

ANNE ÜBERSFELD, *Les Termes clés de l'analyse du théâtre*, s.v. COMÉDIE

1. « À la limite, il peut y avoir dans la comédie présence de souverains et de princes, comme chez Shakespeare, dans la mesure où le domaine public, celui de l'État et du pouvoir, n'est pas directement touché. »

YORK NOTES ADVANCED

2. "In the overall scheme of things, the sins of the fathers are purged by the virtues of their offspring."
3. "In *WT*, what's striking are the number of images associated with *disease and cure, medicine and recovery*."
4. "[Northrop Frye] argued that the nature myth of Demeter and Proserpine was what lay behind the apparent death and revival of Hermione."

OXFORD EDITION

5. "Linguistic opacity [...] is a feature of the play."
6. "The appeal to the oracle is in itself an acknowledgement of the radical fallibility of human justice, the impossibility of determining truth through the processes available to human reason."
7. "There is no logical connection between the death of Mamillius and Leontes' sudden conviction of divine retribution. [...] He invents and elects to believe a metaphysical [explanation]. The process is no different from that by which he had convinced himself of Hermione's guilt."
8. "The preservation and continuance of the king is throughout the critical issue."
9. "[Autolycus] is, in the course of the action, whatever his costume dictates: pedlar, shepherd, gentleman."
10. "What is restored, finally, in this quintessentially Jacobean drama, is royal authority."
11. "This is a play in which reproach is so generalized that every major character is at some point declared criminally guilty of something."

#### NORTON EDITION, JEAN HOWARD

12. "Shakespeare's late plays participate fully in [the] taste for the marvellous, revelling in, rather than being embarrassed by, the strange and the improbable. [...] Only by what is experienced as miracle does tragedy turn to mirth and suffering cease."
13. "In some productions, the actress playing Herm. also plays Perd. [...], deepening the sense that it is through their children that parents have a second life."
14. "The ruler of a kingdom was often compared to the head of a family. Good order in the commonwealth had its foundation in a well-ordered domestic realm. In *WT* Leontes oversteps his just authority in both domains."
15. "In the badly flawed world depicted in *WT* art gradually emerges as one of the resources people can use, either badly or well, to affect the world around them: to correct old mistakes and to forge new realities."

#### ARDEN EDITION, ED. JOHN PITCHER

16. "In the first three acts, songs and music are not simply missing but excluded. In Sicily, [...] there is no place for musical harmonies."
17. "Music at the feast celebrates temporary freedom and pleasure for the underclass, the time in the year when normal social rules are relaxed or suspended. Once the rules are reasserted, at the point that Polixenes decides that his son has consorted with a shepherdess for long enough [4.4.349], the music stops."
18. "If Herm. isn't dead, where did that creature in white [in Antigonus' dream] come from [...]? Ghosts by convention could do such things, but only when the person was dead and buried. [...] Whatever it is, this offstage dream spectre is as real and necessary as any ghost in Shakespeare, and it proves, almost certainly we say, that Herm. is dead." "Herm., in romance, is and isn't dead; she exists as a factual woman but also a counterfactual spectre and statue."
19. "Autolycus [...] is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but he looks suspiciously like Shak.'s alter ego, a personification of the disreputable, greedy thief in Greene's slander — the same Greene from whom Shak. 'borrowed' another couple of works for *WT*."
20. "*WT* is Shak.'s masterclass in bridging [the] gap between high and low art."
21. "The phrase 'a winter's tale' referred [in Elizabethan times] to gossip, outright lies, or to the kind of trivial fairy story that no one but nurse-maids and children would find entertaining. [...] Shak. used the title *WT* to challenge the audience [...] This is it, the title declares, this is the ultimate fanciful story: how much of it will you believe?"
22. "As Shak. and his contemporaries knew full well, [Bohemia] was land-locked, hundreds of miles from the sea [...] In the world of folktale and children's stories, however, Bohemia *must* have a coast, because how else could a ship sail there and the mariners drown, and where else could the Bear eat Antigonus? This is fairytale logic."
23. "Antigonus doesn't die because he is evil but because he is Leontes' surrogate: *someone* has to die for the crime against Perd., and it can't be the king."

