

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER (TRANSGRESSION) IN *THE WINTER'S TALE*

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Critics are turning to Shakespeare's Romances, and in particular *The Winter's Tale*, with increasing frequency. Both the play and its individual characters are gaining unprecedented popularity within the academic community. Topics of recent publications<sup>1</sup> range from Kirstie Rosenfield's simple assertion that "the specter of witchcraft haunts the text as easily as it does in *Macbeth*" (95) to those questions which Theodora Jankowski raises in her article about a possible lesbian relationship between Hermione and Paulina: "where was Hermione kept so secretly for sixteen years . . . ? And, for sixteen years, did Leontes, dense though we know him to be, never have *any* suspicions that his wife was living at Paulina's?" (300).<sup>2</sup> These points, however interesting, are not the key issues which I would like to discuss. Instead, I propose a re-reading of the play in terms of gender (transgression), drawing on characters' behaviour and interaction and analysing how the transgression of gender divisions helps to lead the play to a slightly lighter ending than its beginning might suggest.<sup>3</sup> The marriages of the protagonists, Leontes and Hermione, and Antigonus and Paulina, are destroyed in the course of the play by a third character: Polixenes, King of Bohemia and their trusted friend. Polixenes's presence is the crux for Leontes's jealousy and leads to the destruction of both Leontes and his family. As a result of Leontes's mad accusations, his little son dies, his baby daughter seems to be lost forever and Hermione is declared dead. In addition, Polixenes wreaks havoc on Antigonus, Paulina and their children, because they have the courage to defy Leontes's unjust madness. Antigonus accepts the fact that as a man he cannot heal Leontes, but rather Paulina is better suited to this task. In the end, neither Leontes, nor Antigonus can trust their wives, the latter sacrificing his life and being replaced by Camillo.

As with Othello, the other principal Shakespearean character famously overcome by jealousy, Leontes descends into madness early in the play. In contrast to the famous Moor, however, the Sicilian king's mental decline swiftly takes up only a short fraction of Act 1 Scene 2. *The Winter's Tale* clearly focuses rather on his healing process than the development of his jealousy throughout the whole play. To illustrate my argument, I will briefly reiterate the underlying plot of Acts 1-3 and Act 5, and then analyse these scenes.

The beginning of the play sees Leontes, King of Sicily, and his heavily pregnant wife, Hermione, almost at the end of a nine-month long visit by Polixenes. While Leontes cannot persuade his friend to stay longer, Hermione convinces him to do so. Suddenly overtaken with jealousy, Leontes unjustly accuses his wife of having committed adultery with Polixenes. Hermione herself and the Sicilian courtiers, Camillo, Antigonus and other lords, attempt to prove her innocence, but to no avail. Camillo warns Polixenes of Leontes and flees with him to Bohemia while Hermione is imprisoned and then gives birth to a daughter. Paulina, Antigonus's wife, subsequently takes it upon herself to convince Leontes that Hermione's daughter is his legitimate child, but her endeavours also fail. As a consequence, Antigonus takes the newborn baby to a foreign shore and Hermione faces her husband in court. Leontes will take advice from no one, not even from the oracle of Delphi, until Mamilius, their firstborn son, dies of grief over the loss of his mother. Upon hearing of Mamilius's death this, Hermione faints. She is then carried outside and also reported dead. Suddenly, Leontes repents and even asks for Paulina's scolding. Sixteen years later, the audience still witnesses him grieving for his wife, son and daughter, believing that he was solely responsible for their deaths. Leontes learns that Florizel, Polixenes's son, has arrived in Sicily with his fiancée, in fact, Leontes's daughter disguised as a shepherdess who strangely reminds him of Hermione. On their visit, Paulina engineers a reunion of father, mother and daughter.

The present essay will address the motivations behind Leontes's jealousy and rage against his wife Hermione. By exploring the ways in which the courtiers and Paulina defend Hermione against false accusations and how Leontes overcomes his destructive feelings, the essay examines how relationships between characters are severed and re-formed. Instead of considering Leontes's healing process in terms of Christian allegory (England 1991) or Marian mythology (Vanita 2000), this article analyses both the impact of gender relations between characters and also the contrasting representations of marriage in the play as exemplified by Leontes's dual role of king and husband. Through a gender studies perspective, Eugene England argues that "*The Winter's Tale* profoundly parallels *King Lear*, so directly it can serve as a kind of gloss on *Lear*" (69).<sup>4</sup> However, Stephen Orgel only considers the characters' biological sex and not their social gender when he states that "[Leontes's disastrous jealousy] is the consequence of women entering the world of male friendship" (17).<sup>5</sup> Yet, none of the critics links the process which Leontes has to endure in order to be reunited with both his wife and daughter at the end of the play to the gender of the characters around him. Before Leontes can be healed properly, he needs the opportunity to purge himself of bad humours by taking out his rage on a just cause. To this end, he chooses to vent his anger on someone who

