

# Unit 1: Drama

## Introduction to Drama

- The word “Drama” was not used in England until the 16<sup>th</sup> century; nor was the word “Theatre” applied to medieval drama.
- Earliest record of Tragedy plays exist from the 5<sup>th</sup> BCE when Tragedy play contests were performed.
- Greek Theatre began in the 6<sup>th</sup> BC in Athens with the Tragedy plays performed at religious festivals, which consequently inspired Greek comedies and Roman Comedies.
- Although earlier, dramatic rituals were performed at the festivals of Dionysus- *Dionysia*.
- These tragedies were performed in “Theatron” or open-air theatres. Plays were open to only male audience with mythological plots.
- In Tragedies, the 3 most important names are- Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.
- In Comedies, most famous names were Aristophanes and Menander.
- Chorus was an important part of these plays and was composed of 24 performers.

**Note: Aeschylus was known for innovation in theatre. He increased the number of actors and dialogues onstage and even experimented with sequels. He called his works “morsel from the feast of Homer”. (Earliest drama allowed only one person on the stage, wearing mask and impersonating gods).**

- Comedies in Greek theatre began with Aristophanes in 425 BCE. These plays developed out of bawdy celebrations of Dionysus (God of Wine and Fertility) with coarse songs, phallic

processions and fertility festivals. Earliest form of Comedy exists as *Satyr*, a form of ancient drama in which mythical half-human-half-goat characters ridiculed the characters in a Tragedy play. Aeschylus would have derived his Comedies from *Satyr*s.

- The earliest evidences of these performances at Dionysia date back to 7<sup>th</sup> BCE.
- Comedies described human beings “worse than they are” while Tragedies described human beings “better than they are”. In *The Republic*, Plato believed that Comedy was “destruction to the self” and guardians of the state should avoid laughter as it can provoke a “violent reaction”.

**Note: “Tragedy is a mimesis of an action that is serious, complete and of certain magnitude...through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation (Catharsis) of these emotions” – Aristotle in *Poetics* (written in 4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE and one of the earliest and most significant essays on drama).**

- According to Aristotle, the 3 original genres of literature are- Tragedy, Comedy, Epic Poetry and Lyric Poetry. He considered Tragedy as the truest mimesis of life and Comedy as the most removed from the true mimesis of life.
- Greek drama declined from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BCE.
- But by 240 BC it had been introduced in Rome by Livius Andronicus. Although, the earliest tragedies in Roman Theatre are surviving works of Lucius A. Seneca. Although it is to be noted that in Rome, Comedies were more popular than Tragedies.
- Senecan plays were very famous in its time and inspired Renaissance theatres with its elaborate dialogues, bloodshed on stage, violence, theme of revenge, plot-within-plot, magic, ghosts, etc.

## Some important Greek plays-

<b>Aeschylus</b>	<i>Prometheus</i>
	<i>Orestes Trilogy</i>
	<i>Suppliants</i>
	<i>Seven Against Thebes</i>
	<i>The Persians</i>
<b>Sophocles</b>	<i>Ajax</i>
	<i>Electra</i>
	<i>Oedipus Trilogy</i>
	<i>Trachinian Women</i>
	<i>Philoctetes</i>
<b>Euripides</b>	<i>Medea</i>
	<i>Alcestis</i>
	<i>Hippolytus</i>
	<i>Andramache</i>
	<i>Ion</i>
	<i>Trojan Women</i>
	<i>The Bacchantes</i>
	<i>Iphigenia among the Taurians &amp; Iphigenia at Aulis</i>
	<i>Electra</i>
<b>Aristophanes</b>	<i>Archanians</i>
	<i>The Birds</i>
	<i>The Frogs</i>
	<i>The Clouds</i>
	<i>Lysistrata</i>

## **Beginning of Drama in England**

It is believed to be centuries old. In English literature, it began as a form of dramatization of biblical events to attract Christians to churches on Sunday mass. Later, it went out of church and into playhouses where Biblical or Christian themes were performed. In the medieval ages (5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century AD), it is found in 3 forms- Miracle, Mystery and Morality.

- **Miracle plays** were based on lives of saints. They were developed in 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also called Saint's plays because they describe the life or martyrdom of a saint. They were performed at public festivals to enhance their experience. Almost all surviving miracle plays center on either the Virgin Mary or St. Nicholas, a 4th-century bishop. They employed *deus ex machine* as a trope to depict the saving powers of the holy figures.
- **Mystery plays** were based on biblical events performed by trade professionals. Often they were performed together in cycles which could last for days. The mystery play developed into a series of plays dealing with all the major events in the Christian calendar, from the Creation to the Day of Judgment. By the end of the 15th century, the practice of acting these plays in cycles on festival days was established in several parts of Europe. These plays were performed on a decorated pageant cart that moved about the city. Mystery plays had 4 known cycles- York (48), N-Town (42), Chester (25) & Wakefield (32).
- **Morality plays** were based on Christian themes such as Patience, Mercy, etc. They were allegorical plays that were didactic in nature e.g. *Everyman & Mankind*.

In the Age of Revival (1400-1550), drama went through major transformation in its form and content. Now it became largely secular with common themes. Transition drama includes-

- **Interludes-** a short dramatic piece, especially of a light or farcical in nature. It was formerly introduced between the parts or acts of miracle and morality plays or given as part of other entertainments. In the Age of Revival, it became a form of standalone drama.
- **Farce- It is a** boisterous comic dramatic play that uses highly improbable comic situations, stereotyped characters, extravagant exaggeration, and violent horseplay.

# **The Age of Revival**

**(1400-1558)**

## **Historical background**

- King Henry V ascended the English throne in 1413.
- He aimed at regaining power over France.
- He sent a couple of demands to the French authorities including rule over France.
- These demands were rejected and Henry V waged a war.
- As a result of the war, Treaty of Troyes was signed in 1420 which recognized Henry V as the rightful heir to the French throne.
- He married Catherine, daughter of Charles VI of France.
- He died in 1422.
- Henry VI ascended the throne but was weak.
- Consequently, France regained its lost power under the leadership of Joan of Arc.

### **Cade's Rebellion**

- Against the policies of Henry VI.
- Led by Jack Cade, an Irishman.
- Though he defeated the royal armies and confronted the authorities with his set of demands, he eventually died.
- His followers did not let the fire of rebellion die.
- The authorities/laws were not strong enough to control them effectively. It led to the war of the Roses.

### **War of the Roses**

- Between the Yorks (white rose) and the Lancasters (red rose) for the throne.
- A disturbed lineage, 100 years wars, the disrule of Henry VI and emergence of local noble families as powerful bodies of authority led to this series of civil wars.
- 1455-1485
- Began with Yorks defeating Lancasters; ended with Henry VII of Tudor lineage (cousin of Lancasters) defeating the Yorks.

## **Drama in the Age of Revival**

### **The Interlude of Youth**

- 1513.
- Anonymous.
- Dialogue form.
- It is without any farce or comedy.

- Allegorical characters (e.g. Youth, Charity, etc.)

### **The Hick Scorner Play**

- 1514
- Earliest printed drama.
- Dialogue form.
- Had a farcical subplot for the first time.

### **King Johan**

- 1538
- 1<sup>st</sup> Historical Drama in English.
- It was based on the life of King John, son of Henry II.
- It might have become Shakespeare's inspiration for King John.

### **Fulgens and Lucrece**

- 1481
- By Henry Medwall.
- It was published by Caxton publication.
- **1<sup>st</sup> secular play in English.**
- Love suit competition between Publius and Gaius for Lucrece, daughter of Roman senator Fulgens.
- **Comic play-within-play-** between characters A and B.

### **John Heywood**

- He wrote famous Interludes.
- Popularized the motif of sub-plots in the play.
- Also popularized debate genre.

- Famous works- ***Witty and Witless; Johan Johan, The Four PP; The Play of Weather*** etc.
- Famous poem- ***The Spider and the Fly.***

***The Mery Play betwene Johan Johan, the Husband, Tyb, his Wife, and Syr Johan, the Preest***

- Written in 1520.
- Published in 1533.
- Johan is the foolish character who thinks his wife is cheating on him.
- Satirizes religious themes- comic treatment of the Noah story.
- Part farcical interlude part medieval morality.

***The Play called the Foure PP; a Newe and a Very Mery Interlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Potycary, a Pedlar***

- Written in 1520.
- Published in 1543.
- Written in rhyming couplets.
- They enter into a competition of lying to decide who is the most important and should “most prevail”
- Palmer is a braggart character.
- Potycary is a quack doctor.
- Pedlar is a common man.
- The Palmer wins the competition by claiming that no woman in the world has ever had temper issue.

***The Play of the Wether, a New and Mery Interlude of all Maner of Wethers***



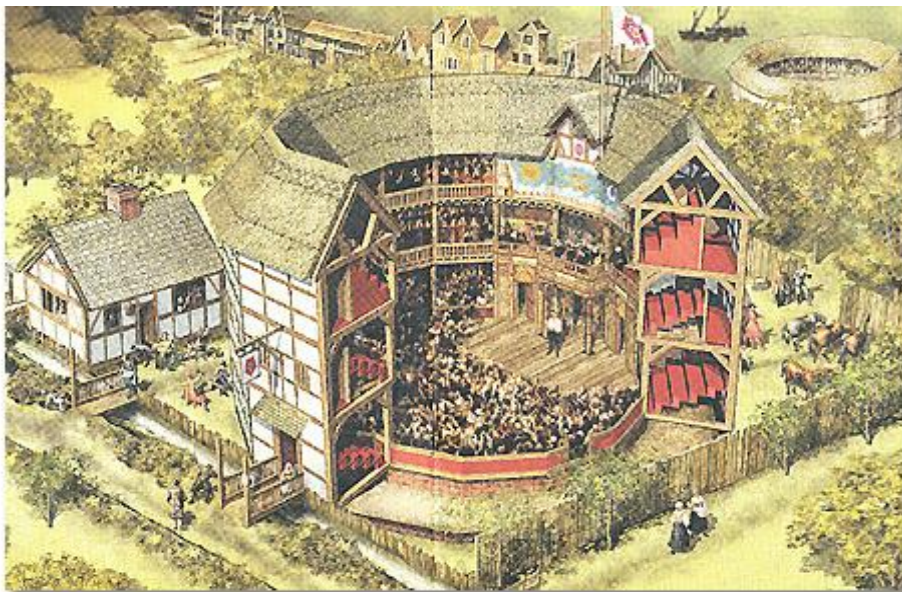
- 1533.
- Published by printer William Rastell.
- Jupiter asks various characters to argue which season should remain for the rest of the year.
- Characters- Farmers, Millers, School Boy, Forest rangers and Gentlemen.
- Each character makes a case according to his priority.
- Since no common conclusion is agreed upon Jupiter deems it that weathers and seasons stay as they are as they fit everyone.

