after Act Two Scene Seven, while William and Corin suddenly disappear from the play after Act Five Scene One. These three characters, Adam, Corin and William, do not voluntarily seek homo-social relationships in the same way as Duke Frederick and Jaques. What is noteworthy is that both Duke Frederick and Jaques were previously courtiers. They are depicted as becoming outsiders who do not return to the court at the end of the play with other characters. While Jaques and Duke Frederick finally withdraw to hermit lives, Silvesta continues to engage in hetero-sexual society actively.

In Act Five Scene One of *Love's Victory*, Musella, who is enforced to marriage to Rustic because of her late father's will, laments over her misfortune: "O eyes, that day can see and cannot mend/ What my joys poison, must my wretched end/ Proceed from love?" (5.1.1-3). As soon as Silvesta knows about Musella's forthcoming marriage from the conversation between Climeana and Lacon in Act Five Scene Two, she decides to help her:

SILVESTA: Musella to be forced and made to try

Her faith to one she hates and still did fly?

It should not be, nor shall be. No, no! I

Will rescue her, or for her sake will die! (5.3.15-18)

Silvesta's repeated use of the auxiliary verb "will" reflects the firmness of her intention to help Musella. "Will" had a stronger meaning in sixteenth and seventeenth England than it possesses today (*OED* def.v.B.11a). Silvesta is determined to save Musella from this marriage to Rustic by any means.

In Act Five Scene Four, Musella and Philisses, depressed by the former's enforced marriage, decide to commit suicide together in the Temple of Love. At the very moment when Musella is about to kill herself by means of a dagger, Silvesta appears and says:

SILVESTA: O, hold your hands! I knew your minds and have

Brought fitter means to wed you to your grave.
Let not those hands be spotted with your blood,
But since your destiny is not withstood,
Drink this sweet potion, then take leave and die,
Embracing thus you dead shall buried lie. (5.4.57–62)

As Cerasano and Wynne-Davies point out, this scene should have reminded the audience of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (208). Juliet uses a potion given by Friar Lawrence in order to avoid her enforced marriage to Paris. In contrast to Musella and Philisses, Juliet knows that the drink will place her in a state of apparent death. In *Love's Victory*, although Musella and Philisses are the main characters, they do not understand what will happen after they consume the portion brought by Silvesta. Except for Venus, who mostly appears on the stage at the beginning and the ending of each Act, only Silvesta knows about its efficacy. What is more, Silvesta deceives not only shepherds and shepherdesses in the world of the play but also the audience as does Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* (1610), who has kept hiding Hermione in the chapel of her house for sixteen years. The audience should have been deceived by Silvesta's words, believing the pair to be dead as a result of drinking the potion. The drink, like that used by Juliet, puts Musella and Philisses in a state of apparent death. In Act Five Scene Seven, while Musella's mother, Simeana, Lisius, Climeana and Dalina deeply grieve for their death, Musella and Philisses awake from their sleep in the Temple of Love. With the sudden appearance of Venus, the play comes to a happy ending. Venus reveals that Silvesta has been her "instrument" (5.7.71).

It is clear that Silvesta's actions and powerful speeches contribute to the happy ending of the play. Lewalski also argues:

Though Venus uses her [Silvesta] as instrument, Silvesta herself produces the happy resolution—not by magical or supernatural powers (like

Fletcher's chaste shepherdess), but by her wit, her skill in potions, and her high ideal of friendship. (302)

In other words, Wroth's representation of Silvesta shows the female potentiality to deal with difficulties positively. Silvesta's language creates a dramatic change in the plot of the play. As Lewalski points out, Silvesta is vivacious enough to act for her friends regardless of their gender. She is aware of the significance of her own actions including the power of her own speech. Even though Musella and Philisses are the main characters in the play, it is actually Silvesta who takes action to develop the plot in the latter part of the play.

