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LICENCE



MASTER



Année M2
Filière: Langues et Sociétés
Date: 15/04/25
Enseignant: R. Muller
Sujet: Commentaire de texte en
anglais

Svetlana ISHEVSKAYA

Nombre d'intercalaires employés :

Note sur
de 0 à 20

APPRECIATIONS EXPLIQUANT LA NOTE CHIFFREE

18/20 Brilliant

Ne pas
écrire dans
cette marge

Twelfth Night is the last of Shakespeare's cross-dressing comedies. It is known that the play received rather positive reactions. Having been written at the threshold of the seventeenth century, it represents the arrival of new aesthetics ~~combining~~ combining a happy comedy with a dark comedy, paving the way to further development of tragicomedy. Twelfth Night was written close to the end of Elizabethan reign, and therefore it explores certain ~~anxieties~~ ^{the} anxieties and fears associated with the years 1601, 1602. Thus, in this commentary we will explore

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Interested

how conflicting tendencies in Twelfth Night force the audience to reflect on social order and morality based on an act of ^{unwilling} fooling and (self-)deception. The scene presented for analysis (Act III scene 4 ll. 80-136) is a part of rising action of the play. Scene 4 of Act III is one of the longest in the play. It contains various forms of foolery and brings together several plot lines: Malvolio's tormenting, rivalry for Olivia's heart, her wooing of Cesario, etc. We will focus on Malvolio being tricked and treated like a madman.

To answer the question announced above we will first examine the way in which Christian and Pagan motives interact to fuel the discussion

on morality. Then, we will explore ~~who~~ is actually disrupting the order, whether it is Sir Toby and the company or it is Malvolvo. Finally, we will analyse the metatheatrical dimension of the play discovering if we are to be or not to be fooled.

Firstly, let us delve into ^{the} religious dimension of the scene as the very title of the play evokes Christian festivities (Epiphany) while its setting reminds of Saturnalian tradition (namely ~~drinking~~ feasting and ~~drinking the kanta of~~ ^{drinking} ~~the kanta of~~).

In Shakespeare's works as well as in the literary tradition of ^{the} Renaissance in general, love is commonly associated with sickness and madness. However, in Twelfth Night it acquires a more complex religious reading, as Malvolio is not affected by love, but by an excess of self-love and pride, ~~and~~ It is not only a tragic flaw of a character in the comedy, a sort of comic villain, but also a sin which creates conflict with Malvolio's supposed puritanism. Maria, Sir Toby and Fabian present and treat Malvolio as a sick mad man (l. 132 "My niece is already in the belief that he's mad"), possessed by the devil, i.e. ~~and~~ sinful (l. 82 "Leggon

himself possessed him") and even under a spell (l. 98 "Pray God he be not bewitched"). That is what happens right after the characters see that Malvolio is fully tricked by Maria: letter into believing that Olivia is in love with him. ^{yes, domestic irony} Despite her surprise obvious for the audience, Malvolio is certain of his charms and nothing can distract him from this self-absorption (ll. 89-91 "Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him. - Alas! Does she so?" ^{c> possibly said to himself}). Malvolio's earlier disapproval of disorder and festivities (Act II scene 3), which fueled the revenge plot, lead Sir Toby and Maria (possibly Master and Mistress of merrile) to fashion a purifying punishment. The latter is similar both to the known cure for madness (being kept in a dark room: l. 131 "we'll have him in a dark room and bound"), and to the ritual of holding candles in the dark (Epiphany season). ~~Malvolio~~

While Maria was the one at the origins of the plot against Malvolio, ~~the~~ Lord of merrile does, indeed, have a double identity in the play. Similarly to Viola and Sebastian, or Viola and her playing Cesario, Maria and Sir Toby represent



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en anglais

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in this scene the double-faced nature of Janus, a roman deity with two faces. Sir Toby and Maria are equally important in constructing the device, giving orders to members of the court and actors, establishing social order through evocation of hierarchy, admitting God's and angels' superiority (l. 115 "Get him to say his prayers". However, the question is who is actually asserting or disrupting social order.

In the second part of the analysis we will examine the ambivalence of reading of misrule and order. On the

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to
excellent
analysis
of scene

one hand, Sir Toby et al. are the source of disruption and disorder in the play. Sir Toby's tone is improperly patronizing (l. 109 'Why how now, my bawcock? (...) chuck') through use of childish terms and even ^{Fabian's} alliteration of soft hissing sounds ^{along with repetitions} suggest an attempt to hush, calm a baby down (l. 84 'Here he is, here he is how is't with you sir? How is't with you, man?'). Even though, Sir Toby is Olivia's kinsman and uncle, whereas Malvolio is only her steward, he is a gentleman and such patronizing attitude is rightfully offensive to him. ~~However~~

However, Malvolio himself disrupts the established social order in the scene, possibly ^{contemplating} ~~contemplating~~ to fire Fabian ~~once~~ once he becomes

✓ a count (l. 86 Go off, I discard you. Let me enjoy my private. Go off.). The feeling of superiority is also expressed through the use of you instead of thee and repetition of imperative sentences, even though he is not in the position to command Fabian or others. His trying to subvert the order of things at Olivia's court is intensified in his solemn exclamation "I am not of your element" (l. 119) followed by a threat in line 120: "You shall know more hereafter".