willingly oversteps the boundaries set by gender and social conventions after all other 'normal' engendered attempts have failed. In the midst of this anger, only one female character, who actively steps in the king's way, can make him see reason. By adopting a typically masculine strength and technique of arguing with Leontes, yet never donning a male (dis)guise like Rosaline in *As You Like It* or Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, Paulina purges him of his mad jealousy. Paulina's role in *The Winter's Tale* provides an alternative and challenging construction of gender roles in the play.

In Act 1,<sup>6</sup> King Leontes and Queen Hermione enter with Polixenes for the first time. To convince Polixenes to stay, Hermione only speaks in response to the question "[t]ongue-tied, our queen?" (1.2.28). Having been silent thus far because she "had thought, sir, to have held my peace until / You had drawn oaths from him not to stay" (1.2.28-9), she now skillfully masters the challenge presented to her by her husband. It is this brilliance which serves to fuel Leontes's jealousy, as she, a woman, succeeds where he, a man, could not. Hermione states that she has "spoke to th' purpose twice [now]. / The one for ever earned a royal husband, / Th'other, for some while a friend" (1.2.105-7) and gives her hand to Polixenes, words and actions which echo her response to Leontes when he wooed her (1.2.101-4). This could be considered the catalyst for the Sicilian king's descent into fanatical jealousy and ultimately insanity. Hermione's mastery of words encouraged their marriage, so how should Leontes now interpret the significance of this 'craft' being enacted upon another male, namely, Polixenes? One might also argue that Hermione's skillful eloquence has previously seduced Polixenes and established a relationship too close for Leontes's comfort (1.2.107-17, 181-3, and 281-93). The Sicilian king even starts to suspect that the unborn child might not be his own.

Marriage for a royal couple raises the inevitable question of heirs and succession. Polixenes has been with his friends for nine months, a period of time long enough to father a child, the precise crime which Leontes suspects him of. Indeed, this "entertainment / [Leontes's] bosom likes not, nor [his] brows" (1.2.117-18). Leontes's accusation not only signifies the erosion of his usually rational thought as a king, but also to the love he feels for his wife as a husband. Thus, he turns to their firstborn male child, Mamilius, for affirmation of his fatherhood. Hermione cannot provide him with such 'gender ascribed' reassurance since Leontes recognises that her feminine words can no longer be trusted. This craft with words has now been tainted by Hermione because she was successful where her husband was not. However, Leontes's troubled mind clearly misinterprets this, a fact which he does not willingly acknowledge. He also starts to mistrust the attempts of others to prove that Mamilius is his son and, therefore, heir

to his throne (1.2.121, 128-30, 206). Neither can he quell his doubts about his wife, despite her show of love “in our brother’s welcome” (1.2.172).<sup>7</sup> Moreover, he observes both Hermione and Polixenes from afar (1.2.175-6, 184-204). Later, seeking to expose Hermione’s supposed adultery, Leontes questions the courtier Camillo about the cause of Polixenes’s changed decision (1.2.210-13, 216-18). Leontes suspects that other members of the royal court are already aware of his cuckoldry, but Camillo cannot understand such folly and consequently tries to reassure the king that a trusted friend’s extended visit is simply what it appears to be (1.2.213-30). Yet, Leontes does not believe him and responds by insulting Camillo (1.2.230-64) before he imparts his supposed ‘knowledge’ and ‘proofs’ of Hermione’s infidelity (1.2.264-75, 281-93). Camillo is enraged by such an accusation and tries to reason with Leontes (1.2.276-81, 293-5). While Camillo ultimately recognises that he cannot sway the king, and thus seemingly accords with his mad fantasies (1.2.303-46) in order to save his own life (1.2.344-5), it is the very fact of the male courtier’s natural decision to side with his queen that fuels the king’s suspicions further still (1.2.322-30). This scene exemplifies how Leontes responds negatively to a male attempt to defend Hermione’s honour. As a man, as opposed to a king, he is thrown into emotional insecurity and self-doubt as to whether his wife loved someone else, however fleetingly. The audience’s sympathy for Hermione grows as they witness not only Leontes’s increasingly blind jealousy, but also his mistrust of the men who dare to defend her.

