

V. 1 I. THE INFLUENCE OF THE AUDIENCE ON SHAKESPEARES DRAMA.

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1: Shakespeare's influence - Wikipedia

Shakespeare's Influence on Drama Shakespeare was influential in his formation of a story. He included multiple plot twists and complicated story arcs. He intertwined characters and created love triangles. He was famous for his poetic wording and unique, clever language. Writers today use his.

Despite individual differences, the public theatres were three stories high, and built around an open space at the centre. Usually polygonal in plan to give an overall rounded effect, three levels of inward-facing galleries overlooked the open centre into which jutted the stage—essentially a platform surrounded on three sides by the audience, only the rear being restricted for the entrances and exits of the actors and seating for the musicians. The upper level behind the stage could be used as a balcony, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, or as a position for a character to harangue a crowd, as in *Julius Caesar*. Usually built of timber, lath and plaster and with thatched roofs, the early theatres were vulnerable to fire, and gradually were replaced when necessary with stronger structures. When the Globe burned down in June, it was rebuilt with a tile roof. A different model was developed with the Blackfriars Theatre, which came into regular use on a long term basis in The Blackfriars was small in comparison to the earlier theatres, and roofed rather than open to the sky; it resembled a modern theatre in ways that its predecessors did not. Elizabethan Shakespeare[edit] For Shakespeare as he began to write, both traditions were alive; they were, moreover, filtered through the recent success of the University Wits on the London stage. By the late 16th century, the popularity of morality and academic plays waned as the English Renaissance took hold, and playwrights like Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlowe revolutionised theatre. Their plays blended the old morality drama with classical theory to produce a new secular form. However, it was more ambiguous and complex in its meanings, and less concerned with simple allegory. Inspired by this new style, Shakespeare continued these artistic strategies, [6] creating plays that not only resonated on an emotional level with audiences but also explored and debated the basic elements of what it means to be human. He takes from Aristotle and Horace the notion of decorum; with few exceptions, he focuses on high-born characters and national affairs as the subject of tragedy. In most other respects, though, the early tragedies are far closer to the spirit and style of moralities. They are episodic, packed with character and incident; they are loosely unified by a theme or character. In comedy, Shakespeare strayed even further from classical models. The *Comedy of Errors*, an adaptation of *Menaechmi*, follows the model of new comedy closely. Like *Lyly*, he often makes romantic intrigue a secondary feature in Latin new comedy the main plot element; [10] even this romantic plot is sometimes given less attention than witty dialogue, deceit, and jests. The "reform of manners," which Horace considered the main function of comedy, [11] survives in such episodes as the gulling of *Malvolio*. In these years, he responded to a deep shift in popular tastes, both in subject matter and approach. At the turn of the decade, he responded to the vogue for dramatic satire initiated by the boy players at Blackfriars and St. At the end of the decade, he seems to have attempted to capitalise on the new fashion for tragicomedy, [12] even collaborating with John Fletcher, the writer who had popularised the genre in England. The influence of younger dramatists such as John Marston and Ben Jonson is seen not only in the problem plays, which dramatise intractable human problems of greed and lust, but also in the darker tone of the Jacobean tragedies. One play, *Troilus and Cressida*, may even have been inspired by the War of the Theatres. This change is related to the success of tragicomedies such as *Philaster*, although the uncertainty of dates makes the nature and direction of the influence unclear. Style[edit] During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, "drama became the ideal means to capture and convey the diverse interests of the time. His verse style, his choice of subjects, and his stagecraft all bear the marks of both periods. In some of his early works like *Romeo and Juliet*, he even added punctuation at the end of these iambic pentameter lines to make the rhythm even stronger. To end many scenes in his plays he used a rhyming couplet to give a sense of conclusion, or completion. Although a large amount of his comical talent is evident in his comedies, some of the most entertaining scenes and characters are found in tragedies such as *Hamlet* and histories such as *Henry*

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IV, Part 1. He argues that when a person on the stage speaks to himself or herself, they are characters in a fiction speaking in character; this is an occasion of self-address. Furthermore, Hirsh points out that Shakespearean soliloquies and " asides " are audible in the fiction of the play, bound to be overheard by any other character in the scene unless certain elements confirm that the speech is protected. Saying that addressing the audience was outmoded by the time Shakespeare was alive, he "acknowledges few occasions when a Shakespearean speech might involve the audience in recognising the simultaneous reality of the stage and the world the stage is representing. As was common in the period, Shakespeare based many of his plays on the work of other playwrights and recycled older stories and historical material. His dependence on earlier sources was a natural consequence of the speed at which playwrights of his era wrote; in addition, plays based on already popular stories appear to have been seen as more likely to draw large crowds. There were also aesthetic reasons: Renaissance aesthetic theory took seriously the dictum that tragic plots should be grounded in history. Even these plays, however, rely heavily on generic commonplaces. While there is much dispute about the exact Chronology of Shakespeare plays , as well as the Shakespeare Authorship Question , the plays tend to fall into three main stylistic groupings. The first major grouping of his plays begins with his histories and comedies of the s. However, after the plague forced Shakespeare and his company of actors to leave London for periods between and , Shakespeare began to use rhymed couplets in his plays, along with more dramatic dialogue. For the next few years, Shakespeare would produce his most famous dramas, including Macbeth , Hamlet , and King Lear. The romances are so called because they bear similarities to medieval romance literature. Among the features of these plays are a redemptive plotline with a happy ending, and magic and other fantastic elements. Canonical plays[edit] Except where noted, the plays below are listed, for the thirty-six plays included in the First Folio of , according to the order in which they appear there, with two plays that were not included Pericles, Prince of Tyre and The Two Noble Kinsmen being added at the end of the list of comedies and Edward III at the end of the list of histories.