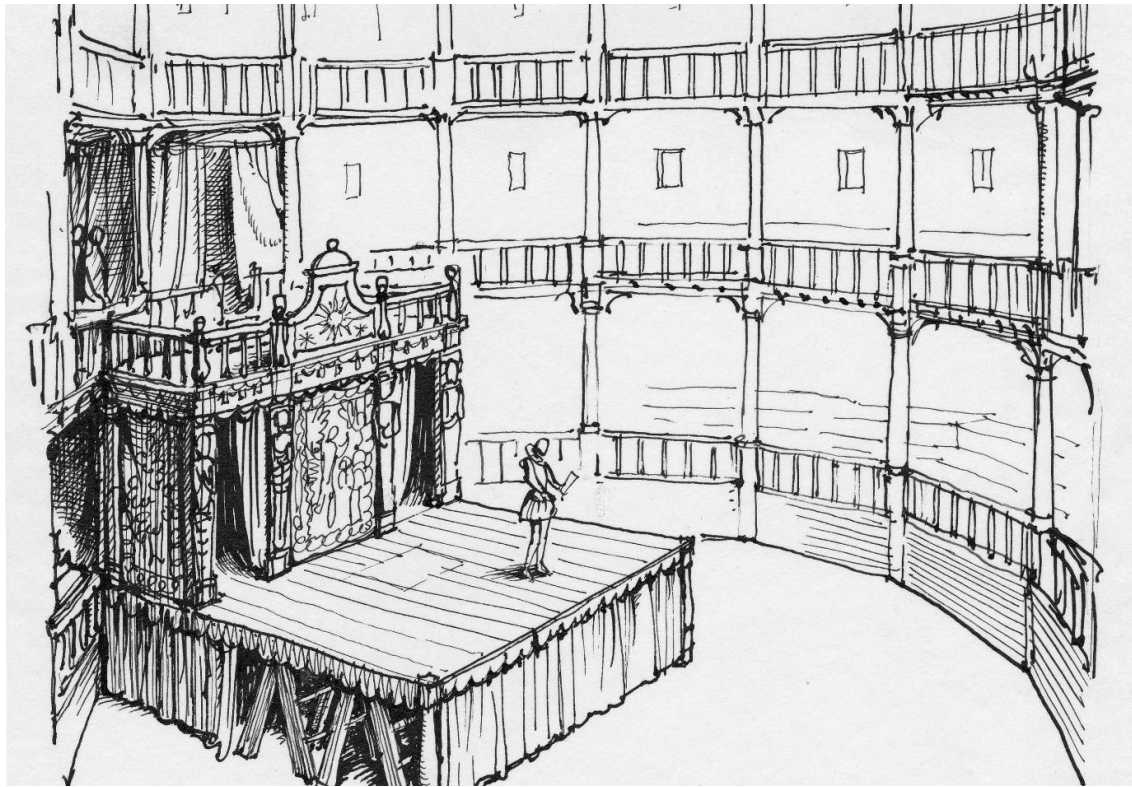
Modern form of literature began in the Elizabethan Era in England with the great dramatists like Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Today, some recognized forms of drama are the following-

## **Introduction to Elizabethan Drama**

- As drama moved out of church's boundaries into secular space- local festivals, carnivals, guilds, etc.- it reached more and more into the common household.
- After seeing numerous transitions over the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, drama started to be performed in spaces called "Inn-yards"- courtyards of Inns with space for performance and audience.
- Famous Inns were-
- **Gray's Inn**- a popular Inn.
- **Middle Temple**
- **Inner Temple**

- **Lincoln Inn**- mentioned in John Donne's *A Sermon Preached at Lincoln's Inn*.
- But as popularity of drama was increasing and it was becoming more and more professional, a need was felt for specialized spaces where dramas could be performed.
- **James Burbage**- came up with the idea of building a proper theater.
- **The Theater is constructed in 1576 by James Burbage and John Brayne, under the architectural plan of John Dee.**
- It was an amphitheater; based on ancient open-air theaters.
- The Elizabethan dramatists adopted a classical style of building theaters because it gave them a sense of legitimacy and authenticity.
- Elizabethan dramatists also started incorporating themes and forms of drama from the ancient Greek and Roman theater; from other Latin and French sources, etc.





### Important Theaters-

- 1567- The Red Lion (first playhouse by John Brayne)
- 1576- The Theater by James Burbage; The Black Friars Theatre and Newington Butts Theater
- 1577- The Curtain
- 1587- The Rose
- 1595- The Sawn
- 1596- The Black Friars Theater (by James Burbage and Richard Burbage as **first indoor theater for**).
- 1599- The Globe
- 1600- The Fortune

- 1604- The Red Bull
- 1614- The Hope

## **Important Drama Groups-**

- **Lord Chamberlain's Men**

- 1594
- Shakespeare's company
- 1597- started performing for The Curtain
- After the construction of the Globe in 1599 started performing there exclusively (only in summers)
- In 1603- called King's Men under King James I.
- Richard Burbage was the lead actor.
- Will Kempe and Robert Armin were the actors for clowns.
- Fire broke out in The Globe in 1613 but it got rebuilt in 1614.
- It was shut down in 1642 in the Commonwealth.
- 1997- Sam Wanamaker rebuilt The Globe.

- **Lord Admiral's Men**

- The main rivals of Lord Chamberlain's Men.
- 1576- They were called Lord Howard's Men.
- The principal company that was associated with Christopher Marlowe.
- It's main actor was Edward Alleyn.
- It was over by the 1630s.

- **Queen's Men**

- 1583
- It was under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth I and Noble Francis Walsingham.

- Mostly associated with the university wits- George Peele, Thomas Lodge, Thomas Kyd, Robert Greene etc.

## **First Comedies & Tragedies in Elizabethan Drama**

- ***Ralph Roister Doister***

- 1553 (Published in 1556)
- By Nicholas Udall- influenced by comedies of Plautus and Terence.
- Written in 5 acts.
- It was performed by Westminster Boys (first performed by the school boys where he was the Headmaster).
- Written in irregular rhythm and Doggerel form.
- **First comedy in English.**
- Christian Custance is a widow character. Her fiancé is merchant Gawyn Goodluck. She is wooed by RRD, a comic character. Matthew Merrygreeke is a trickster character who motivates RRD to court Madame.
- The play ends with a reconciliation when Goodluck appears, a prayer and a song.

- ***Gammer Gurton's Needle***

- 1566/1567
- Presumed playwright is John Still/William Stevenson.
- Second English comedy.
- It was written in rhymed couplets.
- The central action of the play revolves around finding a lost needle- domestic comedy (a realist depiction of peasant class life).
- Gammer Gurton, an old woman, loses her only needle when she is mending the pants of her servant, Hodge.

- Diccon is a beggar character who pretends to summon the Devil for the solution, which is to be found between Cat, Rat and Dame Chat.
- Diccon creates many misunderstandings in this process. In the end, he slaps Hodge on his backside, when he feels a prick there, only to discover the lost needle.
- **Gorboduc**
  - 1561
  - Thomas Norton (3 acts) and Thomas Sackville (2 acts).
  - **1st English tragedy in English Literature**
  - **1st drama in blank verse in English Literature.**
  - Influenced by Senecan Tragedy and from Geoffery of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannia*.
  - Gorboduc and Queen Videna.
  - Ferrex and Porrex (younger).
  - Porrex kills Ferrex over the question of succession.
  - Videna kills Porrex.
  - Leads to a civil war. King and Queen are killed by the people.
  - Senecan bloodshed on stage.
  - Performed in the Inner Hall or Temple on the 12<sup>th</sup> Night.
  - Came in 3 editions.
  - Political theme; lineage theme.

## **The University Wits**

- ✓ The University Wits were a group of dramatists that wrote in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century (last 15 years) in England and were educated at either Oxford or Cambridge University. The term was coined by George Saintsbury, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century writer-

“we have the group of university wits, the strenuous if not always wise band of professed men of letters, at the head of whom are Lyly, Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Lodge, Nash, and probably (for his connection with the universities is not certainly known) Kyd.”

- ✓ He believed that they merged the more academic style of Thomas Sackville and more entertaining style of interlude and farce writers to create a new form that was an intermediary between the Middle English and Modern English drama. They attempted to give drama more life-like form with their use of Blank Verse (headed by Marlowe), but they couldn't quite achieve that perfect life-likeness in their works.

“All were learned and classical in their tastes and interested in courtly literature” - David Horne (Biographer of George Peele)

- ✓ Some important characteristics of the Wits were-

Expression in Blank verse; Use of magnificent epithets and strong lines
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Affinity towards Heroic themes, style and form
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Long speeches; dramatization; elaborate events
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Little to no humour; mostly Tragic plots
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### ✓ Robert Greene (1558-1592)

- Shakespeare's most successful predecessor in blank-verse [romantic](#) comedy.
- Popularized Prose Romance- *The Honorable Historie of frier Bacon, and frier Bongay* (written c. 1591, published 1594), the first successful romantic comedy in English.

- To be certain of supplying material attractive to the public, Greene at first slavishly followed literary fashions. His first model was [John Lyly's Euphues](#).
- In the later 1580s Greene wrote prose pastorals in the manner of [Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia](#).
- The best of his pastorals is [Pandosto](#) (1588), the direct source of [Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale](#). *Pandosto* was itself inspired from [The Clerk's Tale](#) of [The Canterbury Tales](#). Pandosto, King of Bohemia, accuses his wife Bellaria of adultery committed with his childhood friend, the King of Sicilia.
- In *Groats-worth* appears the first printed reference to Shakespeare, assailed as "an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you . . . in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie." - *Greenes groats-worth of witte* (1592).
- *Eupheus, his censure to Philautus*- Troilus and Cressida story from Hector's perspective.
- *Menaphon* (1589)- A prose romance. Theme of cross-dressing and incest. Preface given by Thomas Nashe. The romance tells the adventures of the princess Sephestia, shipwrecked on the coast of Arcadia. Sephestia, disguised as Samela, is wooed simultaneously by her father and her teenage son, while herself carrying on a love affair with her (disguised) husband. Her fourth lover is the shepherd Menaphon of the title. Among the charming lyrics is the cradle-song 'Weepe not my wanton, smile upon my knee'.
- ***A Looking Glass for London and England*** (1589-1590) is a collaboration between [Thomas Lodge](#) and [Robert Greene](#). It recounts the [Biblical](#) story of [Jonah](#) and the fall of [Nineveh](#).