In 2.1, Leontes enters together with Antigonus and other courtiers at about 2.1.33, but only at 2.1.62 does the king finally inform his wife of what she is accused. Once more, Leontes implicates Camillo in his wife’s adulterous crime: “that false villain” (2.1.48) was the adulterer’s “help in this, his pander” (2.1.46, also 2.1.90). After Hermione is brought to the prison, Antigonus, similarly to Camillo in 1.2, tries to talk some sense into Leontes and predicts the latter’s sufferings:

Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice  
Prove violence, in the which three great ones suffer,  
Yourself, your Queen, your son. (2.1.126-9)

He even consents that he would “keep my stables where / I lodge my wife [Paulina]; . . . / For every inch of woman in the world / Ay, every dram of woman’s flesh, is false / If she [Hermione] be.” (2.1.134-5, 137-8). Antigonus is a courtier and advisor to the king and can very likely afford horses of high value, which would be stabled in excellent conditions. If Hermione were proved guilty of adultery, Antigonus would simply rank his horses higher than Paulina, in that he would even keep them in the house, effectively displacing his wife due to her untrustworthiness. In the overall social class distinctions

depicted in the play, horses certainly signify wealth, since low characters such as Autolycus, who is nothing more than a rogue when he first enters, must be content with walking. In addition, horses are commonly linked with male activities such as hunting and warfare. Thus, the argument which Antigonus employs immediately raises issues of gender and social status. Antigonus tries in vain to exercise his male influence over his wife, thus failing to make the king see reason. When Leontes attempts to silence both him and the other lords present in this scene, Antigonus swears that he would even kill his daughters if Hermione proved to be unchaste, so that they cannot repeat the queen's crime (2.1.144-9). In so doing, he renounces all the female members of his family. Although enraged by the outburst and by Antigonus's belief in Hermione, Leontes takes no action against him. After Hermione is imprisoned and has given birth to their daughter, he responds with unnecessary force. He calls Antigonus a "traitor" (2.3.81), threatens him with hanging (2.3.108-9), and urges him to either burn or abandon the newborn baby, Perdita (2.3.130-41; 2.3.173-82), lest Leontes execute both him and his wife Paulina (2.3.169-72). Thus, his fanatical jealousy threatens to rip Paulina and Antigonus's family apart as it has divided Leontes's own.

In 2.1., the king longs for the lords' approval, but merely receives contempt. Only when Leontes tells them of the messengers, whom he has sent to the oracle of Apollo, do the lords seem to approve his actions (2.1.150-200). Leontes also insults his wife and thus makes her supposed transgression public. He claims that the lords should "mark her well" (2.1.65), since "she's not honest" (2.1.68) and has a "without-door form" (2.1.69), and, worst of all, "she's an adulteress" (2.1.78, 2.1.88) and "a bed-swerger" (2.1.93). Yet, Hermione chooses not to plead her innocence, nor does she weep for her own cause, but, instead, consoles her ladies with the words "[d]o not weep, good fools, / There is no cause." (2.1.118-19). Thus, Hermione does not resort to using perceived feminine weakness in her defence: "I am not prone to weeping, as our sex / Commonly are" (2.1.108-9), but in this instance acknowledges that transgressing her gender role ". . . Is for [her] better grace" (2.1.121-2). Leontes's wife purposefully adopts the typical male characteristics of strength and endurance when she realises that her husband no longer trusts her usual female behaviour or her words. Hermione's transgression of gender boundaries thus allows Leontes to perceive, albeit not to believe, the strength of her honesty but not the weakness of his male advisors.

Paulina, the last of these defenders, enters the scene in 2.2. As Antigonus's wife and Hermione's trusted friend and confidant, she understands the nature of certain issues which can arise in marriage. However, unlike Hermione, she firmly relies on her husband to trust her. Thus, Antigonus and Paulina occupy an equal standing. In

contrast, the royal marriage is problematised by the fact that Hermione is simultaneously Leontes's wife and his subject.

