



**SHAKESPEARE'S MASTERY OF PLOT AND COMEDY IN
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**
SHAKESPEARE'İN OLAY ÖRGÜSÜ VE KOMEDİDEKİ USTALIĞI:
YOK YERE YAYGARA

Sibel İZMİR

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Atılım Üniversitesi, Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Asst. Prof. Dr., Atılım University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, English Language and Literature
sibel.izmir@atilim.edu.tr / sibeleceizmir@gmail.com
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7821-6328>

Atıf/Citation

İzmir, S. (2021). "Shakespeare's Mastery of Plot and Comedy in
Much Ado About Nothing". *Sanat Dergisi*, (37), 99-109.
Araştırma makalesi/Research article
Doi: <http://doi.org/10.47571/ataunigsfd.754835>

Abstract

It is a well-known fact that William Shakespeare, just like many of his contemporaries, was influenced by earlier literary and non-literary sources while he was writing his plays. However, Shakespeare did not remain true to the sources by which he was inspired neither in terms of content nor form. Much Ado About Nothing, which he wrote by making use of the features of New Comedy genre that had emerged in the Ancient Greece, is undoubtedly an indicative of his mastery of plot and comedy. The playwright, while utilizing the genre of New Comedy, brought novelties to the play showing his genius and he knitted, so to speak, the plot structure in a conscientious manner. This study aims to analyse the mastery of Shakespeare in creating the plot structure and comedy, to show the features of the New Comedy he made use of and to investigate the elements which are purely Shakespearean in Much Ado About Nothing.

Öz

William Shakespeare'in, pek çok çağdaşı gibi, oyunlarını yazarken daha önce yazılmış olan edebi ve edebi olmayan kaynaklardan etkilenmiş olduğu bilinen bir gerçektir. Ne var ki Shakespeare, ilham aldığı kaynaklara ne içerik ne biçem açısından sadık kalmıştır. Antik Yunan'da ortaya çıkmış olan Yeni Komedi türünün özelliklerinden yararlanarak yazdığı Yok Yere Yaygara adlı oyunu, Shakespeare'in hiç şüphesiz olay örgüsü ve komedideki ustalığının bir göstergesidir. Adı geçen oyunda, Yeni Komedi türünden faydalanırken kendi dehasını da ortaya koyarak oyuna yenilikler getiren yazar, olay örgüsünü adeta ilmek ilmek örmüştür. Bu çalışma, Yok Yere Yaygara isimli oyunda Shakespeare'in olay örgüsü ve komedi yaratmadaki ustalığını incelemeyi, oyunu yazarken Yeni Komedi türünün hangi özelliklerinden faydalandığını göstermeyi ve oyunda tamamen Shakespeare'e özgü olan öğeleri araştırmayı hedeflemektedir.

Key words: Much Ado About Nothing, Shakespeare, New Comedy, Shakespearean Comedy.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yok Yere Yaygara, Shakespeare, Yeni Komedi, Shakespeare Komedisi.

Introduction

The Plot and New Comedic Devices

William Shakespeare, just like many of his contemporaries, was affected by earlier literary and non-literary sources while he was writing his plays. However, he did not remain completely loyal to the sources by which he was inspired neither in terms of content nor form. *Much Ado About Nothing*, which he wrote by making use of the features of New Comedy genre that had emerged in the Ancient Greece, is undoubtedly an indicative of his mastery of plot and comedy. The playwright, while utilizing the genre of New Comedy, brought novelties to the play showing his genius and he almost knitted the plot structure in a conscientious manner. This study aims to analyse the mastery of Shakespeare in creating the plot structure and comedy, to show the features of the New Comedy he made use of and to investigate the elements which are purely Shakespearean in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Much Ado About Nothing is believed to have been written in mid or late 1598. The 1600 edition of the play claims that the play has been “sundrie times publicly acted” (McEachern, 2006: 110). Since many references to the play have survived, it is supposed that the play was a popular one. There were already records of several performances of the play at the court of King James I (Boyce, 1996: 453). The main plot of the play, i.e., Hero-Claudio plot, is an example of an old European tradition dating to the classical times that includes stories in which “a lover is deceived into believing that his beloved is unfaithful” (Boyce, 1996: 452-453). The sources of the play are claimed to include Ludovico Ariosto’s massive poem *Orlando Furioso*, a story by Matteo Bandello and a collection of tales named *The Rocke of Regard* by George Whetstone.