Analyze
Heide but
du long

Consequently, Sir Toby and Maria as master and Mistress of misrule ~~misrule~~ do not seek to permanently inverse social hierarchy and order but merely temporarily disrupt it in order to reveal the true identity or a hidden ^{more} sickness. The audience is made part of the device by the very title of the play Twelfth Night OR What You Will and other metatheatrical devices used by the author and potential performers, which we will examine in the following part.

Finally, Shakespeare is famous for his use of metatheatricity in order to elevate the complexity and ambiguity of ~~his~~ ^{his} plays.

While it is always one audience's choice whether to be or not to be fooled, theatre requires a certain level of willing suspension of disbelief. In the scene audience is invited to judge if Malvolio is ~~is~~ actually mad or not, even though we are aware of the fact that he is tricked into believing in Olivia's love. We laugh, but it is not absolute comic, as we laugh at Malvolio's vice, ~~and~~ Moreover, the ending of the passage foreshadows a much darker (both literally and figuratively) reading of Malvolio's treatment. Audience's laughter makes us accomplice of mischief, and a cruel one. Fabian's metatheatrical ~~line~~ line establishes that, despite the improbability, what is happening on stage is real, it is a part of the non-fiction world that audience represents: "If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction" (l. 124). The remark serves as a reminder for the audience to suspend their disbelief, but what is happening is, indeed, 'an improbable fiction' even for the characters, as it is a play within the play, a plot to trick Malvolio.

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13 On ne voit
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Characters themselves require some persuasion and directing. Hence, Maria takes on a role of ~~some~~ a playwright, an author of the device, and Sir Toby becomes a director of the scene commanding actors what to do or not to do (l. 92 "Go to, go to. Peace, peace, we must deal gently with him. Let me alone."). He insists on knowing the right way of playing the scene, especially using repetitions of 'let', setting the mood ('peace', 'gently'): 'Prishee hold thy peace, this is not the way' (l. 105). He

also is the one who explains to the actors and the audience what will follow, staging the ~~game~~ punishment in the dark room and promises to reveal what is meant to be revealed by the play within the play.
(... Come, we'll have him in a dark room and bound.
(...) We may carry it thus for our pleasure ~~and~~ ^(...)
till our very pastime (...) prompt us to have mercy on him; at which we will bring the clevice to the bar and crown thee for a finder of madmen.
Thus, the audience becomes a co-protagonist and is invited to reflect on a supposedly absurd situation through the lens of moral sickness. Consequently, Sir Toby, being

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a self-appointed stage manager, also becomes a doctor, whose role is to cure the madness, or the vice both in Malvolso and in ^{the} audience. Thus, he prescribes the treatment for ~~the disease~~ the disease which Malvolso suffers from (namely, a dark room for treating madmen) and his patronizing tone (l. 109-112 'Why how now, ~~my~~ my bawcock (...) By, biddly, come with me') acquires a new dimension, apart from being attributed to the Lord of Mordor.

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In conclusion, Twelfth Night, or What you Will echoes Shakespeare's recurrent theme of self-reflection, reevaluation and renewal of society and identity characteristic of ~~the~~ Renaissance culture. It does so through mannerist aesthetics of illusion and multiple points of attention, distorting the vision. The audience is ^{willingly} tricked to believe in their inherent superiority, but they also become ^{unwilling} subject of a thorough examination in terms of morality and immorality of certain actions. ~~The choice~~
The choice of prose for the ^{passage} ~~scene~~ intensifies

excellent
TB
new

TB!!

the realistic dimension of one scene which
creates proximity with the audience, offering
an opportunity to experience ~~the~~ judgement
~~of~~ and ~~question~~ ~~our own~~
our own self-deception in moral matters
surrounded by what Bakhtin defined
as carnivalesque, or assertion of freedom
and subversion of authorities and
hierarchy.

copie brillante !

TB idee

démonstration solide,
fine, subtile

à belle prise de
recul dans le cercle

ligne directrice intéressante
à laquelle vous revenez
avec fréquence à fluidité

Bravo!!

pas "the" qui montre d'autres idées
aurait pu être abordées :
ques de la folie comme poison
démagogie parodie de poésie
burlesque dégradé, pas métaphores
intéressantes. Mais le temps est limité
donc on ne peut pas tout dire. Votre copie
est très bonne. On aime les idées.