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2: William Shakespeare and his Influence on Modern Language

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Choose several of these stage directions and explain what they mean. Give examples to support your answer. After each response, explain why it is or is not correct. Students should cite examples from the play to support their ideas. Write a short essay exploring the character of Lady Macbeth and the influence she seems to have on her husband. Focus especially on her remarks in *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, Act I, Scenes v and vii and the attitudes and personality traits that those remarks reveal. Also consider what Macbeth says to her in his next-to-last speech in Scene vii. Students should cite details from the play to illustrate each quality they name. Cite details from the play to explain your answer. How does Macbeth come to be Thane of Cawdor? Dramatic irony exists when what appears true to one or more characters is not what the audience or reader knows to be true. What does Duncan believe to be true? In contrast, what do we know to be true? Address these questions in a brief essay that uses details from *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, Act I, to support your ideas. Examples of dramatic irony that students may mention include: Use details to support your answer. Answer your questions in a brief essay that cites details from Act I of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* to support your ideas. Students should support their ideas with details from the play as well as logical reasons. She stands firm when Macbeth begins to waver in his deadly purpose. He is not ruthless enough.

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3: The Psychology of Theatre Audiences

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Legend attributes the invention of the dithyramb, the lyrical ancestor of tragedy, to the poet Arion of Lesbos in the 7th or 6th century bce, but it was not until the creation of the Great Dionysia in Athens in that tragic drama established itself. The Dionysiac festivals were held in honour of Dionysus, a god concerned with fertility, wine, and prophecy. Dionysiac celebrations, held in the spring, were traditionally occasions for frenzy, sexual license, and ecstatic behaviour welcoming the return of fertility to the land after the winter reflected dramatically in the Bacchantes by Euripides. The Great Dionysia was a more formal affair, with its competition in tragedy, but its religious purpose is often cited as a pointer to the origin of drama itself. In the theories that see drama as a development from primitive religious rites, the dramatist is often described as a descendant of the priest. Theatrical representation could have arisen first from the substitution of an animal for a human sacrifice, say, a goat for a virgin or a young warrior. In time, the formula of the sacrifice might have been enacted ritualistically without the actual sacrifice of the animal. He therefore blinds himself. However, other explanations for the origin of drama have been offered. Mimesis, the artistic representation or imitation of an event, has been discerned in such rituals as war dances, which are intended to frighten the enemy and instill courage into the hearts of the participants. These dances may imitate the action of battle itself, or at least the way in which the participants hope to see the battle develop. The origins of drama have also been attributed to simple storytelling, as when the storyteller adopts a false voice or adds characterization through movement and costume. In such terms, the art of theatre could be described at its most fundamental as the presence of an actor before an audience. Whatever the primary motivation, the first systematic elaboration of theatre can be seen through the work of the Greek playwrights of 5th-century-bce Athens. Aeschylus apparently inherited a form that consisted of a single actor responding to or leading a chorus. His innovation is generally considered to have been the use of a second actor, and it was either Aeschylus or Sophocles who added a third actor as they competed each year for prizes in the Great Dionysia. Once a third actor appeared, the chorus gradually declined, and it was the multiplying individual characters who assumed importance. In this way, ancient Greece left to posterity a measure of specialization among theatrical performers. Beyond these formal elements, however, Classical drama offers a pattern of development that has been reenacted continually in other cultures throughout history. The rapid rise and decline of drama in ancient Athens paralleled the rise and decline of Athenian civilization itself. Great periods of achievement in theatre have tended to coincide with periods of national expansion and achievement, as in Elizabethan England. Conversely, periods of excessive materialism, such as those during which ancient Greece or ancient Rome declined, tend to produce theatre in which ostentation, spectacle, and vulgarity predominate. Probably more than in other arts, each theatrical style represents an amalgamation of diverse heritages. Greek theatre has long had the most direct influence on Western culture, but in the late 20th century Balinese and Japanese arts were frequently adapted in the West. Chinese and Indian theatrical practices have had wide influence in Asia. A fundamental difference between borrowings from Greek theatre and borrowings from Asian traditions is that the techniques of Greek performance have not been handed down with the texts. Most of what is known about the actual performance of Greek plays is the result of scholarly and archaeological research. Information about the nature of the music and of choral dances, for example, is very skimpy. In Asian theatre, on the other hand, techniques as well as texts have survived. For example, the Noh theatre of Japan has been handed down through families of performers with few changes for hundreds of years. Some of its techniques may be found in surviving theatre forms such as the Indian kathakali dance. In turn, some of these techniques were assimilated during the second half of the 20th century by such Western directors as Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, and Eugenio Barba. Other writers and directors created new relationships between Eastern and