Undoubtedly, Shakespeare is one of the greatest men of genius who not only made use of Ancient dramatic conventions and but also paved the way for the succeeding playwrights with his innovations. The effects of the New Comedy of Menander (c. 342–292 BC) the Greek playwright, which is different from the Old Comedy of Aristophanes (c. 450–c. 385 BC), are explicit in Shakespeare’s comedies. As a matter of fact, the comedy of manners first originated in the New Comedy which was further developed by the Roman playwrights Plautus and Terence in the third and second centuries BC. As M. H. Abrams states, New Comedy and the plays of Plautus and Terence generally dealt with:

“The vicissitudes of young lovers and included what became the stock characters of much later comedy, such as the clever servant, old and stodgy parents, and the wealthy rival. The English comedy of manners was early exemplified by Shakespeare’s Love’s Labour’s Lost and Much Ado about Nothing, and was given a high polish in Restoration comedy.” (1660–1700) (2009: 49)

Much Ado about Nothing carries the tradition of New Comedy as it is evident in its structural organization, its use of eavesdropping, disguise and mistaken identity (Riehle, 1990: 222). As pointed out by Marjorie Garber, the play “*is indeed in many ways Shakespeare's great play about gossip. Everything is overheard, misheard, or constructed on purpose for eavesdropping*” (2004: 375) Moreover, the play nearly approaches to tragedy and Shakespeare clearly aims to create tragicomic effects and emotions like he does in most of his other comedies which are tragic in nature: the heroine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* was near to be raped, there are constant death threats over Egeon in *The Comedy of Errors*, over Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, over Claudio in *Measure for Measure*, and over Prospero in *The Tempest*, and similarly there are “the apparent deaths of Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*, of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*, and of Innogen in *Cymbeline*” (Wells, 2017: 39). Thus, the title of the play, *Much Ado About Nothing* is obviously ironic as it attempts to deny the existence of serious moral issues which would almost turn into tragedy (Riehle, 1990: 222), such as the moral accusations of Claudio against Hero and her chastity, leaving her during the wedding ceremony, the pretended death of Hero and Beatrice commanding Benedick of killing Claudio in a duel.

The play is also abundant with intrigues. Robert Miola defines the play as a “comedy of intrigue”. He refers to Kenneth Muir who regarded the play as a subtler version of *The Taming of the Shrew* “transposed from farce to high comedy” (qtd in Miola, 1994: 79) considering that in *Much Ado About Nothing* both Benedick and Beatrice need to be tamed. More importantly, Miola claims that the influence of New Comedy enabled Shakespeare to organize his material and set it in Messina.

“New Comedy is present here as a complex legacy of character, convention, and form, deeply possessed and fluently manipulated. The dramaturgical principle of paired opposites, operative in the contrasting siblings, Don Pedro and Don John, organizes the main events of the play. The desired and legitimated virgo, replete with Italian resonances, becomes Hero, fit match for Claudio, a partially regenerated adulescens. Classical precedents shape the courtship by proxy that begins the play as well as the various eavesdroppings that come later. New Comedic form governs much of the action: the play works towards the false anagnorisis of Hero's infidelity and the fractured wedding; these events set up the final recognition of Hero's innocence and the true nuptials.” (Miola, 1994: 80)

When the characteristic features of New Comedy and Shakespearean Comedy are taken in terms of plot structure, it can be observed that one of the innovations Shakespeare has brought in *Much Ado About Nothing* is in his plot. In a typical New Comedy, the plot is structured around a young man who does his utmost to marry a girl in spite of the strong oppositions of his father. The girl is usually a slave about to be pushed into prostitution and the son finally attains his goal and gets the girl as soon as it is revealed that the girl is actually the lost daughter of a wealthy Athenian. As indicated by Oscar Brockett, “*the entire action, then, rests on a misunderstanding, which, when cleared up, resolves the conflict*” (2014: 36). In *Much Ado About Nothing* as well, the entire action still rests on a misunderstanding; yet the manner the misunderstanding is created differs. In Shakespeare's play, the misunderstanding is intentionally created by