24. “To be aware that his imagination might delude him, and yet still persist in believing what it showed him, makes Leontes wicked, not feeble-minded or mad. He doesn’t have the defence of diminished responsibility that can be made for Othello. From this perspective Leont. is a tragic figure: he chooses to believe he can make truth whatever he says it is, irrespective of what it costs others.”
25. “The private question ‘how can I be sure my wife is faithful?’ was only a short step from the larger philosophical question ‘how can I be sure of anything?’.”
26. “The image in Paulina’s house is secular [...], but the setting could hardly be more inflammatory in Protestant London. The statue is curtained off, as effigies were in Roman Catholic churches, and the sculptor is said to be Giulio Romano, an Italian artist associated with Rome, papal politics and pornography.”
27. “The theatres broke every religious and social rule about who you were — man or woman, king of thief, true or fake — which is why audiences paid to get into them. The thrill of idolatry was irresistible. Little wonder the theatre was a special target for Puritan iconoclasts.”
28. “Just around the date of *WT*, the art and Nature debate had come alive again, and it seemed possible that art might give back to Nature some of its former fecundity. Francis Bacon argued that experimental science, still a fledgling, might eventually do this. [...] It was Elizabethan gardeners who led the way in ‘improving’ Nature, and it was the gillyflower that illustrated what horticulture might do.”
29. “The typological link through the shoulder-bone/blade [3.3 v. 3.4] also reminds us of the difference between the Bear’s savagery — eating according to Nature’s law because it is famished — and the greedy, selfish Autolycus’ preying on victims according to no law at all.”
30. “Early audiences may have recognized parallels between Herm.’s trial and Mary [Stuart]’s, and the statue and the effigy [of Mary in Westminster, in 1612] (and also perhaps between Herm. and another queen, Anne Boleyn, famously tried for adultery and treason by Henry VIII).”
31. “Audiences understand that in the statue scene the earlier failure of ritual in Sicily is being put right.”
32. “People were supposed to stay in the place assigned them at birth. A shopkeeper might make money, even become mayor, but he was forbidden to dress above his rank. Sumptuary legislation set out the fabrics and styles permitted.”
33. “Autol. is a descendant of the Vice figures in Tudor morality plays. [But he] is more unusual in his attempt to dupe the audience. Vice figures — Iago in *Othello* is one — confided in audiences and told them what they were up to. [...] But [Autol.]’ most daring pretence — to the audience — is that he has fallen from the high position he enjoyed with Flor. (4.3.13–14, 86–88). [...] Autol. had indeed been Flor.’s servant, but a very lowly one.”
34. “Autol. wears a variety of clothes but never actually changes. Perd. puts on her proper dress and is restored to the princess she is. Only the rustics [= the Shepherd and the Clown] are made into something new, and this is because Time intervenes. [They] get their reward because Time is actually indifferent to status.”
35. “Londoners saw Time in their street pageants at holiday time or special anniversaries [...] The pageants were often in simple, doggerel verse, and audiences at the Globe would have seen Shak.’s Time as a kind of pageant figure.”
36. “... [Time’s] rhyming couplets — one for each of the sixteen years gone by...”

37. "In *WT* [...] the central characters are always on the verge of seeing larger patterns in their lives. Perd. glimpses the ancient daughter-mother myth of Proserpine and Ceres in a provincial country festival. [...] Autol., the selfish trickster, sees that he will end up doing good even when he doesn't want to."
38. "Perhaps Shak.'s motive for transposing the countries was, yet again, serious play. [...] He made it another of the play's 'preposterous' inversions (where the world is turned upside down)." "[The coast of Bohemia] clearly wasn't Shak.'s mistake, but a joke. Alluding to Bohemia's coastline would raise a laugh, as do modern jokes about the Jamaica hockey team or the Swiss Navy."

**SOJI IWASAKI, *Nature Triumphant: Approach to WT* (1984)**

39. "The imagery running through the whole play is that of nature — natural growth and the natural cycle. In the first half of the play, such imagery is repeatedly found [...] Courtly life as lived by Leont. and Polix. in their childhood is described in pastoral terms in close relationship with nature. [...] In the second half of the play, the pastoral imagery is shifted to a more literal level. [...] What is envisioned by the metaphorical imagery of natural growth in the first half is sustained through the second in a more expanded and explicit form."
40. "It seems that Shak., in *WT* as well as in 'the procreation sonnets', thought that the greatest happiness man can hope to obtain lies in his child. [...] The greatest joy man can ever experience is the redemption of his child once lost."
41. "What happens in the first movement of the play is a fall — a fall from the paradisaical innocence in which Leont. and Polix. remember they passed their childhood."
42. "While Perd. and Flor. are children of Nature, Autol. in this play is a child of Fortune."
43. "The cyclical movement of the natural world with which the play is chiefly concerned is not that of the seasons of the year but that of the generations of men. To be exact, it is the cycle of generation not of men but of a royal family."

***A Sad Tale's Best for Winter : approches critiques du Conte d'hiver de Shakespeare,*  
ED. Y. BRAILOWSKY & A. CRUNELLE (2011)**

**Avant-propos, Y. Brailowsky**

44. « La lecture de l'oracle est effectuée précisément au milieu de l'acte 3, scène 2, dans une scène qui est elle-même au milieu de la pièce tout entière. »

**« L'Hiver du singe », D. Goy-Blanquet**

45. « Katherine d'Aragon partage de nombreux traits avec Herm. : étrangère dans le royaume de son époux, fille d'un grand roi, injustement accusée après des années de mariage heureux, traînée devant un tribunal où elle se défend avec grâce, intelligence et dignité, tout cela en vain. Katherine comme Herm. combat l'injustice parce que son honneur est l'héritage de ses enfants. »