- *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589) is set in the thirteenth century, and focuses on Prince Edward's attempts to woo a maid, Margaret. Edward goes to Oxford to ask Friar Bacon, a noted philosopher and magician, to help him.
- In *The Scottish Historie of James the fourth, slaine at Flodden* (written c. 1590, published 1598) he used an Italian tale but drew on [fairy](#) lore for the characters of Oberon and Bohan. It was a forerunner of *As You Like It* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- In his last year Greene exposed the Elizabethan underworld with *A Notable Discovery of Coosnage* (1591) and the successful and amusing *A disputation betweene a hee conny-catcher and a shee conny-catcher* (1592).
- Titles of some other works- *Selimus and Greene's Vision*.

### ✓ John Lyly (1554-1606)

- Considered to be the first English prose stylist to leave an enduring impression upon the language. As a playwright he also contributed to the development of prose [dialogue](#) in English [comedy](#).
- His plots are drawn from classical mythology and [legend](#) but his construction of dialogues was filled with charm and wit.
- He became famous instantly with the publication of prose romance *Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and its sequel *Euphues and his England* (1580).
- *Euphues* is a [romantic](#) intrigue told in letters interspersed with general discussions on such topics as religion, love, and epistolary style.
- Lyly's preoccupation with the exact arrangement and selection of words, his frequent use of [similes](#) drawn from classical

mythology, and his artificial and excessively elegant prose inspired a short-lived Elizabethan literary style called "[euphuism](#)."

- These works made him the most fashionable literary figure of his time and create a ripple of concern over form in literature.
- In 1583 he gained control of the first [Blackfriars Theatre](#), in which his earliest plays, *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, were produced. All of Lyly's comedies except *The Woman in the Moon* were presented by the [Children of Paul's](#).
- His plays-
  - *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, 1583–84
  - *Gallathea*, 1585–88
  - *Endimion, the Man in the Moon*, 1588- The action of the play (5 acts) centers around a young courtier, Endymion, who is sent into an endless slumber by Tellus, his former lover, because he rejected her to worship the ageless Queen Cynthia.
  - *Midas*, 1589- allegorical story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. A political satire on Philip II of Spain.
  - *Love's Metamorphosis*, 1590
  - *Mother Bombie*, 1590
  - *The Woman in the Moon*, 1595- the only verse comedy

### ✓ **Thomas Nashe (1567-1601)**

- Collaborated with Marlowe in *Dido, The Queen of Carthage*.
- Initiated picaresque writing in English.
- *The Unfortunate Traveler: The Life of Jack Wilton* (1594) is the first picaresque novel in English. Set in the court of Henry VIII, the book describes the travels through Germany and Italy of its

rogue hero, Jacke Wilton, who lives by his wits and witnesses all sorts of historic events before he is converted to a better way of life.

- He is considered to be an extraordinary inventor of verbal hybrids.
- *His interaction with the Wits began with Greene when he wrote *The Anatomie of Absurditie* and the preface to Greene's *Menaphon* in 1589.*
- He also wrote the preface to Thomas Newman's unauthorized edition of [Sir Philip Sidney's \*Astrophel and Stella\*](#) (1591).
- *Pierce Penniless: his supplication to the Devil* (1592) - a [satire](#) focused on the seven [deadly sins](#). He extensively used more free and [extemporaneous](#) prose style, full of [colloquialisms](#), filled with newly coined words and fantastic quirks.
- *The Isle of Dogs*- play by [Thomas Nashe](#) and [Ben Jonson](#) which was performed in 1597 and was immediately suppressed. A satirical comedy, it was reported to the authorities as a "lewd plaie" full of seditious and "slandorous matter", to the point of even satirizing the Queen. Jonson was arrested and sent to [Marshalsea Prison](#). Nashe's home was raided but he escaped imprisonment.
- *Lenten Stuff* (1599)- burlesque of tale of Hero and Leander. Contains a pleasant description of the town of Yarmouth, Norfolk, a herring fishery.
- *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem* (1593)- Nashe warned his countrymen during one of the country's outbreak of [bubonic plague](#) that, unless they reformed, London would suffer the fate of Jerusalem.
- *The Terrors of the Night* (1594) - a lengthy attack on demonology
- *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1600)

## ✓ Thomas Lodge (1557-1625)

- Famous for his Romances; best remembered for *Rosalynde: Euphues Golden Legacie* (1590), the source of [William Shakespeare's](#) *As You Like It*.
- Lodge's most significant work was an anonymous [pamphlet](#) (1579) in reply to Stephen Gosson's attack on stage plays- *Schoole of Abuse in Defence of Poetry, Musick, and Stage Plays*.
- *A Fig for Momus* (1595)- introduced classical [satires](#) and verse [epistles](#) (modeled after those of [Juvenal](#) and [Horace](#)) into [English literature](#) for the first time.
- *Scillaes Metamorphosis* (1589)- an [Ovidian](#) verse [fable](#), is one of the earliest English poems to retell a classical story with imaginative embellishments. It strongly influenced Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*.
- *An Alarum Against Usurers* (1584), exposed the ways in which moneylenders lured young heirs into extravagance and debt.
- *Phillis* (1593)- contains romantic [sonnets](#) and pastoral [eclogues](#) from French and Italian originals.
- *A Margarite of America* (1596)- a Romance which combines themes of [Senecan](#) intentions and pastoral romance. The play is about an improbable love story between a Peruvian prince and a daughter of the king of [Muscovy](#).
- *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse* (1596)
- *The Wounds of Civill War* (1594)
- *A Looking Glasse for London and England* (1594)- In collaboration with Robert Greene
- *A Treatise of the Plague* (1603)
- *The Famous and Memorable Works of Josephus* (1602), (English translation)

- *The Works of Lucius Annaeus Seneca* (1614), (English translation)

### ✓ **George Peele (1556-1596)**

- Famous for his pastoral plays, histories, folk plays, mythological works and tragedies.
- At Oxford, he translated a play by [Euripides](#) into English.
- [The Arraignment of Paris](#) (performed- 1581; published- 1584)- a courtly mythological pastoral play written to pay a tribute to the Queen and was performed at the court before her. It is one of the earliest Elizabethan play written in verse by a major Elizabethan playwright.
- Here Peele retells one of the most famous of all classical myths, the **Judgment of Paris**, in which the Trojan prince Paris is selected to decide the winner of a beauty contest between three goddesses (Hera, Athena and Aphrodite); Peele, however, adds a second element to the story, in which the losers of his decision charge Paris with unfair bias, and he is brought to trial in front of a tribunal made up of the major gods of the Roman mythology.
- *The Battle of Alcazar* (1589)- a Tragedy play and semi-historical, written in 5 Acts.
- *Edward I* (1593)- a chronicle history play
- *The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe* (1594)- a biblical tragedy
- [The Old Wives' Tale](#) (performed- 1591; published- 1595)- comic romance; it satirized the romantic dramas of its times. Uses play-within-play technique.

### ✓ **Thomas Kyd (1558-1594)**

- He fell into obscurity till 1773 when Thomas Hawkins, an early editor of *The Spanish Tragedie*, discovered that Kyd was named as its author by Thomas Heywood in his *Apologie for Actors* (1612). In fact, in another work, Heywood called him “Famous Kyd”.
- Ben Jonson called his name in the same breath as Christopher Marlowe.
- His [\*The Spanish Tragedy\*](#) (also called *Hieronimo is Mad Again*) initiated the [revenge tragedy](#) in English modern drama.
- Many elements of *The Spanish Tragedy*, such as the [play-within-a-play](#) used to trap a murderer, the psychological complexity of *Hieronimo* and a ghost intent on vengeance, appear in [Hamlet](#).
- *The Spanish Tragedy* tells the story of Hieronymo, marshal of Spain, whose son Horatio is murdered by Balthasar, son of the viceroy of Portugal, and Lorenzo, son of the Duke of Castile, because Balthasar has his eye on Bellimperia.
- Bellimperia is Lorenzo’s sister, and she loves Horatio – and this is why poor Horatio is murdered by Balthasar and Lorenzo. Bellimperia, who witnesses the brutal murder of her lover, sends a letter to Horatio’s father Hieronymo informing him that it was Balthasar and Lorenzo who murdered his son, and Hieronymo vows revenge on the two men.
- However, before he can avenge his son’s death, Hieronymo decides – much like Hamlet in Shakespeare’s later play – that he needs to prove that the letter was indeed from Bellimperia and that both Balthasar and Lorenzo are indeed guilty of Horatio’s murder.
- There follows a series of delays in Hieronymo’s enactment of revenge, delays which succeed in turning him mad.

- *Cornelia; or, Pompey the Great* (1590)- translated from the French of [Robert Garnier's](#) academic *Cornélie*. The play is about [Cornelia Metella](#), the widow of [Pompey](#). The play ends with Pompey's death and the reactions from his family. The play mentions Julius Caesar.
- Assumed author of *Ur-Hamlet*, a source of *Hamlet*.
- *Arden of Feversham*- one of the first domestic tragedies; It depicts the real-life murder of [Thomas Arden](#) by his wife [Alice Arden](#) and her lover, and their subsequent discovery and punishment. (The author is unknown, and the play has been attributed to [Thomas Kyd](#), [Christopher Marlowe](#), and [William Shakespeare](#), solely or collaboratively).

## **William Shakespeare**

### **Sources**

- Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1577)- *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Cymbeline*.
- *Holinshed's Chronicles on Scotland*- *Macbeth*.
- *Daemonologie by King James and Discovery of Witchcraft by Reginald Scott*- The Trio of Witches in *Macbeth*.
- *Holinshed's Chronicle + Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britannia + Bodel's Matter of Britain + Albion's England* (1589)- *King Lear*
- *Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia*- subplot of *King Lear* (Earl of Gloucester, Edmund and Edgar).
- *Thomas Kyd's Ur Hamlet and The Spanish Tragedy*- *Hamlet*.