the malcontent of the play, the bastard, Don John. A series of conflicts appear which has a “pseudo-fatal” effect on Hero as she assumes the role of a dead victim. The conflict is resolved when Hero is morally “acquitted” in the eyes of Claudio and the society and when it is illuminated that she has never been disloyal and has not actually died. Equally important novelty in the plot structure is the subplot of Beatrice and Benedick, beginning as a (seemingly) love-hate relationship and ending with true love.

The Legacy of New Comedy and Shakespearean Innovations

The plot of *Much Ado About Nothing* revolves centrally around four young people, soon to become lovers, in the Italian town of Messina. Leonato, a respectable nobleman and governor, lives with his young daughter Hero, his sharp-witted niece Beatrice and his brother, Antonio (Beatrice’s father). The play’s opening is marked with a scene in which Leonato is seen to be preparing to welcome his friend named Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon, and two brave soldiers, Claudio and Benedick back from a war (with minimum “bloodshed”). Don John, who is Don Pedro’s illegitimate brother, is also among the guests and the two brothers have just reconciled. Thus, the space of the soldiers shifts from a bitter world of realities where there was a war to an idyllic world. Such a shift would ensure the appearance of love on the part of the young soldiers within the comic plot. Therefore, it is not surprising that Claudio falls in love with Hero as soon as he sees her. “Can the world buy such a jewel?” (I.i.171) marks his first impressions of her.

Meanwhile, Benedick and Beatrice exchange long witty insults which they have had with each other in the past as well, each expressing an extreme hate towards love. Thus, “Claudio’s romantic contemplation of Hero is played off against Benedick’s sardonic remarks, creating the now familiar opposition of romantic lover and realistic commentator” (Leggatt, 1987: 153). The witty dialogue Benedick and Beatrice exchange in the very beginning is worth mentioning:

Benedick

What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

Beatrice

Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Benedick

Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

Beatrice

A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

Benedick

God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

Beatrice

Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Benedick

Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beatrice

A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

Benedick

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

Beatrice

You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old." (I, i,112-139)

As Benedick reveals Claudio's love for Hero to Don Pedro, observing Claudio hesitant about wooing Hero, the Prince offers to court Hero himself disguised as Claudio at the masque to be held that night. The plan is that when he is assured of Hero's positive response, he will ask her father to marry Claudio and Hero. The first overhearing occurs at that point in the play. Antonio informs Leonato that one of the servants has overheard Don Pedro telling Claudio of his intention to marry Hero.

It is well known that a great number of Shakespeare's comedies has a tragic potential and as very well put by Stanley Wells, his comedies "often verge on tragedy" (2017: 40) which is the same for the play under examination. Although "new Comedy was also mixed in tone, for in many plays pathetic and moral elements injected a serious note" (Brockett, 2014: 37), Shakespeare in *Much Ado About Nothing* transgresses the boundaries of drawing a solely pathetic picture by adding a truly villainous character who is Shakespeare's invention. In this play, the "tragic" appears because of Don John who clearly expresses that he wishes to be a villain, reminiscent of *Othello's* Iago.

"Don John

I wonder that thou, being, as thou sayest thou art, born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause and smile at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach and wait for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and tend on no man's business, laugh when I am merry and claw no man in his humour." (III, i,10-17)

When he learns from one of his followers named Borachio that his brother will woo Hero on behalf of Claudio, he instantly plans to make mischief with this piece of information since he envies Claudio's advancement.

Leonato reminds his daughter just before the festivity that the Prince will woo her. Don Pedro takes Hero aside and woos her in disguise. At this point in Act II, Scene 1, Don John starts putting his plans into action and tells Claudio that Don Pedro is stealing the heart of his future bride for himself, not for Claudio. This is the first time Claudio is trapped although his feeling of having been betrayed lasts for a short time because soon Don Pedro explains he has won Hero's heart for him and already arranged his marriage. Such an error on the part of Claudio does not appear in the accepted sources of the play; it is actually a convention seen in New Comedy (Miola, 1994: 82-83). Here, Shakespeare departs from the Roman practice which is of great importance. He invents a new kind of intriguer, Don John, a plain villain.