Previously, Paulina has displayed masculine characteristics when she visited Hermione in prison. She is able to persuade the jailor to allow her to see Hermione, to fetch Emilia, the queen's lady-in-waiting, and finally takes the newborn baby away with her after having convinced the jailor by saying "Do not you fear; upon mine honour, I / Will stand betwixt you and danger" (2.2.64-5). In this scene, she manages to convince the jailor of Hermione's innocence and acts independently. Having been enraged by Leontes's unjust behaviour, she is now acting rationally and courageously. Paulina's readiness to cross gender divides becomes apparent not only in her battle of words with the jailor and later on with Leontes, but also in her use of the masculine-engendered terms of wit (2.2.51) and honour (2.2.64), which further emphasise the chivalric discourse which she employs throughout the play.

In 2.3, Paulina confronts Leontes with his newborn daughter. Here, Paulina's behaviour is clearly shaped by her relationships with Antigonus and Leontes, and thus works in conjunction with the perceived role of the Renaissance woman. Yet, the outcome does not favour her and Leontes voices his horror and utter disgust when he calls her a "mankind witch," a "most intelligencing bawd," a "callet of boundless tongue," a "gross hag," and refers to her as Antigonus's "lewd-tongued wife" (2.3.42, 67-8, 75-6, 81, 90-91, 94, 107, 159, 171) before Paulina begins her verbal fencing with him and brilliantly masters this challenge. When the king becomes aware of Paulina's presence, he calls her "that audacious lady" (2.3.42) and directs his rage towards her husband, Antigonus. Known for his sense of justice, Antigonus is forced to shield himself from the king's accusations, but Paulina is quick to defend him. In his support of his wife, Antigonus compares her with a horse, a noble, gracious animal (2.3.51-2). In her two subsequent speeches (2.3.52-8 and 2.3.59-61) Paulina defines herself in terms of typical male professions such as "servant," "physician" and "counsellor" and, furthermore, challenges Leontes to trial by combat in defence of Hermione's honour, as if she were a man. Thus, Paulina is cross-talking, echoing the actor's necessary cross-dressing, and is consequently severely rebuked by Leontes. Since women were performed by men on stage, the humour in this dramatic staging of gender roles would be immediately obvious to a Renaissance audience. Leontes goes on to call Paulina "Dame Partlett" (2.3.75), a "crone" (2.3.76), "a callet of boundless tongue" (2.3.90-91), a "dam" (2.3.94), "Lady Margery" (2.3.159) and a "lewd-tongued wife" (2.3.171). He thus alludes to a Renaissance perception of women and their verbal aggressiveness in which the tongue was regarded as a woman's natural weapon, later exemplified in texts such as

George Webbe's *The Araignment of an Unruly Tongue* (1619). His remarks also evoke another literary tradition: that of gossiping women who rage against their husbands and against men in general, for instance, the contempt of marriage portrayed in Rowlands's *Tis Merrie when Gossips meete* (1620). If we consider both of these examples in relation to the events of *The Winter's Tale*, it becomes apparent that Leontes dismisses Paulina's womanly scolding simply because her tongue is "too sharp," whereas he finds his own "bitter" dismissal of her to be entirely justified. The fact that Paulina and Hermione appear to stick together (as gossiping women were perceived to do) fuels Leontes's belief that Paulina's rage towards men remains unfounded.

This re-enforces Leontes's denial of gender boundaries as he perceives Paulina's reaction to his behaviour not for what it is meant to be (something intended to cure his jealousy and to prevent the break-up of his family), but rather for what it is (something condemnable which subordinates him to a woman). He takes his accusations further still by addressing Paulina as "a most intelligencing bawd" (2.3.68), "a callet" (2.3.90) and a "midwife" (2.3.159). With these terms the king expresses again his willingness to implicate her in the unjust charges against his wife. He believes her to be guilty of helping Hermione and Polixenes to commit adultery both by acting as a go-between and by aiding them to hide their relationship from Leontes. In his eyes, Paulina is as guilty as Hermione of turning him into a cuckold since she convinces him that the queen's newborn child is his own. Knowing that these accusations are mere mad fantasies, Paulina defends both herself and the queen against Leontes, thereby creating a pair of female figures who stand together against male tyranny and Leontes's insanity. Paralleling other female characters in Shakespeare's own plays, for example, Desdemona and Emilia, or Beatrice and Hero in *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, Paulina and Hermione fight against unjust male behaviour driven by unfounded jealousy.