- Saxxo *The Grammarian's Historia Danica 'History of Amleth'* (13<sup>th</sup> C)- *Hamlet*
- Thomas Lodge's *'Wit's Miseries and World's Madness'*- *Hamlet*
- Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans or Lives* (1579)- *Antony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus and Coriolanus.*
- Edward Hall's *"The union of two noble families of Lancasters and Yorks"* (1547)- *for History plays.*
- Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (tl. By Arthur Golding 1567)- *Tempest, Midsummer Night's Dream and Titus Andronicus.*
- Arthur Brooke's *The Tragic History of Romeus and Julius* (1562)- *Romeo and Juliet.*
- Boccaccio's *Decameron- The Winter's Tale* (Robert Greene's *Pandosto*), *All's Well that Ends Well, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Cymbeline and Othello.*
- Matteo Boiardo's *Orlando Innamarto- "Fountain of Head" and "Garden of Ardenne"* as *Forest of Arden in As You Like It.*
- Matteo Bandello's *Certain Tragical Discourses* (tl. By Geoffrey Phenton 1567)- *Much Ado About Nothing and Twelfth Night.*
- Christopher Marlowe's *Jew of Malta- The Merchant of Venice.*
- John Gower's *Confessio Amantis- Pericles.*
- Plautus' *Menaechmi- The Comedy of Errors.*
- Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde- As You Like It*
- Jorge de Montemarjo's *Diana Enamorada- The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*



## Literary Phases

- **Ist Phase-** This was the upbeat period of initial vigour in his career, displaying the exuberance of youthful love and imagination. It started off with his History Plays, Poems, and some initial Comedies. The plays that were written during this period were *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II* and *Richard III*. 26 sonnets and 7 plays were written in total. *Venus and Adonis* and *Rape of Lucrece* are popular poems of this age. These were probably all composed before 1595. This phase shows influence of Christopher Marlowe.
- **IInd Phase-** The second period runs from 1595 to 1601. It shows progress in his dramatic calibre as there is less exaggeration, more power in plot and diction, and a deeper insight into human nature. There also appears first evidence of philosophy and a vein of sadness in his characters, e.g. the sayings of Jaques in *As You Like It*. Because by this time he was at the peak of his career and was enjoying immense professional and financial success, he wrote such happy Comedies. In fact, most of his great romantic comedies are from this period. He also continued writing his History Plays. Among the plays of this period are *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night* (tragi-comedy), *Richard II*, *Henry IV Parts I and II*, *Henry V*.
- **IIIrd Phase-** This period runs from 1601 to 1608. It was a period of hardships in his life, that reflected on the kind of plays that he was writing. His father died in 1601, after great disappointments. His best friends suffered what he calls,

in *Hamlet*, "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." In 1601 Elizabeth executed the Earl of Essex for treason, and on the same charge also punished the Earl of Southampton. Rumour mill has it that perhaps even Shakespeare himself may have been suspected. The impact of these events on his work was that he produced his Great Tragedies during this period. They were *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*. Additionally, he wrote his Dark Comedies during a particularly Dark Phase of his life (1601-1604). They were- *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*.

- **4<sup>th</sup> Phase-** The plays of his fourth period (1608-161) are remarkable for calm, composure and sweetness. The fierceness of his erstwhile tragedy plays like *Othello* and *Macbeth* is left behind. In 1608 Shakespeare's mother died. The vivid recollection of her love may have been influential in causing him to look on life with kinder eyes. This phase boils down to tranquillity, just like his own life. The greatest plays of this period are *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*.

## Important Facts to Remember

### 1. *Hamlet*-

- *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*
- Longest Play of Shakespeare
- Opening scene: Ghost of Hamlet's Father

- Play within Play is used: Murder of Gonzago or The Mousetrap Play.
- Hamlet gets a chance to kill Claudius in a **Prayer scene (Act III Scene iii)** but he doesn't because he doesn't want his uncle to go to heaven.
- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Hamlet's Oxford companions
- Ghost- Act I and Act III
- Ophelia's death told by the Gravediggers- Act V Scene i
- "To Be or Not To Be" and Nunnery Scene (he knows Claudius and Polonius are spying on him so he uses his madness as an advantage)- Act III Scene i.
- Hamlet is killed by Laertes' poisoned sword in Act V.

## 2. *King Lear-*

- 3 daughters- Goneril (Duke of Albany), Regan (Duke of Cornwall) and Cordelia (King of France)
- Earl of Kent is also banished (maintains a disguise)
- Earl of Gloucester has 2 sons- illegitimate Edmund and Edgar.
- Gloucester dismisses Edgar who disguises as Poor Tom
- Gloucester is proved traitor by Edmund and his eyes are plucked out.
- Storm scene- Act III Scene i
- Dover Cliff Scene- Act IV Scene vi
- Fool- The Fool

## 3. *Othello-*

- Iago- Machiavellian character

- Handkerchief scene- Act III Scene iv (When Othello demands his handkerchief but Desdemona couldn't produce it because it was stolen by Emilia.)
- Strangling scene- Act V scene ii
- Both Desdemona and Emilia will die
- Emilia's dying song- "Willow"

#### 4. *Macbeth*-

- Banquet Scene Act III Scene iv- Macbeth arranges for a banquet for Scottish Thanes. He gets the news that Banquo is killed but his son Fleance escaped.
- Here he sees the ghost of Banquo sitting on the table and is horrified.
- Macbeth is ultimately, killed by Macduff who was cut out of his mother's belly.
- Malcolm will become the king.
- Witches appear 4 times in the play-
  - Act I Scene i
  - Act II Scene iii
  - Act III Scene v
  - Act IV scene i

#### 5. *Richard II*-

- Considered as the most lyrical play of Shakespeare's.
- Reference of Peasant's Revolt and Black Death in the play.

#### 6. *Henry V*-

- Prologue: Dramatic use of Prologue to make an apology for the size of Renaissance Theatre.

7. *The Taming of the Shrew*-

- Induction Scene I and II

8. *Love's Labour Lost*-

- Ends with the song "*The Owl and the Cuckoo*"

9. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*-

- Play within Play technique is used- "*Pyramus and Thisbe*".
- The play ends with an epilogue.

10. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

- Old Oak Tree in Windsor Forest where the 3 ladies will have children dressed as pinching fairies and pinch and burn Falstaff.

11. *As You Like It*-

- Forest of Arden setting.
- Jacques the Melancholic- "Seven Ages of Man" poem (Act II Scene vii)
- Touchstone the Fool will criticize the Forest of Arden.
- Duke Senior- "Tongues in Treed Books in Brooks" poem (Act II Scene i)
- Song "Under the Greenwood Tree"- (Lyrical song) Title of a novel by Thomas Hardy

12. *Romeo and Juliet*-

- First Romantic-Tragedy by Shakespeare
- Prologue- calls the lovers "star-crossed"
- There are three Sonnets in this play- (ABAB CDCD EFEF GG) (Iambic Pentameter)

- 1st sonnet- Prologue:

“Two households, both alike in dignity  
(In fair Verona, where we lay our scene),  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-marked love  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage—  
The which, if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.”

- 2<sup>nd</sup> sonnet- (Act 1 scene V) the scene of the lover's first kiss. It is spoken by two individual voices. But, it is a sonnet just the same:

“If I profane with my unworthiest hand  
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:  
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.  
Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;  
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.  
Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?  
Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.  
O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;  
They pray — grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.  
Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.  
Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.”

- 3<sup>rd</sup> sonnet- the prologue to Act II. This third sonnet reviews the action of act one, and prepares the audience for act two of *Romeo and Juliet*.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Songs in Plays**

- "Under the Greenwood Tree" in *As You Like It*, (Act II, scene 5)
- "It Was a Lover and His Lass" in *As You Like It* (Act V, scene 3)
- "O Mistress Mine" in *Twelfth Night*, (Act II, scene 3)
- "The Wind and the Rain" in *Twelfth Night*, (Act V, scene 1)
- "Where the Bee Sucks" in *The Tempest*, (Act V, scene 1)
- "Full Fathom Five" in *The Tempest*, (Act I, scene 2)
- "Sigh No More" in *Much Ado About Nothing*, (Act II, scene 3)
- "Take, O Take Those Lips Away" in *Measure for Measure*, (Act IV, scene 1)
- "Willow song" in *Othello*, (Act IV, scene 3)
- "How Should I Your True Love Know?" in *Hamlet* (Act IV, scene 5)
- "Then They for Sudden Joy Did Weep" in *King Lear*, (Act I, scene 4)
- "When Gripping Griefs" in *Romeo and Juliet*, (Act IV, scene 5)

### **Plays with Prologue**

- *Romeo and Juliet*- before Act I and Act II
- *Troilus and Cressida*
- *Henry VIII*
- *Henry V*
- *Richard III*

- *Henry IV Part 2*
- *Pericles*- before every Act
- *Macbeth*- given by the three witches
- *The Two Noble Kinsmen*
- *The Taming of the Shrew*- the Induction scene

### **Plays with Epilogue**

- *Romeo and Juliet*- spoken by Prince Escalus
- *Henry VIII*
- *The Tempest*- Prospero requests that the audience free him
- *Henry IV Part 2*- It offers an apology for the "badness" of the play and requests applause from the audience followed by a prayer for the Queen and promises the audience a sequel to the play that will feature Falstaff
- *As You Like It*- Rosalind says that the play is breaking theatrical norms by allowing a female character to perform the epilogue. Hence, she gives the epilogue.
- *Henry V*- The Chorus reminds the audience that Henry died very young, leaving the kingdom to his infant son, during whose reign France was lost and England did "bleed."
- *The Two Noble Kinsmen*
- *All's Well that Ends Well*
- *Henry V*
- *Pericles*
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*- dance performance
- *Twelfth Night*- Feste song

### **The Passionate Pilgrim**

- Published in 1599
- An [anthology](#) of 20 poems- only five are considered Shakespearean



- Published by [William Jaggard](#)
- Poems-
  - “When my love swears that she is made of truth” - later appears as Sonnet 138
  - “Two loves I have, of comfort and despair” - later appears as Sonnet 144
  - “Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye” - appears in Love’s Labour Lost
  - “If love makes me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?” - appears in Love’s Labour Lost
  - “On a day (alack the day)- appears in Love’s Labour Lost.

## **Settings of the Plays**

*As You Like It*

Setting: Forest of Arden

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Setting: Athens, and a wood nearby

*The Merchant of Venice*

Setting: Partly in Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia on the Continent

*All's Well that Ends Well*

Setting: Rousillon, Paris, Florence, and Marseilles

*The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Setting: Windsor

*The Tempest*

Setting: The Sea; afterwards an Island

*Timon of Athens*

Setting: Athens

*Antony and Cleopatra*

Setting: Parts of the Roman Empire

*Hamlet*

Setting: Elsinore

*Julius Caesar*

Setting: Rome; afterwards, Sardis and near Philippi

*King Lear*

Setting: Britain

*The Comedy of Errors*

Setting: Ephesus

*Coriolanus*

Setting: Rome, Corioli, and Antium

*Cymbeline*

Setting: Britain, Italy

*Love's Labour's Lost*

Setting: Navarre

*Macbeth*

Setting: Scotland and England

*Measure for Measure*

Setting: Vienna

*Much Ado about Nothing*

Setting: Messina

*Othello*

Setting: Venice (for first act) and a sea-port in Cyprus

*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*

Setting: various countries

*Romeo and Juliet*

Setting: Verona and Mantua

*The Taming of the Shrew*

Setting: Sometimes in Padua, and sometimes in Petruchio's home in the country.

