remodeler la culture populaire. Fondations, sermons, catéchismes, visites pastorales, nouvelles associations et nouveaux séminaires, encouragés par les élites laïques, donnèrent l'élan.

Une association particulièrement vigoureuse, le Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement, patronnée par les plus hautes classes de la société, mit tout en oeuvre pour renforcer la discipline, influencer les législateurs, entraver l'expression de la culture populaire, appuyant le clergé dans son opposition aux festivals, danses, charivaris, occasions de débauches.

En fait, l'Eglise du diocèse, comme ailleurs, en Italie en particulier, cherchait, par la multiplicité des règlements, à maintenir une étroite séparation entre le sacré et le profane. D'où ces prescriptions concernant la surveillance du clergé, la musique d'église et la moralité sexuelle. On retrouve ici ce puritanisme impitoyable dont on a hérité en Nouvelle-France. Notons toutefois que l'auteur n'aborde pas le domaine de la casuistique héritée des moralistes espagnols. Il suffit de retenir que même les autorités civiles exerçaient - à côté du clergé - un sévère contrôle social: surveillance accrue des moeurs, répression de la prostitution, du concubinage, des bains publics, de la nudité et même des festivals populaires, considérés comme sources de désordres, sinon de sédition. Promoteur de l'ordre public, la monarchie se trouvait pleinement d'accord avec ce que proposait la spiritualité tridentine.

Au cours du XVIII^e siècle, grâce en particulier à l'influence des curés, se multiplièrent les associations pieuses, comme celles du Rosaire, du Saint-Sacrement, des Pénitents, du Scapulaire, de la Doctrine Chrétienne. La nouvelle spiritualité catholique inspira d'importantes fondations, telles que les écoles primaires, promises à un grand avenir. Ajoutons que, dans les associations nouvelles - charités, confraternités, etc. - les femmes prenaient une part de plus en plus active, surtout dans les campagnes.

Quelques questions à approfondir: v.g. quel est le rôle de l'Eglise officielle du temps - la cour de Rome, le clergé de France (assemblées du clergé, mandements des évêques), les grands séminaires (St-Sulpice à Paris, Charles Borromée à Milan, etc.) - dans la définition de la spiritualité française et dans l'aménagement de la praxis pastorale au niveau d'un grand diocèse, sans doute modèle de plusieurs autres?

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R.S. White. *Let Wonder Seem Familiar: Endings in Shakespeare's Romance Vision*. New Jersey and London: Humanities Press Inc., 1985. 203 p. \$17.95.

Let Wonder Seem Familiar makes a useful contribution to Shakespearean criticism. In it, Dr. R.S. White of the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne examines the interrelated, evolutionary growth of romantic comedy and dramatized romance in the Shakespearean canon from *The Comedy of Errors* to *The Tempest*. Analyzing the dramatist's brilliant adaptations of these modes, even in tragedy, White traces the parallel influences of medieval and Greek romance,

discovering their impact even as early as *The Comedy of Errors*. White concludes that "Shakespeare worries away for the rest of his writing career at the problem of how to adapt into his dramatic endings the potential endlessness of romance" (33).

Not surprisingly, White suggests that to some extent a Shakespearean ending determines the shape and direction of the play. By studying the canon through its romance endings, then, White emulates a man journeying in snow: a glimpse of where Shakespeare has been signals not only where is going but where he *must* go.

The romance perspective of the "endless ending" allows White revisionary insight into Shakespeare's dramatic method. He repositions the problem comedies more firmly in the house of romance, rehabilitates *Pericles* as a mistakenly underrated play, and develops intriguing readings of other plays, such as *All's Well that Ends Well* and *The Tempest*, through the perspective of the genre of romance.

By tracing Shakespeare's evolving attitude toward romance, White advances a biographico-generic explanation for troublesome changes in tone and effecting the problem comedies. Moreover, he releases new meaning in the tragedies through the 'perspective glass' of romance, labelling *Troilus and Cressida* satiric tragedy and uncovering something rich and strange in the romance strains of *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. He sees *Lear*, for example, as "perhaps the greatest non-comic dramatic romance" (8), and *Antony and Cleopatra* as romantic tragedy embodying the comedies' belief that what the imagination sees can be turned into personal truth.

While this approach is least effective with *The Tempest*, it offers a disciplining framework and rationale for enriched understanding of the hybrid nature of many of Shakespeare's plays. For Shakespeare, White explains, romance is both a set of conventions and formulae, and an outlook or point of view. In some ways, then, White does for romance what A. P. Rossiter did for tragicomedy in *Angel With Horns*. Through the route of perspective or point of view, both writers outline the dimensions of what may be essentially a discrete dramatic mode in Shakespeare.