In addition, Paulina progressively assumes masculine qualities, whereas her husband Antigonus adopts supposedly characteristically feminine weaknesses (Dash 146). During the Renaissance, the effeminate man was condemned alongside the mannish woman. In the contemporary, anonymous pamphlets *Hic Mulier* (1620) and *Haec Vir* (1620) gender transgressions were denounced along with women who wear masculine clothes and male fops, respectively. Remarkably, the anonymous author of *Haec-Vir* partly defends the "mankind" woman, as Linda Woodbridge explains, by "characterising her behaviour as a response to male effeminacy: *somebody* has to wear the breeches" (147).<sup>8</sup> This assumption of masculine authority is echoed in *The Winter's Tale* when Paulina realises that she must face the king alone as the lords prove too docile to stand up to him. As a result, she is referred to as "a mankind witch," an insult which

effectively unsexes her. Leontes sees her as neither woman nor man, but rather as a potentially dangerous threat to his authority as the King of Sicily.

A contemporary discussion of gender roles in witchcraft can be found in the *Daemonologie*. Written by King James I under his pseudonym Epistemon, the *Daemonologie* considers magic and necromancy to be separated from sorcery and witchcraft according to gender divides. Whereas magic is practised out of curiosity solely by men, witchcraft, performed only by women, serves either to gain fortune or to exact revenge. From Epistemon's point of view, witches are evil and "their whole practises are either to hurte men and their gudes . . . for satisfying of their cruell mindes in the former, or else . . . to satisfie their greedie desire in the last poynt" (35). Leontes echoes these beliefs when he claims that Antigonus's wife must be the worst and most evil being of which he can conceive: a "mankind witch" to be punished and burned.

In 3.2, during Hermione's trial Paulina confronts Leontes a second time, informing him that his son, Mamilius, and his wife, Hermione, have died (3.2.170). This scene foregrounds the change in the relationship between Paulina and Leontes. In her un-gendered state Paulina asserts herself courageously for almost forty lines (3.2.173-99 and 201-12). Only in this capacity can she triumph over Leontes who ultimately collapses and admits her moral superiority when he says "Go on, go on. / Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt'rest." (3.2.212-15). Thus, through her transcendence of gender, Paulina finally assumes her true feminine role. Now she can display the typical female characteristics which she has suppressed throughout the play. She even goes so far as to call herself "a foolish woman" (3.2.225). Furthermore, Paulina now appears unable to rein her passion, and thus seemingly embodies the exact stereotypical role of the Renaissance woman which she had previously subverted. However, as it comes to light in Act 5.3, Paulina only acts this role. While her half-spoken sentence "The love I bore your Queen – lo, fool again!" (3.2.226) may betray the fact that she has an ulterior motive, faced with a repentant Leontes, it is by apparently succumbing to stereotypically feminine emotional outbursts that Paulina conceals from him her skilful ploy. Their power roles are indeed reversed by the end of this scene. Whereas Paulina rejects her identification as a "mankind witch," as Leontes denounced her in Act 2, she is now permitted by him to go on and scold him even more when he utters "Go on, go on. / Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt'rest" (3.2.212-40). At this point, Leontes is in no doubt of Hermione's death. Yet, as the last scene in the play reveals, Hermione has been in hiding for sixteen years while her death was in fact a strategic ploy to enable Leontes to recognise that he has been the only unfaithful character in the play.

The restoration of the marital status quo in Act 5 is further reinforced by the return of Perdita, whom the audience learnt in Act 4 had been found and raised by a shepherd after Antigonus left her on the shore of Bohemia. Paulina's use of magic in the reconciliation of Hermione with both her husband and her daughter culminates in the return of Perdita and Florizel, Polixenes's son. Her double role in restoring familial and gender roles effectively brings the play to its happy ending. In 5.1, she appears as Leontes's conscience, whereas in 5.3 she partly fulfils the role of a witch. In this earlier scene, all the other courtiers want Leontes to marry again despite Paulina's objection (5.1.1-84). The ultimate evidence of Leontes's renewed trust lies in the fact that he allows her to choose him a second wife (5.1.49-53).