## Heroines

- Beatrice and Hero in Much Ado About Nothing
- Cordelia, Goneril and Regan in King Lear
- Desdemona in Othello
- Gertrude and Ophelia in Hamlet
- Titania, Hippolyta, Hermia and Helena in Midsummer Night's Dream
- Imogen in Cymbeline
- Celia and Rosalind in As You Like It
- Bianca and Katherine in Taming The Shrew
- Hermione in A Winter's Tale
- Isabella in Measure for Measure
- Miranda in the Tempest
- Viola and Olivia in Twelfth Night
- Portia in The Merchant of Venice
- Tamora in Titus Andronicus

- Volumnia in Coriolanus

## **Fools**

- Falstaff in Henry IV Parts 1 and 2
- Feste in Twelfth Night
- Costard in Love's Labour Lost
- Nick Bottom in Midsummer Night's Dream
- Puck in Midsummer Night's Dream
- The Fool in King Lear
- The Gravediggers in Hamlet
- Touchstone in As You Like It
- Trinculo in The Tempest
- Pompey in Measure for Measure

## **Jacobean Dramatists**

### **Thomas Middleton (1580-1627)**

- ▶ *The Phoenix* (1603)
- ▶ *The Honest Whore I* (1604)- in collaboration with Thomas Dekker; Bellafront the prostitute, her love for Count Hippolyta and how ultimately she redeems herself; Setting of Milan.
- ▶ *Michaelmas Term* (1604)
- ▶ *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1605)
- ▶ *A Mad World, My Masters* (1605)
- ▶ *The Bloody Banquet* (1608-1609)- written in collaboration with Thomas Dekker.

- ▶ A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1611)
- ▶ More Dissemblers Besides Women (1614)
- ▶ A Fair Quarrel (1616)- in collaboration with Rowley.
- ▶ The Old Law (1618-1619)- In collaboration with William Rowley.
- ▶ Anything for a Quiet Life (1621)- in collaboration with John Webster.
- ▶ The Changeling (1622)- In collaboration with John Rowley; Revenge Tragedy; sexually explicit; Spanish court; Beatrice Joanna is trying to escape an engagement with Alonso she dislikes and go with Alsemero, the man she loves. She hires De Flors, a Machiavellian character to kill Alonso but instead gets caught up in tricks of De Flors. Subplot is in an asylum: of Antony trying to woo Isabella disguised as a Mad Man; Dance scene of Madmen as birds and animals.
- ▶ Women Beware Women (1625)- Degeneration of Bianca; Bianca eloped with Leantio but with the help of Livia she is raped by the Duke. Hence, she has to marry him. Hippolito is also trying to woo Isabella; Leantio becomes involved with Livia. All the characters die in the end.
- ▶ A Game at Chess (1625)- Suppressed by James I; only 9 performances at the Globe; White pieces allegorical of English and Black of the Spanish.
- ▶ The Revenger's Tragedy- A Jacobean revenge tragedy. Vindice seeks the revenge for the death of his fiancé Gloriana, poisoned by the Duke, 9 years before the play began.

### **Thomas Dekker (1572-1632)**

- ▶ Dramatist and Pamphleteer.
- ▶ Old Fortunatus (1599)

- ▶ The Shoemaker's Holiday or The Gentle Craft (1599)- Inspired from Thomas Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*, which is a true story of a shoemaker Simone Eyre.
- ▶ "The Wonderful Year" (1603)- Pamphlet; About James I's coronation, plague, deaths, etc.
- ▶ The Honest Whore (1604-1605)- In collaboration with Middleton.
- ▶ Old Fortunatus (1599)- A morality play based on a German legend.
- ▶ News from Hell (1606)- continuation of Thomas Nashe's *Piers Plowman, his supplication to Devil*.
- ▶ "The Seven Deadly Sins" (1606)- Of London; a pamphlet. In collaboration with Middleton
- ▶ "The Belman of London" (1608)- a pamphlet; Tom 'O' Bedlam is the leader of Beggar's Army.
- ▶ The Gull's Hornbook (1609)- In collaboration with Middleton
- ▶ The Roaring Girl (1610)- in collaboration with Thomas Middleton.

### **Thomas Heywood (1570-1641)**

- ▶ Called "Prose Shakespeare" by Charles Lamb.
- ▶ The Four Prentices of London: with the conquest of Jerusalem. (1592; 1613)- burlesque of old romances.
- ▶ A Woman Killed with Kindness (1603)- domestic tragedy; inspired by Middleton's 'A Fair Quarrel'; title is taken from a dialogue in 'The Taming of a Shrew'; Anne is seduced by Wendoll, friend of her husband Frankford; for repentance she is sent to a lonely manor where she self-starves and dies in the arms of her husband.

- ▶ An Apology for Actors, containing Three Brief Treatises (1612)
- ▶ The Royal King and The Loyal Subject (1618)
- ▶ The English Traveler (1623)- domestic tragedy.
- ▶ A Mayden-Head Well Lost (1634)
- ▶ A Challenge for Beautie (1636)
- ▶ The Queen's Masque (1636)

### **John Marston (1576-1634)**

- ▶ Involved in War of Theater with Ben Jonson and Thomas Dekker.
- ▶ In 1601, he was considered as one of the greatest dramatists of the age along with Shakespeare, Jonson & Chapman.
- ▶ The Metamorphosis of Pigmaliions Image and Ceratine Satyres (1598)
- ▶ The Scourge of Villanie: Three Books of Satyres (1599)
- ▶ Histrionastix (1599)- with Thomas Dekker
- ▶ Antonio and Mellida (1599-1600)- Act V: Antonio rises from the Coffin.
- ▶ Antonio's Revenge (1600)
- ▶ Jacke Drums Entertainment; or The Comedie of Pasquill and Katherine (1601)
- ▶ What You Will (1601)
- ▶ The Malcontent (1604)- Story of the usurping Duke of Genoa, Pierto Iacomo and Malevole. Induction scene written by John Webster; Theme of incest. Protagonist id Altofronto, the banished duke of Genoa.

- ▶ Parasitaster, or the Fawn (1604)
- ▶ Eastward Hoe (1604-1605)- Collaboration with Ben Jonson and George Chapman.
- ▶ The Dutch Courtesan (1605)- Freevill and Malheureux (puritan) are both in a passionate yet turbulent relationship with Dutch courtesan Franceschina. The play was found anti-puritanical for explicit sexual content. In the end Franceschina is whipped & imprisoned.
- ▶ The Spectacle Presented to the Sacred Majesties of Great Britain, and Denmark as They Passed through London (1606)
- ▶ The Entertainment of the Dowager Countess of Darby (1607)

### **George Chapman (1559-1634)**

- ▶ The Shadows of Night (1594)- A poem in two parts '*Hymnus in Noctem*' and '*Hymnun in Cynthiam*'.
- ▶ Ovid's Banquet of Sense (1595)- parodies Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and its erroctic elements.
- ▶ The Blind Beggar of Alexandria (1596)- first play
- ▶ A Humorous Day's Mirth (1597)
- ▶ 1598- wrote a continuation of Marlowe's unfinished *Hero and Leander*
- ▶ All Fools (1605)- based on Terence's 2 comedies *Heauton Timorumenos* and *Adelphoe*.
- ▶ Bussy D' Ambois (1607)- on Henry III of France's brother; Bussy is a malcontent character.
- ▶ The Revenge of Bussy D' Ambois (1610)



- ▶ Translation of Homer's Iliad (1611)
- ▶ Caesar and Pompey (1613)
- ▶ Translation of Homer's Odyssey (1616)- John Keats praised this work in his "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" sonnet (1816)

### **John Webster (1578-1634)**

- ▶ Caesar's Fall (1602)- in collaboration with Michael Drayton Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton and Anthony Munday
- ▶ Lady Jane (1602)- in collaboration with Thomas Heywood
- ▶ Westward Hoe (1604)- In collaboration with Thomas Dekker
- ▶ Northward Hoe (1605)- In collaboration with Thomas Dekker
- ▶ The White Devil (1608-1609)
- ▶ The Devil's Law Case (1610)
- ▶ The Duchess of Malfi (1613)
- ▶ Anything for a Quiet Life (1621)- in collaboration with John Middleton
- ▶ The Fair Maid of the Inn (1625)- In collaboration with Philip Massinger
- ▶ A Cure for a Cuckold (1625)- in collaboration with Heywood

### **John Ford (1586-1642)**

- ▶ It's a Pity She's a Whore (1633)- Incest theme; Love story of Giovanni and his sister Annabella. Her suitor is Soranzo. In the end, Giovanni is killed by Soranzo's hired killers.
- ▶ The Broken Heart (1633)

### **James Shirley (1596-1666)**

- ▶ Hyde Park (1637)- Comedy of Manners

### **Philip Massinger (1584-1640)**

- ▶ A New Way to Pay Old Debts- famous character- Sir Giles Overreach
- ▶ The Great Duke of Florence
- ▶ The Virgin Martyr
- ▶ The Maid of Honour

### ***The White Devil***

- ▶ Married Venetian Vittoria Corombona, and the Duke of Bracciano have fallen in love.
- ▶ Vittoria's brother, Flamineo, exploits this information to advance his career.
- ▶ He plots for the two to meet up alone in order to become Bracciano's secretary.
- ▶ During the clandestine meeting, Vittoria and Flamineo's mother, Cornelia, sees them and, mortified, curses them. She wants them to end this affair.
- ▶ However, this incidents works in reverse as Bracciano's lust for Vittoria only multiplies and he schemes with Flamineo to have his wife, Isabella, and Vittoria's husband, Camillo, murdered.
- ▶ Quite suspiciously, Isabella is soon poisoned and Camillo's neck broken.
- ▶ Vittoria, however, is the one sent to court as the suspect.