It is not surprising at all that the intrigues will continue on the part of Don John who, this time, makes another plan with the help of Borachio. The second disguising in the play will function in order to disrupt everyone's happiness. Borachio's companion Margaret, who is Hero's serving woman at the same time, will look out of the window at night and Borachio will make love to her. He will make Claudio and Don Pedro watch the scene and they will think that the woman is Hero wooed by a man in the middle of the night. The plan succeeds and Claudio is trapped for the second time strongly believing that Hero has been disloyal to him. Although this crucial scene is not staged, it is described five times variously. These descriptions depict Hero as "meretmix", as the courtesan who continually frustrates young lover in Plautus and Terence by opening her door to others. "The real or imagined visit of another man to the home of one's beloved is common in New Comedy, though the mood always differs, and the emphasis usually falls on the naïveté or confusion of the jealous lover" (Miola, 1994: 88).

Accordingly, Claudio who has turned into the outrageous lover on the day of their wedding in the Church, bitterly accuses Hero of betrayal and abandons her in front of everyone.

"Hero

And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Claudio

*Out on thee! Seeming! I will write against it:
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality." (IV, i,54-60)*

Leonato, stricken, at first accuses his daughter as well but thanks to the "sermon" Friar Francis has given, he accepts the plan made by the friar: Hero will pretend that she has died of sudden shock and grief and she is going to hide away till her innocence is proved. So far, Claudio-Hero plot includes the following:

Don Pedro wooing Hero for Claudio	Don John disrupting the plan and Claudio trapped (against Don Pedro)	Claudio in realisation of his error: Claudio ♥ Hero	Don John disrupting the plan (against Hero) and Claudio trapped for the second time	Church Scene Harmony disrupted	Hero's pretended death
(Act II, Scene 1)	(Act II, Scene 1)	(Act II, Scene 1)	(Act III, Scene 2)	(Act IV, Scene 1)	(Act IV, Scene 1)

The intrigues of half-brothers come to climax in the remarkable wedding scene. However, here Shakespeare creates a fractured wedding to serve as an antitype to the conventional New Comedic nuptials. As Miola very cleverly suggests:

“The pistis or proof of identity becomes here a false report that demonstrates the difficulties of perceiving, knowing and ‘noting’ truly. The anagnorisis [moment of discovery and recognition] is likewise inverted: the typical discovery about the heroine, namely that she is a long lost daughter or an Athenian citizen, therefore eligible for marriage, becomes here the false revelation that Hero is whore. This revelation shatters rather than enables the wedding. Tragic passion erupts in New Comedy, mocking expectation, ‘This looks not like a nuptial’ (IV, i, 68), exploding forms and conventions, disfiguring characters.” (1994: 89)

That’s why, Claudio cruelly rejects Hero just like her father, Leonato who vehemently denounces his daughter. Like Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, he becomes the harsh, unreasoning figure (Miola, 1994: 89) who is actually suffering because of his mistaken anger.

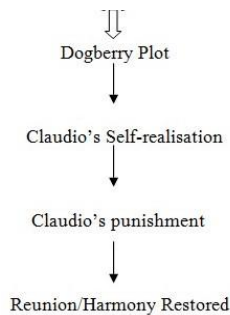
Most critics argue that Benedick-Beatrice plot deserves an equal importance as Claudio-Hero plot and therefore take this plot as the main plot as well, thus claiming that the play has two main plots, “one tragicomic, the other comic” (Wolfensperger, 1994: 112). As also elaborated by Bates:

“The story of the falsely accused woman is an ancient one, and, in all the known versions of the story, a lover is hoodwinked into thinking his beloved is unchaste – the germ of the Hero/Claudio plot. But not one of the seventeen or so contemporary versions of the story that Shakespeare may have known contains the equivalent of the Beatrice and Benedick subplot, nor the theatrical devices necessary to trick them together. Shakespeare invents Beatrice and Benedick, in other words, and inserts them into the well-known and much-rehearsed Hero story in such a way as to create a climate of comparison and debate.” (2004: 114)