Taking direction from Frank Kermode's 1967 study *The Sense Of An Ending*, White concludes that the most tricky problem of Elizabethan writers of romantic comedy and dramatized romance lay "in ending the play in such a way that the reader or audience feels the elegance of finality but does not lose the romance sense of potential endlessness" (3). The aura of "potential endlessness," White implies, characterizes Shakespeare's evolving use of the romance vision. Pure romance assumes there will be no end, he reminds us, whereas "in drama - especially Elizabethan drama - the slogan 'my end is in my beginning' is insistent" (3).

The tension and mystery in Shakespeare's romantic plays, then may derive partially from attempts to fuse contradictory impulses of finality and endlessness into a simultaneous experience. Reviewing elements of the typical ending in romantic comedy, White finds three basic characteristics: endlessness suspended by the dramatic necessity for closure; implications of providential order; and a sense of wonder frequently qualified by touches of sadness (19). Even in the ubiquitous wedding of Elizabethan comedy, White finds "the meeting place of

short time and eternity" (20), a communal celebration simultaneously concluding and beginning. In this familiar dramatic close, White identifies the inner dynamic of romance: the attempt to "fuse comedy and tragedy, endlessness and the sense of an ending" (20).

Through the history of early Elizabethan romantic comedy is hazy, White believes it developed rapidly because of borrowings from the romance vision. Where "Lyly is the master of the heavily qualified ending" (20), he notices, Greene's endings are wholly festive. Apparently Shakespeare's comedies and their endigns synthesize these two tendencies.

Paradoxically, White states, although *The Comedy of Errors* is built upon a classical play, its ending "owes more to romance than to the hard-edged satire of Plautus's *Menaechmi*. It is full of wonder, emotional reconciliation of a family, and a sense of the improbable . . ." (27). Later, White advances similar claims for *The Tempest*, finding in the two earliest comedies seeds that blossom wonderfully in the late romances (34). Subsequently, White labels *Love's Labor's Lost* Shakespeare's first successful attempt to square moral problems with "the necessity for an ending" (39). Whereas *A Midsummer Night's Dream* generates a dream-like sense of overlapping endings, *Much Ado About Nothing* is the marriage of romance and social realism.

Applying this romance perspective to the problem plays, White uncouples *All's Wells That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*. In many ways, he believes *All's Well* "points more surely to the later plays, while *Measure for Measure* looks back - although critically - upon the form of comedy which Shakespeare has accepted and used up to this point of his writing career" (68). Though he locates *All's Well* more thoroughly in the genre of romance, White finds the conceptual heart of *Measure* in "the prison," a metaphor for a range of constraints: political, religious, legal, moral, and its target in authority of all kind. In *All's Well*, however, he discovers a paradigm of the romance point of view: trust in the power of human love, patience, and imagination, Shakespeare's "signal that such a position of faith may be religious in the most comprehensive sense of the word" (87).

At the center of this survey, White argues that Shakespeare presents romance and the sense of the happy ending "not as plot development but as beliefs, a self-sufficient way of looking at, and eventually changing, the life around us" (92). This opinion, and others like it, becomes both justification and basis for White's analysis of the romance vision in Shakespearean tragedy. He begins, naturally, with *Romeo and Juliet*, a play White sees as almost wholly romantic in vision and conventions. Its tragic ending, White reasons, "partly reflects the capacity of the romance writer to stop more or less whenever he likes" (96).

In the tragedies, White sees the romance vision as providing an elusive alternative beckoning toward happiness. *Antony and Cleopatra*, for example, presents the "unexpected triumph of romance and comedy over the worldly finality of death" (2). Thus White reaffirms conclusions of recent commentators on Shakespeare's cross-breeding of the superficially opposed modes of comedy and tragedy: "Romance and satire are the true natural enemies, not comedy and tragedy" (103). In *Antony and Cleopatra*, White suggests, Shakespeare regains confidence in the romance vision as capable of investing value even in desperate

circumstances, and his last four plays, excepting perhaps *The Tempest*, build upon this renewed faith (113).

Assessing the late plays, White labels *Pericles* Shakespeare's most universal and serious romance and *Cymbeline* his most Jacobean (144). The strange and moving beauty of *Pericles*, he states, must be judged through the perspective of romance. As a near-perfect dramatic romance, *Pericles* is a "straightforward revival of a mode extremely popular in the 1580s, and a revival which succeeds where they failed" (116).

We learn from the romance vision of *Pericles* that "patience in adversity is a supreme virtue, that despair is a sin, and that using the human capacities for memory and hope, time and nature will arrange eventually for good to assert itself over the forces of evil and of fortuitous calamity" (117). Here the central metaphor is the sea, and man is confronted by the archetypal simplicity of simultaneous death and birth. Through this timeless event enacted in time, Shakespeare examines time and identity, the personal and collective past (126).