Wroth emphasizes two aspects of female potentiality through her representations of Silvesta: the ability to inspire actions by her own decision and her capability as an orator. Silvesta's ability to persuade people close to her with her powerful rhetoric enables her to participate in human relationships of power. In Act Three Scene One, Musella has concern about her relationship with Philisses. In this scene, she confesses to Silvesta that Philisses misunderstands that she loves Lissius, hesitating to woo the former in order not to breach female virtues in patriarchal society: "Sometimes I fain would speak, then straight forbear,/ Knowing it most unfit; thus woe I bear (3.1.77-78). Silvesta argues against her conservative view, providing advice to her to overcome her difficulties:

SILVESTA: Indeed a woman to make love is ill.

But hear, and you may all these sorrows kill;
He, poor distressed shepherd, every morn
Before the sun to our eyes new is born,
Walks in this place, and here alone doth cry
Against his life and your great cruelty.
Now, since you love so much, come here and find
Him in these woes, and show yourself but kind.

You soon shall see a heart so truly won

As you would not it miss to be undone (3.1.79–88)

Silvesta recommends to Musella to correct his misconception by herself, waiting for him at the path, where Philisses takes walk every morning. Silvesta succeeds in persuading Musella to confess her love to Philisses.

It is interesting that Wroth keeps Silvesta unmarried to the end of the play. Silvesta does not accept Forester's love until the last moment. Her final speech shows her deep compassion for him: "For you, kind Forester, my chaste love take,/ And know I grieve now only for your sake" (5.7.99–100). Focusing upon Silvesta's contribution to a happy ending, Wroth may have implied that women who remain single can engage in activities in sexually integrated society. It should be noted that Silvesta functions as a mediator who enables both male and female characters to construct society. Although the performance offers a temporal fiction to a small circle, Wroth's play in the long run could have raised the audiences' awareness of female capabilities through her portrayals of Silvesta.

The representations of Silvesta are sharply contrastive to those of Climeana and Phillis, both of whom have no choice but to remain single because of their unrequited love. However, in the cases of Phillis and Climeana, Wroth provides an interesting view that staying single is not necessarily caused by women's resignation to pursue their love. Even though both Climeana and Phillis are frustrated by the fruitlessness of seeking return of their affection, they do not escape from romantic relationships with men. Climeana, the only foreigner in the play, left her country called "Arcadia" (3.2.88), since she fell out of her love. Interestingly, Arcadia, which represents the Utopia of ancient Greece, does not make people always happy in *Love's Victory*. Climeana's new love for Lissius in "this happy place" (3.2.98) again remains unfulfilled at the end of the play.

In Act Three Scene Two, Climeana and Simeana, who also loves Lissius, quarrel about the relative strength of their feeling for him. At this point, Climeana takes action to approach Lissius. Climeana earnestly asks Lissius not to treat her coldly: "Dear Lissius, my dear Lissius, fly me not;/ Let not both scorn and absence be my lot" (3.2.177–78). Lissius, who has been hit by Cupid's arrow and is now deeply enamoured of Simeana, responds to her: "A woman woo?/ The most unfittest, shameful'st thing to do!" (3.2.187–88). Having heard Lissius's scornful words, Climeana talks back to him with rage:

CLIMEANA: Unfit and shameful I? Indeed, 'tis true,
Since suit is made too hard; relentless you.
Well, I will leave you and restore the wrong
I suffer for my loving you too long.
No more shall my words trouble you, nor I
Ere follow more, if not to see me die. (3.2.189–94)

Although Climeana's love still remains unfulfilled, she faces Lissius, who forces upon her patriarchal female virtues in seventeenth-century England. Climeana, like Forester, does not withdraw from sexually integrated society. It can be said that Wroth created a heterosexual world in which the unmarried shepherds or shepherdesses do not always have their love fulfilled. Furthermore, Climeana's passionate criticism against Lissius shows her independent attitudes toward romantic relationships. In Act Five Scene Three, having heard about the forced marriage between Musella and Rustic, she even insists upon women's right to choose their marriage partners: "Is not Love unjust/ To suffer this distasteful match to be/ Against her choice" (5.3.2–4).