From the beginning of the play, Benedick and Beatrice exchange witty dialogues on love and marriage and their dialogues are based on their “seemingly” hatred towards each other. In their plot, there will be again “intrigues” and they will be “trapped” too to fall in love with each other. In Act II, Scene 2, Don Pedro reveals his plans to Leonato and Claudio explaining that he will trick the two rivals into falling in love with each other. One-day Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato, knowing that Benedick will overhear them, speak aloud about how Beatrice passionately and desperately loves him. Because of the involvement of Don Pedro in the conversation, Benedick believes what he has heard and confesses himself that he also loves Beatrice. In the meantime, Beatrice is

tricked as well. She has been informed by one of the servants that Hero and Margaret are talking about her and as she eavesdrops them who have been talking about Benedick's desperate love for her, she admits her love too. Benedick, trying to hide his feelings from Don Pedro and Claudio, is teased because of his changed appearance. The same is true for Beatrice who is teased by Hero and Margaret. In Act IV, Scene 1, Benedick and Beatrice confess their love to each other. Beatrice wants him to kill Claudio in a duel to prove his love. Benedick really invites Claudio to a duel. From this point on, the events begin to proceed to a resolution. When the two plots are brought together, the picture is interesting:

Don Pedro wooing Hero for Claudio (Act II, Scene 1)	Don John disrupting the plan and Claudio trapped (against Don Pedro) (Act II, Scene 1)	Claudio in realisation his error: Claudio ♥ Hero (Act II, Scene 1)	Don John disrupting the plan (against Hero) and Claudio trapped for the second time (Act III, Scene 2)	Church Scene Harmony disrupted (Act IV, Scene 1)	Hero's pretended death (Act IV, Scene 1)
Witty insults exchanged and Benedick expressing his being hurt (Act II, Scene 1)	Don Pedro revealing his plan to trick Beatrice and Benedick (Act II, Scene 1)	Benedick "trapped" into love (Act II, Scene 3)	Beatrice "trapped" into love (Act III, Scene 1)	Benedick and Beatrice teased (Act III, Scenes 2&4)	Benedick and Beatrice confessing their love Benedick♥Beatrice (Act IV, Scene 1)



As it is clearly seen, while the Claudio-Hero plot begins very positively and is disrupted by Don John, Benedick-Beatrice plot starts in mutual insulting and is again “disrupted” in a very positive manner, this time by Don Pedro. Thus, while Don John seems to function for tragic ends in the play, Don Pedro is there for comic ends and to create harmony in the society. In other words, they represent the good and evil potentials of New Comedic intrigue (Miola, 1994: 83). The controversy about which plot is the main plot is best solved by the fact that whenever the comedy is “received” by the playgoer and the reader, the plot, whether it is the plot of Claudio-Hero or Benedick-Beatrice, becomes the main plot. As Wolfensperger observes:

“What we witness in Much Ado is that the Claudio/Hero plot is removed from its initially central position step by step, virtually scene by scene, to become the play’s subplot, whereas the Benedick/Beatrice plot initially subordinate to the

Claudio/Hero plot, gradually supersedes it to emerge finally as the comedy's main plot." (1994: 115)

At this point, eavesdropping becomes one of the characters who works to correct faults unlike the eavesdropping of Plautus which was there to, for example, "swindle the soldier of his money and girl and to expose him as a pretentious buffoon who deserves the final beating" (Miola, 1994: 86). Shakespeare exploits eavesdropping in a reverse way and makes Beatrice and Benedick feel shame to hear themselves accused of pride and arrogance.

When and if the stories of the two couples are taken equally into consideration as main plots, subplots can be listed as Don Pedro and Don John subplots, Borachio and Margaret subplot, Dogberry subplot and lastly the subplot of Hero's pretended death. Of all, the Dogberry subplot is the most important and functions to proceed the play to a resolution. As it is a comic world, the resolution comes not with the help of Don Pedro but with the help of the rustic Constable Dogberry overhearing Conrade and Borachio about the plan to deceive Claudio. Dogberry and his watchmen arrest the two men and make them confess the plan creating very comic effects. Inspired from Munday's 'Sbirri' or local observation, he functions as the antitype of the clever slave: "He is a *servis ineptus* whose fumbings in language and action mysteriously nullify subtler intrigues and reveal the hidden truth" (Miola, 1994: 92). Instead of planning intrigues or solving the complicated actions, he orders his men to turn away from trouble and do nothing, to ignore the disobedient, to let drunks alone and to let thieves steal out of their company.