White is both convincing and provocative in discussing identity and past time. In *Pericles*, for example, "each individual has been brought into living relationship again with his or her own past, and [that] in a strangely haunting way this leaves each still in some sense alone, and separate" (126). This its action may be seen as repetition dressed in the glow of the eternal present.

Cymbeline, by contrast, lacks its sacramental solemnity and metaphysical ambition. Despite many romance elements, character development threatens plot as *Cymbeline*'s key figures acquire reality normally associated with tragedy: a romantic heroine too pragmatic, a romantic hero too morally dubious, and a villain too attractive to remain fully subordinate to the romance vision. Though the dominant mode of *Cymbeline* is romance, the play contains what White describes as "a genuinely disturbing presentation of different versions of evil" (143).

Like others before him, White sees the pattern of *The Winter's Tale* the familiar shape of romance, oscillating between joy and disaster, with short and long time built into the "endless ending" (145). This play carries us from an opening glimpse of childhood innocence directly into a questioning and morally ambiguous world of paradise lost (147), becoming for White an almost schematic presentation of the "endless ending" and offering characters the possibility of eluding the past by denying its existence.

Though acknowledging that romance is a "synthesizing genre" encompassing a range of literary experiences normally isolated into other categories (143), White generally resists the critic's temptation to find evidence everywhere. Except, perhaps, in *The Tempest*, where his approach is less convincing and his interpretation of some characters and events unpleasantly extreme. While reiterating that *The Tempest* is a montage of romance materials, White sees the play as ambiguous in genre, a series of paradoxes: improbable yet naturalistic; static yet in perpetual motion; ending yet beginning, time-bound yet timeless; morally simple yet equivocal and inconclusive (161-2). He sees in the play tension derived from opposing perspectives, as an aloof classicism pulls against romance elements.

With its central image the sea, *The Tempest* sustains fundamentally opposed points of view: "intense moments encountered on the 'human shores' where people are caught up in their own social, moral, and emotional involvements, and simultaneously the 'eternal whisperings' of a vast amoral freedom which tends to trivialize human experiences" (162). However, White's presentation of Ferdinand as profligate roué, Caliban as eloquently and truly generous, and Prospero as too deeply associated with Antonio's evil is less easy to accept. His view of Caliban as a mirror of the dark side of Prospero: feelings of "sexual desire, resentment, and the bitter need for revenge and power" (166), fails to incorporate the curative influence of past time and the sense of resolution and forgiveness beginning the play.

For White, Prospero's moral status is so highly ambiguous that he and his motives possess an "Iago-like opaqueness" (168). And his reading of Caliban and Ferdinand remains contra-intuitive, foreign to typical audience reactions. Like his magical isle, White claims, Prospero mirrors the faults and virtues of those around him, though isolated by knowledge, experience, age, and time. "His presence casts across the play a wash of tired nostalgia, and a melancholy recognition of the poignant transience of life as of art" (168).

Obviously, White sees *The Tempest* as metadramatic, speaking cryptically of the process of creativity and the status of its own art. Inevitably, he interprets Ariel as the "limitless potential of the imagination harnessed briefly in shape and form" (172). Logically, then, Prospero's "magic island of art" becomes a figure for the play itself, as is Ariel whose creative inspiration fixes the ideal in the permanence capable of teasing us out of thought.

Despite the ambiguous tensions of this last romance, however, the critic cannot have it both ways. Logically, *The Tempest* cannot be both reductively allegorical and ambiguous and relative at the same time. Nor can it be simultaneously one of Shakespeare's greatest romances but also his most insistent anti-romance (174).

On balance, White's eloquent study of Shakespeare's use of romance sources, motifs and attitudes portrays a dramatist probing the heart and essential nature of his genre rather than simply reproducing dated conventions. Shakespeare in fact harnesses the traditions and mode of romance as both the raw materials of dramatic action and away for talking about and seeing that action. The contribution of *Let Wonder Seem Familiar*, then, lies not only in recognition of the need for judging Shakespearean transmogrified romance on its original terms but in its individual readings of the later romances, the problem comedies, and others mentioned above.

The seven chapters of this revised and expanded version of *Shakespeare and the Romance Ending* (privately printed in 1981) offer a credible sense of Shakespearean dramaturgy. Gracefully written, comprehensive and consistent, it applies the discipline of a unified source perspective with little jargon and elegant clarity. But for some half-dozen typographical errors, this excellent book so rewards close study and rereading that we may find it a staple of the shelves of Shakespearean criticism.

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