In the last scene of the play, when Paulina makes Hermione's statue come to life she, with Leontes's permission, freely adopts the role of a witch (5.3.80-91, 94-6) and her supposed power becomes in his eyes "an art as lawful as eating" (5.3.109-11). Significantly, Paulina is now declared a widow (5.2.58-77, 5.3.132-5), but in opposition to the Renaissance perception of a widow's status, portrayed, for example, in George Chapman's *The Widow's Tears* (1612) and Lording Barry's *Ram-Alley* (1611), she exhibits its stereotypical freedom but does not turn into a woman with a lascivious eye for men. Woodbridge explains that this stereotype often included "many an incontinent widow marr[ying] away her late husband's fortune, neglect[ing] his children, and by her lewd behaviour bring[ing] his name posthumously into ridicule" (178). Paulina has spent sixteen years on her own in many varied roles: she cared for Leontes, Hermione and for her three daughters without a husband. Once it is finally established that Antigonus has died, something which Paulina had only suspected, she desires to mourn for him until her own death. Yet, Leontes destroys this hope by marrying her to Camillo (5.3.143-6). In this exceptional scene, he is able to use his power over her, not only as a king, but also as a man. This indicates why Paulina's voice is no longer heard after these lines and also the rather abrupt end of the play. As mentioned above, the marital balance is certainly restored at this point, but it comes at a price.

In conclusion, it can be stated that gender transgression constitutes the catalyst for the play's 'happy' ending. The male courtiers, especially Camillo and Antigonus, cannot prevent Leontes from succumbing to jealousy, but rather incite it further by arguing against the falsity of the king's assumptions. As men themselves, they cannot cross those boundaries which Leontes has set for his court in terms of established gendered behaviour, and, therefore, they are bound to fail in the process of purging the king's madness. Since their masculine attempts prove a real threat to Leontes, the two male courtiers are removed from the Sicilian court. Furthermore, their masculinity

prevents Leontes from taking the same action against them as he would in the case of a woman overstepping the boundaries of femininity. This can be seen in his reaction to Paulina's transgression of her 'natural' role and her adoption of male rationalism when Leontes rages against her, calls her names and even threatens to have her burned. The Sicilian king needs a 'just cause' upon which to vent his anger, which none of the male courtiers can provide. Hermione cannot fulfil this role either, since she is the reason, however fantastical, why Leontes's roles as both husband and king are called into doubt. Leontes and Hermione's relationship requires a different gender balance to that of Leontes and Paulina, an outsider. In addition to being a real mother to her own daughters, Paulina acts as a mother-figure to the king (in a scolding way in Hermione's presence and in a caring way during her sixteen-year-long absence). Thus, Paulina overpasses Hermione in bringing Leontes to his senses again. The play never calls into question these 'true' feminine roles; rather, it is what Leontes perceives as 'correct female' behaviour that is called into doubt, destroyed and reconstructed. This becomes apparent in a poignant way at the end of the play when he offers Paulina in marriage to Camillo. Leontes rejects Paulina's newly-found independence and forces her to accept subordination to a man through marriage, thus subjecting her both to a king and to a husband. In contrast to England, for example, and his reading of *The Winter's Tale* as a gloss on *King Lear* (69), I advocate for a re-consideration of the play on its own terms before drawing any parallels with other plays. Natural and assumed genders are of vital importance to the construction of character relations in *The Winter's Tale*.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For example, see Dash (1981: 133-52); Erickson (1982); Woodbridge (1984); Rose (1991); Wolf (1994); Orgel (1996); Snyder (1999); Hackett (2000); Vanita (2000); Jankowski in Callaghan (2001: 299-319); Lim (2001); Rosenfield (2002); Alfar (2003); Foakes (2003: 191-95).

<sup>2</sup> Author's emphasis.

<sup>3</sup> This article is based on a previously-published student essay entitled "Paulina - witch, shrew or obedient wife?" by Grin Verlag in Munich, Germany (2006).

<sup>4</sup> See also Foakes (2003) who compares the function of Paulina to that of Prospero from *The Tempest*.

<sup>5</sup> See also Alfar (2003), Rose (1991), Rosenfield (2002), Snyder (1999), Woodbridge (1984) and Jankowski in Callaghan (2001).

<sup>6</sup> All references to lines and acts are according to the edition by Stephen Orgel in the Oxford Shakespeare Series.

<sup>7</sup> I concede that this line can be read in either a negative or positive meaning. However, in combination with Leontes's following speech about Sir Smile and men's gates, bags and baggage, I understand it in a negative way. He accuses his wife of adultery and reproaches her that her heartfelt welcome of Polixenes (so heartfelt that they conceive a child) lessens the love she feels for her husband. The more she turns to Polixenes and spends time with him, the less she loves Leontes.

<sup>8</sup> Author's emphasis.