- ▶ The Cardinal Monticelso and Francisco de Medici, the Great Duke of Florence and Isabella's brother, sentence her to live her days in a house prostitutes.
- ▶ Although Bracciano attends the court hearing, he does not take responsibility for his actions.
- ▶ Eventually, Flamineo starts an affair with Zanche, Vittoria's chambermaid, but his older brother, Marcello, becomes quite suspicious;so Flamineo kills him.
- ▶ This is the last straw for Cornelia who finally goes mad with grief.
- ▶ Francisco soon finds out that Bracciano had a hand in plotting his sister Isabella's death and so he hires Lodovico and Gasparoto to kill Bracciano;They are successful.
- ▶ Flamineo now sets out to determine Vittoria and Zanche's loyalty.
- ▶ In the climax, a double pistol shootout takes place.
- ▶ Vittoria and Zanche try to kill Flamineo, but the bullets in the guns turn out to be blanks.
- ▶ Flamineo, after having realized their intention, attempts to kill them, but just as he raises his daggers, Gasparo and Lodovico appear and kill all the three- Flamineo, Vittoria, and Zanche.

### ***The Duchess of Malfi***

- ▶ Setting: Italian city of Malfi.
- ▶ The Duchess is a young widow who falls in love with her steward, Antonio.

- ▶ Her scheming brothers, Duke Ferdinand and the Cardinal, however, do not want this marriage since they are keen to eventually seize her fortune.
- ▶ Suspicious, they hire spy Bosola, who finds out that the Duchess is pregnant but doesn't know who the father is.
- ▶ The Duchess and Antonio have actually married in secret and eventually have three children.
- ▶ On knowing about her condition, Duchess is threatened by Ferdinand, who also might have some sexual attraction towards his sister, to be disowned.
- ▶ Fearing for her life, she plans to elope away. Antonio escapes with children to Ancona first.
- ▶ Duchess entrusts Bosola to deliver her jewelry to him unaware that he is a spy.
- ▶ She eventually escapes to Ancona.
- ▶ However, Cardinal eavesdrops the plan and in a mad rage sends an army to have the two lovers killed.
- ▶ Antonio escapes with the first born, however, Duchess and the children are captured, brought back to Malfi and killed (Ferdinand's orders).
- ▶ However, constant slacking and mistreatment by the brothers and a sense of guilt and sympathy towards the Duchess turns Bosola against the brothers.
- ▶ He eventually decides to take revenge for the Duchess.
- ▶ Cardinal, eventually, kills his mistress Julia with a poisoned Bible after having made a confession to her.

- ▶ Overhearing that Cardinal plans to kill Bosola, Bosola goes to the chapel where Cardinal prays, however, he kills Antonio there.
- ▶ Eventually, Bosola stabs first Cardinal, then Ferdinand, and himself gets mortally wounded in the fight that is ensued.
- ▶ In the end, the throne of Malfi goes to Duchess' eldest son.
- ▶ Source: William Painter's The Palace of Pleasure
- ▶ Act IV scene ii- Ferdinand has brought madmen to scare the Duchess.
- ▶ Act III Scene iv- Mime scene where Cardinal adorns a soldier's attire and acts the banishment of the Duchess.
- ▶ "Duchess: I am Duchess of Malfi still.
- ▶ Bosola: That makes thy sleeps so broken:
- ▶ Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
- ▶ But looked to near, have neither heat, nor light."
- ▶ (Act IV Scene ii)
- ▶ After having lost everything she still utters these lines.

## **Ben Jonson**

- Benjamin Jonson (1572-1637)
- Played Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy*
- Popularized the Theory of Humours.

## Plays

- ***A Tale of a Tub***

- *Written- 1596*
- *Performed- 1633*
- *Published- 1640*
- *The play opens on the day of St. Valentine's.*
- *Different suitors are pursuing Audrey Turfe, daughter of constable Turfe.*
- *They try to break her engagement with John Clay, who is a tilemaker.*
- *A suitor, Squire Tub, tries to break off their engagement by putting a false accusation on Clay of stealing, for which he is pursued by constable Turfe.*
- *In the meantime, lady Tub's usher, Pol Marten, woos Audrey and marry her.*
- *Their wedding celebration has a masque performed with the same name.*
- *The name of the title derives as a synonym for*
- *"A cock and a bull story"- which means an implausible, tell-tale.*

- ***The Isle of Dogs***

- *Performed in 1597*
- *Written in collaboration with Thomas Nashe.*
- *It refers to a location on the banks of River Thames called Placentia, where Queen's Privy Council met and where the Queen had her dog kennel.*
- *The play was consequently suppressed because it was believed that it meant to degrade the Council ministers.*
- *It is now a lost play.*
- *Originally, it was performed at the Swan theatre.*

- All the theaters in London were shut down for a month as punishment.
- Jonson was lucky enough not to have his career ended.
- Nashe remained in exile until 1601, in which year he died.
- ***Everyman in his Humor***
  - 1598
  - Performed in the Curtain theater by Lord Chamberlain's Men.
  - Shakespeare played the character of Knowell in it.
  - Prologue: Jonson wishes to depict contemporary times and its "deeds and language for the audience to laugh at.
  - It can be considered as a Comedy of Correction.
  - Father Knowell tries to spy on his son Edward Knowell to check his moral status.
  - For this he appoints his servant Brainworm.
  - Subplot- Kitley the merchant invites many city gallants to his house to check his wife's morality.
  - Captain Bobadill- Braggart soldier, inspired by Plautus' comedy *Miles Gloriosus*. In Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Pecksniff is also inspired by Bobadill.
- ***Everyman Out of His Humor***
  - 1599; published in 1600.
  - Reply to John Marston's *Histriomastix or the Player Whipped*.
  - In this play, Marston satirizes Jonson and Thomas Dekker.
  - Hence, in Act III scene I, Jonson shows Marston as Clove the Clown.
  - He also satirizes Shakespeare as Sogliardo, the bumpkin.
  - Important characters-
    - Moral commentators- Mitis and Cordatus
    - Macilente- malcontent character

- Carlo Buffon- Jester
- Fastidious Brisk- a courtier who is over-indulgent in current fashions
- Sordido- a miserly farmer
- Fungoso- Sordido's son who wishes to be a courtier
- Puntarvolo- a vainglorious knight

- ***Cynthia's Revels***

- Performed in 1600
- The play begins with a dispute over the black cloak of the prologue speaker. Ultimately Anaides speaks it but rest of the players try to shut him down.
- Setting- Gargaphie in Greece
- The main play opens with Cynthia, or Goddess Diana (Queen Elizabeth), ordering revels, joined by Mercury and Cupid.
- Mercury has disturbed the weeping Echo who laments the fate of Narcissus.
- She tells that anyone who drinks from his springs falls in excessive love with himself; hence, all of the party gathered there drink from his spring.
- Getting emboldened by the water of the spring, a foolish character Asotus challenges everyone in a competition of court compliments.
- The competition is held in 4 phases.
- 2 musical masques also take place for revelry but soon Cynthia unmask the revelers and show them to be vices not virtues.
- To correct their folly, she sends them to Mount Helicon to purify their body and soul.

- ***The Poetaster***

- 1601
- "Would be Poet"



- Use of classical setting in the reign of King Augustus Caesar.
- John Marston is represented as Crispinus; Thomas Dekker as Demetrius. They are the foolish poetasters.
- They together conspire to dishonor Horace or Jonson himself.
- The character of Judge is of Virgil.
- Marston is satirized for his use of rhetoric and Dekker is satirized for his comedies.
- The reply by Marston and Dekker is *Satiromastix; or, the Undressing of the Humorous Poet*.
- **Eastward Hoe**
  - Written in 1605
  - In collaboration with George Chapman and John Marston.
  - A city comedy.
  - Setting: London of 16<sup>th</sup> century
  - This play satirizes the conventions of contemporary society and offends James I for its anti-Scottish undertones, for which James I have them all arrested.
  - Touchstone, a goldsmith, has two daughters, Gertrude, the vain one, and Mildred, the modest one.
  - His 2 apprentices are Quicksilver, a spendthrift, and Golding, a decent, industrious man.
  - Gertrude was to marry nobleman Sir Petronel Flash but Touchstone arranges for Golding to marry Mildred.
  - Quicksilver decides to take revenge on Touchstone by conspiring with Sir Petronel to cheat on Gertrude out of her dowry.
  - As they are escaping, they are shipwrecked at the Isle of Dogs while trying to escape 'eastward' to Virginia.
  - They are arrested and brought before Golding, who is now a magistrate.
  - Golding takes pity on the repentant adventurers.

- He asks Touchstone to go to prison to see them repentant.
- Ultimately, Touchstone also forgives them.
- Petronel and Gertrude are reconciled in the end.
- Quicksilver is also forgiven.
- ***Volpone the Fox***
  - Volpone, a rich Venetian, pretends that he is dying so as to receive gifts from his would-be heirs.
  - Mosca, his parasite servant, persuades each of the potential heirs that he is to be the heir, and thus exploits them of costly presents.
  - Corvino, the crow, even attempts to sacrifice his wife Cilia to Volpone in hope of the inheritance.
  - Finally Volpone, to enjoy the confusion of the vultures who are awaiting his death, makes his will and pretends to be dead.
  - Mosca takes advantage of the situation and blackmails Volpone, but Volpone reveals all to the authorities.
  - They punish Volpone to be cast in irons; Mosca is to be whipped and confined to the galleys; Corvino made to parade in ass's ears, and his wife be returned to her family with a multiplied dowry.
  - A secondary plot involves Sir Politic Would-be, an English traveller who has absurd schemes for improving trade and curing diseases, and his Lady Would-be.
- ***Epicoene; the Silent Woman***
  - Performed-1609; Published- 1616
  - London setting
  - Theme of cross-dressing- Man Cutbeard
  - Morose, a rich old bachelor, is seeking a silent wife.
  - His disinherited nephew Sir Dauphine Eugenie plants Epicoene to trap Morose.

- When Morose comes across Epicoene, who lives nearby and hardly speaks, he marries her instantly.
- However, once married, Epicene turns out to be talkative and bawdy and invites admirers at their house for an riotous wedding feast.
- Morose tries to drive the revelers from his house and pleads for a divorce.
- Sir Dauphine intervenes to help him get the divorce in return of fortune and inheritance.
- In the end it is revealed that Epicene is in fact a boy; hence, the grounds for divorce are made.
- ***The Alchemist***
  - Performed- 1610; Published- 1612.
  - By King's Men
  - Preface- addressed to "Fortune".
  - The play opens in Lovewit's house, who has decided to shift to countryside from Blackfriars city due to a plague epidemic.
  - Jeremy the Butler will conspire with Subtle, a fake alchemist and Dol Common, the prostitute to fool people from the mansion.
  - Their customers include-
  - Druggier, the Tobacconist who wishes to set up a great business estate.
  - Dapper, the lawyer's clerk wishes to gain luck in gambling.
  - Sir Epicure Mammon, the Knight wishes for philosopher's stone.
  - Mammon's friend Surly will bust the trio dressed as a Spanish nobleman.
  - Other characters- the Anabaptists, Dame Plaine the widow and her brother Kastril.
  - Ultimately, Lovewit marries the widow and Jeremy asks the audience for forgiveness.