Dogberry

If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

Watchman

If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dogberry

Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

Verges

You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dogberry

Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him." (III, iii,49-62)

Dogberry is not a typical slave at all, he can never change identities with speed or skill but rather, he plays himself the noble constable, the guardian of the commonwealth. He even fails to communicate the facts about Don John's deception to Leonato before the wedding since he misunderstood what he has heard and believed that Borachio and Conrade are guilty of some sort of burglary. If there were not the watchmen who

overheard the criminals and Borachio himself who confessed to Don Pedro and Claudio, Dogberry's Messina would be a tragic town (Miola, 1994: 92-93).

When everyone learns that Hero is innocent, time for Claudio to suffer over Hero's "death" has come. His "punishment", as Leonato informs, will be to tell everybody in the city that Hero was innocent and to marry another "niece" of Leonato, who bears an exact resemblance to the dead Hero. Claudio goes to the Church to marry a masked bride and he is shocked with joy when the woman un.masks. Also, the time for Benedick to propose to Beatrice has come, which is accepted. The play thus ends with the promise of a double wedding, prosperity and regeneration.

Conclusion

Much Ado About Nothing is one of the best comedies of Shakespeare in which the playwright seems to have constructed the plot structure as if he is knitting it in a very conscientious manner. Also, it should not be forgotten that the play departs from the original sources mentioned at the beginning structurally with the intrigues the brothers initiate, Don Pedro playing good and Don John playing bad tricks. Thus, "Don Pedro's humorous New Comedic deceptions oppose Don John's perverse and potentially tragic deceits. Such opposition is perfectly orthodox piece of New Comedic dramaturgy" (Miola, 1994: 80). Though such opposition is common in New Comedy, the extent of Don John's villainy belongs to Shakespeare. Besides, the play apparently demonstrates the darker potential of New Comedic intrigue. It also explores the limitations—dramatic and moral—of New Comedic characterization and action. Shakespeare departs from the classical adolescent figure and draws upon other traditions for Claudio's penance scene. He also reshapes the "traditional *virgo*, enlivening Hero with charm, providing for a wondrous rebirth" (Miola, 1994: 98). As Lawrence Danson puts it in *Shakespeare's Dramatic Genres*, "Comedy is a genre: it has its traditions, of which Shakespeare was well aware; but the genre is not a mould into which he poured the loose ingredients to be cooked into plays" (2000: 57-58), which is absolutely seen in *Much Ado About Nothing* especially in the way Shakespeare has invented Beatrice and Benedick subplot as well as the way he has drawn his villain, Don John.

References

- Abrams, M. H. and Harpham G. G. (2009). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Ninth Edition. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Bates C. (2004). "Love and courtship". *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy* (Edited by Alexander Leggatt). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 102-12.
- Boyce, C. (1996). *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd.
- Brockett O. G. and Hildy F. J. (2014). *History of the Theatre*. Tenth Edition. Essex: Pearson.
- Danson, L. (2000). *Shakespeare's Dramatic Genres*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Garber, M. (2004). *Shakespeare After All*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Leggatt, A. (1987). *Shakespeare's Comedy of Love*. London and New York: Methuen.
- McEachern C. (2006). "Introduction". *Much Ado About Nothing*. Arden Shakespeare. 22-167.
- Miola, R. S. (1994). *Shakespeare and Classical Comedy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Riehle, W. (1990). *Shakespeare, Plautus and the Humanist Tradition*. Cambridge: Brewer.
- Shakespeare, W. (2006). *Much Ado About Nothing*. London: Arden Shakespeare.
- Wells, S. (2017). *Shakespeare's Tragedies: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wolfensperger, P. (1994). *Shakespeare: Impartial and Partial*. Tübingen: Verlag.