The third shepherdess, who remains single, is Phillis, who loves Philisses. In Act Four Scene One, the shepherds and shepherdesses including Phillis and Climeana play at a riddle the content of which implicitly reflects their love experience. Katherine Larson discusses how important oral games were

especially for women in courtly culture to show their leadership: “Even as participation in courtly sports showcased participants’ virtue and breeding, therefore, games provided a sanctioned conversational space within which women could achieve rhetorical, political, and even sexual agency” (90). In fact, Dalina, a fickle shepherdess, has the initiative for most of the spoken games in *Loves Victory*. Phillis’s riddle evokes the cyclical image of seasons, in which spring time will come back again:

PHILLIS: A Spring I hoped for, but it died,
Then on the next my hopes relied;
But Summer past, the latter Spring,
Could me but former losses bring;
I died with them, yet still I live,
While Autumn can no comfort give. (4.1.425–30)

The main theme of her riddle is, as Wynne-Davis and Cerasano mention, “her unrequited love for Philisses” (206). Even though Phillis has not recovered from the grief of her failure to gain the affection of Philisses, this image of season suggests that she may fall in love again in the long run. In contrast to the unmarried male characters in *As You Like It*, such as Jaques and Duke Frederick, Wroth thus represents Phillis as a woman who stays within the bounds of heterosexual society despite her disappointment.

In early modern England, it was not unusual for women to be enforced to marriage for the convenience of their families. The strong stance of the unmarried characters to cope with hardships in their romantic lives implies their sense of self in various ways. These women in the play would have been especially inspiring to the female members of Wroth’s audience, since there is no implicit assumption that love always leads to marriage in *Love’s Victory*. What is more, men of aristocracy had to have an heir in order to maintain their lineage in the patriarchal society of that period. The pastoral framework

in *Love's Victory* enables Forester to embrace bachelorhood for the rest of his life. Wroth's representations of Forester provides another fantasy about singlehood for the noblemen in the Sidney circle, most of whom had to be subjugated under the patriarchal value system in terms of marriage in that period.

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This essay has studied the representations of the unmarried characters in *Love's Victory* in comparison to those in *As You Like It* in the light of the concept of marriage in early modern England. Even though both plays are categorized as pastoral comedies, each of them uses the functions of pastoral in entirely different ways. Shakespeare uses the framework of pastoral to resolve happily difficulties related to marriage. While the unmarried characters in *As You Like It* are all male like Jaques and Duke Frederick, three shepherdesses, in Wroth's play, Silvesta, Climeana and Phillis, stay single. Furthermore, all female characters in *As You Like It* are finally made to get married by virtue of pastoral of the play. In other words, Shakespeare rebuilds the patriarchal social order at the end of *As You Like It*.

On the other hand, Wroth employs the pastoral elements to suggest female potentialities in *Love's Victory*. The shepherdesses who stay single in *Love's Victory* do not retreat into a homo-social sphere as a result of their despair at fruitless love. In particular, Wroth makes Silvesta, who remains single in the play, conclude the play with a happy ending. The issue of female capacities presented by Wroth in her play may have had a temporary effect, which lasted only during the performance in a private house. Even so, her audience, especially the female members in the Sidney circle, would have been empowered by the representations of the unmarried shepherdesses, who act freely and have their own voices. Wroth's characterizations of these women could

have introduced to her original audience a new perspective upon female lifestyle, which is freed from constraints of marriage imposed on women in patriarchal society.

In Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (1604), Lucio tells Duke Vincentio about Mariana that "My lord, she [Mariana] may be a punk, for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife" (5.1.177–78). His speech makes it clear that there were no classifications for women except for "a maid," "a widow," "a wife" or "a punk" in the English Renaissance. However, by leaving three shepherdesses unmarried at the end of the play, Wroth suggests a new way of living as an independent-minded single woman, which did not fit into the concept of marriage within patriarchal social norms in early modern England.

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(東京女子大学大学院博士後期課程人間科学研究科在籍)

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