- S.T. Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* calls it one of the “three most perfect plots ever planned”.
- The other two being *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles and *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding.
- ***Bartholomew Fair***
  - Performed by Queen’s Men in 1614.
  - Published in 1631.
  - Setting- Bartholomew Fair at Smithfield
  - Date- 24<sup>th</sup> August, St. Bartholomew’s Day celebrations.
  - Preface- Jonson hopes his play is worth the money for the audience. The Stage-keeper appears and criticize the play for being unromantic; then the Book-keeper appears and replies that the play is written for the contemporary times and the audience must not expect of Jonson to take him back into time of wonder.
  - The play also has a puppet show- a burlesque of Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander* and Greek myth of Damon and Pythias.
  - Characters-
    - Littlewit
    - Win, Littlewit’s wife
    - Dame Purefact- Littlewit’s Puritan and Rich mother-in-law who is pursuing Zeal-of-the-land Busy.
    - Quarlous, Littlewit’s friend who marries Dame in the end.
    - Wasp- a hotheaded countryman pursuing grace.
    - Winwife- a friend of Littlewit; ultimately marries Garce.
    - Justice Adam Overdo- father of Grace
    - Edgeworth- A scoundrel and a pickpocket.

**Note: Refer to his Tragedy plays *Sejanus* (1603) and *Catiline* (1611).**

# **Restoration Theatre**

## ***The Way of the World***

- Written by William Congreve.
- First performed in 1700 in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London.
- Act I opens in a chocolate house where Mirabell and Fainall have just finished playing cards.
- Mirabell is informed by a footman that Waitwell, his servant, and Foible, Lady Wishfort's servant, got married that morning.
- Here Mirabell tells Fainall about his love of Millamant.
- The only issue is that if her guardian, Lady Wishfort, should marry, he will lose £6000 of Millamant's inheritance.
- He needs her consent to save that money.
- Fainall has affair with Mrs. Marwood, though she is friends with his wife.
- He accuses her of loving Mirabell (which she does).
- Mrs. Fainall (Mirabell's former lover) also tells Mirabell that she hates her husband, and they begin to plot to deceive Lady Wishfort into giving her consent to the marriage.
- Millamant appears in Act II for the first time; she only has a vague idea about the plan.

- We are introduced to Lady Wishfort in Act III.
- The plan is, she is encouraged by Foible to marry the supposed Sir Rowland – Mirabell's supposed uncle – so that Mirabell will lose his inheritance.
- Sir Rowland is, however, Waitwell in disguise, and the plan is to entangle Lady Wishfort in a marriage which cannot go ahead, because it would be bigamy, not to mention a social disgrace.
- Mirabell will offer to help her out of the embarrassing situation if she consents to his marriage.
- Later, Mrs. Fainall discusses this plan with Foible, but this is overheard by Mrs. Marwood. She later tells the plan to Fainall, who decides that he will take his wife's money and go away with Mrs. Marwood.
- Mirabell and Millamant are two strong headed characters and they discuss their conditions of marriage in a very crucial scene called the Proviso scene in Act IV Scene v.
- After all the intrigues, Millamant earns her full £12000 inheritance and marries Mirabell.

### ***The Country Wife***

- Written by William Wycherley.
- Written in 1675.
- The play begins with a Prologue, spoken by the actor playing Harry Horner, who gives the conventional “apology” for the play that is to follow.

- Horner tells The Quack that he has spread a rumor that a treatment for venereal disease rendered him impotent, and so it will also allow the ladies to undertake liaisons with him and yet preserve their honor in the eyes of the world.
- Sir Jasper arranges for Horner to act as his wife's, Lady Fidget's, new chaperone and companion.
- Horner's two friends are Frank Harcourt and Mr. Dorilant.
- Mr. Sparkish is a fatuous character who is a false-wit.
- Pinchwife, a newly married, has not heard the rumors, and privately fears that Horner will cuckold him.
- Margery Pinchwife complains to her sister-in-law Alethea that her husband has confined her to indoors due to his jealousy.
- She also reveals how she admires actors at theaters.
- Her husband appears and tells her that she is admired by someone (Horner because he said he saw her at the theater), and she is delighted to know that, but is also locked in a room.
- Sparkish, the fiancé of Alethea brings his friend Harcourt to show off his fiancée but Harcourt begins to flirt with her,
- Sparkish doesn't seem to realize this even after Althea tries to bring it to his notice.

- In Act III Pinchwife expresses he wishes to settle back to the countryside with Margery which she detests.
- After her much protestation he disguises her as a boy and takes her out for outing to the New Exchange, a Theater, where Horner, Harcourt, and Dorilant are also present.
- Here Horner approaches Margery as he recognizes her but Pinchwife cannot do anything so as to not blow off her cover.
- Harcourt also expresses his love to Alethea in front of Sparkish, which he still cannot understand, which drives her mad.
- As Pinchwife turns his back, Horner makes Margery run away and sends her back with gifts.
- Pinchwife suspects he has been cuckolded.
- Sir Jasper now comes to unite Horner with his wife Lady Fidget.
- Alethea is also married to Sparkish, though disapproved by her own maid Lucy.
- In Act IV, while shopping for China, Horner and Fidget try to make love which is caught by her husband.
- He objects but she says she was only checking if he was ticklish and he is also an expert on china dishes.
- They enter another room on that pretext.



- Here Pichwife also learns that he has not been cuckolded and he tells Margery to write a hate letter to Horner, but she exchanges it for a love letter.
- Pichwife hands over the letter to Horner who pretends to read a hateful letter.
- Sparkish comes and invites them for dinner as a celebration for his wedding, but Horner puts up a condition that he will come only if Margery is also present.
- In Act V, Pinchwife catches Margery writing a love letter to Horner but she signs it off as Alethea. She then disguises herself as Alethea and goes to visit Horner.
- Pinchwife confronts Sparkish about the letter and so he insults her. She only disapproves saying her good nature was to blame for her predicament.
- At Horner's place, the Fidgets arrive and Lady Fidget reveals of her relations with Horner.
- Dainty Fidget and Mistress Squeamish are also there, who have no problem in sharing him amongst the three of them because their husbands don't look after them properly due to upper class pretensions and follies.
- Margery, all the while is hiding in the other room.
- In a turn of events, all the characters come to Horner's house and demand an explanation from him regarding the confusion.

- The Quack then appears, only to approve of Horner's deficiency.
- In the final scene, Harcourt indicates his impatience to be a husband, the Pinchwifes each indicate their distaste for their marriage, and Lucy insists to Pinchwife that Margery's expression of love for Horner was only a reply to his jealousy, which Margery has to reluctantly confirm.
- Pinchwife has no other way to believe in, though he is reluctant to accept it fully- "For my own sake fain I would all believe; / Cuckolds, like lovers, should themselves deceive."

### ***The Plain Dealer***

- Written by William Wycherley.
- It is loosely based on Molière's *Le Misanthrope*.
- At his lodgings, the sea captain Manly tells Lord Plausible that he does not intend to subscribe to standard etiquette: he feels it is too hypocritical. After a brief exchange, Manly rudely dismisses Plausible.
- Freeman visits; he is shocked at Manly's behaviour to Plausible. Manly instructs his servant Oakham not to admit any man to his apartment; Oakham jokes that perhaps he would allow a woman to be admitted.
- Manly praises the virtues of his only friend to Freeman, and tells the latter that he is no friend to anyone

because of his polished manners, and his belief that he must be friends with everyone.

- Freeman argues that a “cool friend is better than an enemy.” Fidelia enters, dressed as a man; pretending to be a boy, she has served Manly aboard ship, and pleads with him to take her on his next voyage. The Widow Blackacre arrives, to their consternation.
- Manly asks after Olivia, the Widow’s cousin, and the woman he loves. The Widow dismisses his interest, and proceeds to demonstrate her son Jerry’s adeptness at legal discourse. Jerry is reluctant to do so, however.
- Manly finally silences them, and exits.
- Freeman asks the Widow to marry him, but she is scandalized that he would propose in front of her “dear minor”. They leave.
- Fidelia tells Freeman that Manly has entrusted ten thousand pounds to Olivia, his poor and ugly intended wife, who is in the care of his greatest friend, Vernish.
- Fidelia laments her impulse to follow Manly, whom she loves, in the guise of a boy. Manly and Freeman set out for Olivia’s.
- In Act II, After Olivia swears never to let a lover enter her doors, a gentleman arrives: it is Mr. Novel, a gossip-monger. They proceed to defame the characters of most of the town’s residents.

- Manly arrives. Olivia has no interest in talking to him individually, to his “Confusion!” They tease him to the point at which Olivia has “talked [him] out of all respect [he] had for her”.
- Manly orders Plausible and Novel to leave. Manly tells Olivia that he now hates her though Fidelia reminds him that Olivia still has his money and jewels.
- However, Olivia admits that she has given the money and jewels to -- her husband! The latter gentleman is out of the country, and thus unable to return Manly’s possessions.
- The Widow Blackacre and Major Oldfox arrive to visit Olivia. Freeman argues with Oldfox about his right to ask the Widow to marry him.
- The Widow is shocked to hear of Oldfox’s amorous intentions, and tells him to marry his laundress.
- She then tells Freeman, who is twenty years younger than her, that she is aware of his lavish lifestyle, and that he only intends to court her to get her money.
- In Act III, Manly confesses in a soliloquy that he still loves Olivia.
- Fidelia, who has told Manly that Olivia has asked “him” to come into her house, is then ordered by Manly to do just that, in case Olivia has repented her bad behaviour of the morning.

- However, Fidelia reports to Manly the proceedings of her meeting with Olivia: the latter lady has thrown herself at the young “man”!
- Manly is disbelieving, then appalled to learn that Olivia has given Fidelia a key to her back garden for a midnight tryst.
- Manly takes the key as his “instrument of revenge.”
- Freeman then arrives to report that Jerry has deserted his mother to become his ward.
- In Act IV, Manly tells Fidelia that he has made love to Olivia, but under the guise of the younger man because of which she cries.
- Fidelia is to write a little love-note to arrange another meeting, which will be surprised by Manly, who will expose the duplicity to Olivia.
- When Fidelia hears that Manly abhors Olivia, she agrees to write the note.
- Widow is appalled to see Jerry has chosen Freeman as his guardian; to cover up, he proposes to her for marriage.
- The Widow refuses him, and tells Jerry that he legally cannot inherit anything, as he was born out of wedlock.
- Vernish, Olivia’s husband, returns unexpectedly as she waits for Fidelia.
- He draws his sword, as soon as Fidelia arrives disguised as a boy.