**« Green(e) Shakespeare : Pandosto et LCH », S. Chiari**

46. « Si le dramaturge intervertit les royaumes, sans doute est-ce pour mieux se démarquer de Greene tout en revendiquant son adaptation. C'est peut-être aussi [...] parce que du temps de Shak., le roi de Bohême n'était autre que Rodolphe II de Habsbourg, [...] qui avait les faveurs de la cour du roi Jacques I<sup>er</sup>. Dans ce contexte, il aurait été fâcheux que Shak. dépeigne le roi de Bohême comme un tyran lascif. »
47. « Là où Greene dépeignait un monde vert bucolique et idéalisé tout droit sorti de la pastorale peuplée de bons bergers, la seconde partie du *CH*, située en été et se déroulant en Bohême, se présente comme une pastorale dévoyée. Loin d'être oisifs ou idéalisés, les bergers y sont dépeints de manière réaliste, sujets à la jalousie ou à la cupidité. »
48. « Les spectateurs ne devaient pas seulement avoir peur, ils devaient aussi beaucoup rire en voyant surgir un homme déguisé en ours. Cette double réaction reflète le caractère tragique, puis comique, de la pièce. Avant l'apparition de l'ours se situe le temps de la peur, le temps tragique des morts et des larmes. Après, commence la temporalité comique, celle des déguisements, des arnaques, des résurrections. »
49. « *LCH* ne place pas au centre de ses préoccupations l'amour que se portent Flor. et Perd. [...], il s'en sert pour mettre en exergue des notions plus profondes, et interroger le rapport de l'individu au vrai et au faux. »

**« Paulina, figure du parrésiasite dans *WT* », P. Drouet**

50. « La réaction de Leont. [en 3.2.137] surprend moins quand on sait que Reginald Scot, dans *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* [1584], dénonçait les pratiques frauduleuses des oracles, et plus particulièrement d'Apollon le Pythoniste. Toute bouche qui prétendait détenir et énoncer la vérité était suspecte. »
51. « L'ironie qui sous-tend l'ensemble de la pièce, c'est que Paulina n'est prise au sérieux et écoutée par Leont. qu'à partir du moment où elle ment, dissimule, ruse. »

**« “*Sicilia is a so forth*” : la rumeur dans *WT* », N. Vienne-Guerrier**

52. « L'obsession de la rumeur trouve son prolongement comique dans la deuxième partie de la pièce qui s'ouvre sur une clameur sauvage [...] dont on ne sait si elle est celle de l'ours ou des chasseurs qui le poursuivent. Cette indétermination de la source est caractéristique de la rumeur et de l'absence de preuve, de certitude sur laquelle elle repose. [...] Il y a, dans *WT*, beaucoup de bruit pour rien [...], Leont. nous “fait” tout une histoire (*a tale*) à partir de rien. »

**« The Discerning Ekphrasis of Herm.'s Statue in *WT* », M. de Benedictis**

53. “This is a play testing the characters' belief in things not seen, or merely reported, often unreliable and subject to paradox.”

**MONTAIGNE, *Essais*, I, 31, « DES CANNIBALES » (1588)**

54. « Ce n'est pas raison que l'art gaigne le point d'honneur sur nostre grande et puissante mere nature. Nous avons tant rechargé la beauté et richesse de ses ouvrages par nos inventions, que nous l'avons du tout estouffée. Si est-ce que, par tout où sa pureté reluit, elle fait une merveilleuse honte à nos vaines et frivoles entreprinses [...]. Tous nos efforts ne peuvent seulement arriver à représenter le nid du moindre oyselet, sa contexture, sa beauté et l'utilité de son usage, non pas la tissure de la chetive

araignée. Toutes choses, dict Platon, sont produites par la nature, ou par la fortune, ou par l'art; les plus grandes et plus belles, par l'une ou l'autre des deux premières; les moindres et imparfaites, par la dernière. »

55. **John Florio's translation (1603):** "There is no reason, art should gaine the point of honour of our great and puissant mother Nature. We have so much by our inventions surcharged the beauties and riches of her workes, that we have altogether overchoaked her: yet where ever her puritie shineth, she makes our vaine and frivolous enterprises wonderfully ashamed. [...] All our endeavour or wit cannot so much as reach to represent the nest of the least birdlet, its contexture, beautie, profit and use, no nor the web of a seely spider. *All things (saith Plato) are produced either by nature, by fortune, or by art. The greatest and fairest by one or other of the two first, the least and imperfect by the last.*"

**OVID, *Metamorphoses*, XI.359–63**

56. **Arthur Golding's translation (1575):**

Now when shee full her tyme had gone, shee bare by Mercurye  
A sonne that hyght Awtolychus, who provde a wyly pye<sup>1</sup>,  
And such a fellow as in theft and filching had no peere.  
He was his fathers owne sonne right: he could mennes eye so bleere,  
As for to make the black things whyght, and whyght things black appeere.

**GEORGE PUTTENHAM, *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589)**

57. "The Poet devised the Eglogue long after the other drammatick poems, not of purpose to counterfait or represent the rusticall manner of loues and communication: but vnder the vaile of homely persons, and in rude speeches to insinuate and glaunce at greater matters, and such as perchance had not bene safe to haue bene disclosed in any other sort, which may be perceiued by the Eglogues of Virgill, in which are treated by figure matters of greater importance then the loues of Titirus and Corydon."

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<sup>1</sup>A magpie, *i.e.* a thief.