- But she refuses to fight, and admits she is a woman in a man's clothing. Olivia having departed, Vernish tries to make love to Fidelia, but she fends him off.
- In the end, Manly fights off Vernish, wins his money back and returns Fidelia's love for her dedication to him.

### ***The Rover***

- *The Rover or The Banish'd Cavaliers* is a play in two parts that is written by the English author Aphra Behn.
- It is a revision of Thomas Killigrew's play *Thomaso, or The Wanderer* (1664), and depicts the amorous adventures of a group of Englishmen in Naples at Carnival time.
- Prologue- The prologue, opens with the assertion that neither play-goers nor critics tend to give unknown playwrights a chance. The narrator further comments that the established writers mocking a new work are often bores and plagiarists themselves, and that wit and creating the illusion of easy conversation require terribly hard work.
- She ends by rhetorically asking the playwright what she would say to the audience, to which the hypothetical playwright responds that people come for their own sakes—to have a good laugh at wit and debauchery.
- The first scene introduces two of the play's main female characters: Florinda and her younger sister Hellena, along with their brother, nobleman Don Pedro and a cousin, Valeria.

- Florinda wants to marry for love rather than for money, while Hellena wants to experience love rather than go into a convent.
- Although Florinda is in love with Belvile, a poor English Cavalier, her brother, Don Pedro, wants to marry her to the rich Don Antonio.
- Florinda, Hellena, and Valeria sneak out to Carnival in disguise.
- In the second scene, Belvile's friends Frederick and Blunt tease him for his devotion to Florinda as they look forward to the women they hope to seduce at Carnival.
- They meet up with Willmore, a naval captain and wandering freethinker, and remark on passing prostitutes. Florinda, Hellena, and Valeria enter, disguised as gypsies, and Hellena and Willmore banter and flirt.
- Belvile, not recognizing Florinda in her gypsy costume, is surprised when the gypsy tells him to meet Florinda later that night.
- Blunt, one of the other Englishmen, is targeted by a prostitute named Lucetta and leaves with her.
- The English Cavaliers discuss a poster advertising a famous courtesan named Angellica Bianca.
- Angellica charges 1000 crowns a month for her company. The price is so high the Cavaliers exclaim it's

enough to pay for the company of a princess (the Infanta).

- They lament that they are all poor. Blunt returns, declaring he is in love, but he is clearly being duped.
- Don Pedro and Don Antonio arrive separately to court Angellica. Though they are masked, Don Pedro recognizes his friend—and his sister's fiancé.
- Despite his engagement to Florinda, Antonio wants to pay for Angellica's services.
- Don Pedro is angered because of the insult to his sister and because he also wants Angellica.
- He challenges Antonio to a duel.
- Willmore tries to steal Angellica's picture, and a fight breaks out.
- Angellica calls Willmore to her chambers in the second scene. Rather than apologizing to her, he argues with her and tries to get her to lower her price.
- Angellica is charmed by his boldness and falls in love.
- She sleeps with him for nothing, and her servant complains love is the ruin of all prostitutes.
- Hellena has fallen in love with Willmore.
- Florinda is horrified at her sister's willfulness and lack of virtue.



- The Cavaliers enter, discussing Willmore, and Hellena eavesdrops. Willmore joins them and brags about having bedded Angellica.
- Blunt leaves to meet Lucetta.
- Hellena confronts Willmore, who seems to forget Angellica as soon as a new woman enters his field of vision. She demands he never see Angellica again.
- Angellica enters and is dismayed by their exchange. Valeria flirts with Frederick, while Florinda—in disguise—tests Belvile's loyalty.
- Not recognizing her, he pays no attention to this stranger, and Florinda leaves him a jewel to show it was her.
- In scenes 2, 3, and 4, Lucetta and her pimp rob the amorous Blunt of everything but his underwear and leave gloating. Blunt vows revenge on all of womankind.
- Scene 5 finds Florinda waiting to meet Belvile, but Willmore stumbles in drunkenly and attempts to rape her. Her cries alert both Belvile, who tries to fight Willmore, and her brother, Pedro—ruining her escape.
- In scene 6 Belvile rages at Willmore, who refuses to fight him. Instead, Willmore gets into a fight with Don Antonio below Angellica's rooms, and wounds Don Antonio. Passersby believe Antonio has been murdered. Willmore departs, and when a group of soldiers arrives, Belvile is arrested for the assault.

- With Don Antonio's arm wounded, he cannot fight his duel the next day. In scene 1, he persuades Belvile to duel in his place.
- Belvile despises Don Antonio, but agrees, believing he will be fighting another rival for Florinda.
- Scene 2 finds Belvile disguised as Don Antonio. He defeats Don Pedro in a duel.
- Florinda intercedes for her brother's life, and Belvile lays his sword at her feet.
- Don Pedro still believes the other duelist is Don Antonio. He is impressed and insists Florinda must marry the duelist at once.
- This would be ideal for Belvile and Florinda, but Willmore reveals Belvile and spoils the couple's good fortune.
- Angellica confronts Willmore angrily about Hellena, and Hellena arrives disguised as a boy. She relates a story about a noblewoman in love with Willmore. Willmore recognizes her and tries to teach her a lesson by abusing the fictional noblewoman.
- Angellica demands Willmore never see this other woman again. When she suspects Willmore will be unfaithful anyway, she vows revenge.
- In scene 3 Florinda and Valeria escape in disguise, although they are pursued by Willmore.

- Scenes 4 and 5 follow Florinda as she slips into Belvile's lodgings—a house where Blunt is recovering. She asks Blunt to shelter her, but instead he tries to rape her and invites Frederick to join him. She shows a ring to prove she is a noblewoman, and they lock her away
- In Act 5's single scene, Belvile, Don Pedro, and Willmore insist Blunt open his door. They laugh at his misery.
- Blunt explains he has a lady captive, and Belvile realizes it is Florinda but cannot say anything without giving her away. Don Pedro threatens his sister without realizing, until Valeria arrives to divert him elsewhere.
- Florinda reveals herself, forgives everyone, and leaves with Belvile to be married. Frederick also marries Valeria. Willmore stays behind.
- Angellica enters and threatens Willmore with a pistol, saying he has broken her heart and destroyed her honor. He admits he's not capable of being faithful, and she resolves to shoot him despite her lingering affection.
- Don Antonio arrives and offers to shoot Willmore for her, but she lets him live, hoping he'll suffer the same heartbreak she did. Don Pedro appears and challenges Don Antonio to another duel, since he failed to show up for the first one.
- Hellena walks in, and Willmore tries to convince her to sleep with him. She holds firm, and he agrees to marriage. Finally they tell each other their names. Don Pedro reluctantly blesses both his sisters' arrangements.

Revelers arrive and dance as Hellena and Willmore discuss their trepidation about marriage.

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- Epilogue- Behn's brief epilogue uses rhyming couplets to mock the audience and to decry those leaders who want to censor plays, "With canting Rule [they] wou'd the Stage refine." She complains that modern theater can be damaged by restrictive attitudes, since "such Fops are never pleas'd, unless the Play / Be stuff'd with Fools, as brisk and dull as they."

## Other Types of Drama

- **Tragedy-** Tragedy is a branch of drama that addresses the sorrowful downfall of a protagonist in a serious manner. The protagonist in a tragedy is a tragic hero of exalted social status whose own character flaw (Hamartia) combines with fate to bring about his ruin. The tragic form was first developed by the ancient Greeks as a dramatic art. Playwrights like Sophocles and Euripides wrote tragic dramas. These plays resulted in catharsis.
- **Comedy-** It is the opposite of Tragedy; it deals with light matter of non-serious concern. In it the characters fuss over petty issues and it invokes laughter and amusement in the audience.
- **Romantic Comedy-** It is a type of comedy that is based on themes of love. In it a hero & heroine overcome challenges to unite in the end and get married. The play ends with nuptial celebrations. These were popularized in the times of Shakespeare.
- **Restoration Comedy-** It became popular in the Restoration Age (1660-1700). It focused on social trends and gossips with repartee scenes. They were highly unsentimental. These plays appealed to the middle class. Also known as “Comedy of Manners”.
- **Mime-** Mime is a theatrical performance where the action of a story is told through the movement of the body, without the use of speech. It has its sources back in Ancient Greece, wherein a single masked dancer called *Pantomimus*, performed solo. They are also known as “Dumbshows”. Today, they are generally performed in black dress and white face.
- **Opera-** it is a form of drama in which music is a fundamental component and dramatic roles are taken by singers. It is composed in collaboration between a composer and a librettist, the writer of the text. It incorporates acting, costumes, dance and ballet. The performance is accompanied

by an orchestra or smaller musical ensemble, which since the early 19th century has been led by a conductor.

- **Masque-** It is also called masquerade. It began as a form of courtly entertainment with elements of music, dance, costumes, revelry, etc. participants used to wear flamboyant costumes & masks. Masque plays are a form of drama which became popular in Shakespearean times but was mastered by Ben Jonson during the Jacobean Era. They involved allegorical or mythical characters in a scenic setting. Dialogues are in rhymed verse with musical notes accompanied by songs and dance performances. E.g. 'Comus' by John Milton, 'The Masque of Beauty' by Ben Jonson, etc.
- **Closet Drama-** It is meant to be read only & not performed.
- **Melodrama-** Whereas regular plays focus on action, a melodrama is a dramatic work in which the plot revolves around a strong emotional appeal; emotionality & sentimentality takes precedence over action & characterization. Characters are primarily flat rather than round. They developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century French romance dramas & were later popularized in English dramas as well. They revolved around ethical & moral codes in a family, society or around an individual.
- **Epic Theatre-** It is a type of theatrical movement that popularized in the early to mid-20th century. It was given birth by the theories of a number of theatre practitioners who responded to the political climate of the time through the conception of political dramas. Epic theatre emphasizes the audience's perspective and reaction to the piece through a variety of techniques that deliberately cause them to individually engage in a different way. The purpose of epic theatre is not to encourage an audience to suspend their disbelief, but rather to force them to see their world as it is.