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Western theatre by consciously exploiting techniques and traditions from such forms as Kabuki and Noh. There is little doubt that the Greek theatre—and especially the study of its literature—has provided Western theatre with a sense of continuity in stories, themes, and formal styles. The plays themselves are regularly revived, with discernible references to specifically modern concerns. Theatre as expression Mimesis in theatre The art of the theatre is essentially one of make-believe, or mimesis. In this respect the art of narrative in literature is much closer to that of the theatre. In a story, considerable attention must be paid to plausibility. The principal factor in plausibility is not precise correspondence with known facts but inner consistency in the story itself. This plausibility is based on the connection between the impression made by the actors and the preconceptions of the auditors. If the character Hamlet is to be plausible, the actor must make an audience believe that Hamlet could conceivably be as he is presented. This does not mean that the actor must make the audience believe that he or she literally is Hamlet, merely that he is plausibly and consistently making-believe to be Hamlet. Knowing all the time that it is a figment, they are willing to enter into the make-believe, to be transported, if it is sufficiently convincing. Yet they know that, however thrilling or pleasurable the rapture, it may be shattered at any moment by some ineptitude or mistake on the stage or by a coughing neighbour in the audience. That is the basic rule, or convention, of the make-believe of the theatre. The actor breaks the basic rule of the game if he forgets his words, or laughs at private jokes, or is simply incompetent, or is unsuited to his part. No modern audience can accept a vulgar, lumpish, elderly Hamlet, because Hamlet is a young prince whose lines are consistently thoughtful and witty. That credulity can extend a considerable way; the actress Sarah Bernhardt played Hamlet several times in her old age. Thus, in every performance there must be realism in some degree. At certain epochs and in certain kinds of plays, the aim has been to be as realistic as possible. But even the most realistic production e. Conversation in real life often leads nowhere; it is full of inconclusive, meaningless, boring passages. Though most commercial, light comedies continue to be written and acted realistically, realistic theatre fell out of fashion in the first half of the 20th century in response to a host of avant-garde theatrical experiments and the advent of motion pictures. Just as realistic painting declined when photographs began to achieve similar effects mechanically, so did staging that attempted to reproduce the actual world in every detail lose artistic status when such effects became commonplace in films. The most unrealistic productions, however, inevitably retained certain realistic features; the actors still had to be human, no matter how fantastic the script and settings might be. Theatre as social expression In different contexts , various aspects of humanity have seemed important and have therefore been stressed in Western theatrical representation. Much Renaissance drama, for instance, emphasized the individuality of each character, while in later 17th-century theatre, which was much more restricted in its philosophy and in its setting, a character was presented not as a creature who occupied a unique place and status in the universe but rather as someone adapted to and determined by the quite limited environment of 17th-century society. The greatness of the Elizabethan theatre was the universality of its outlook and the breadth of its appeal. Since the latter part of the 17th century, the art of the theatre has been concerned with smaller themes and has aimed at a smaller section of society. Rustics were almost automatically ridiculous, although sometimes their simplicity might be endearing or pathetic. A very clear line is drawn between employers and employed in these plays, and the latter, though often more intelligent, never seem to belong to even the same species as the former. By the early 19th century, European theatre had become at least as much a middle-class as an aristocratic entertainment. Nevertheless, it was still thought important, especially in London, that the actors suggest gentility. The plays that succeeded throughout Europe were plays about men and women of good social position, and the plots were concerned with some infringement, usually sexual, of the genteel code of behaviour; *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* by Arthur Wing Pinero is an example. The melodrama that dominated 19th-century European and especially British theatre championed the values of the middle class. However, the new literary drama of Henrik Ibsen that emerged during the second half of the century challenged those values. After the Russian Revolution of , the Soviet theatre broke with gentility. The heroes and heroines of Soviet theatre were muscular, idealistic workers. At a famous series of productions at the Group Theatre , the director Harold

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Clurman was in conscious revolt against the oppressive bourgeois gentility of the day. The Group Theatre was not spectacularly successful, however, and it stayed in existence for no more than a few years. In Europe after World War II, the theatre made more-concerted efforts to reflect and to interest a wider section of society. By that time, however, audiences at all levels had lost the habit of theatregoing and were fast losing the habit of moviegoing, as television was becoming the popular medium of drama—indeed, of all entertainment. Theatre began to be directed not to any one class in society or to any one income group but rather to anyone who was prepared for the energetic collaboration in the creative act that the art demands. Page 1 of 2.

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4: Perceptions of the Ghost in Shakespeare's Hamlet - Page 2

you every day' (), seem to anticipate a relationship between audience and playgoer that is less about detached assessment, and more about imaginative engagement, fantasy and 'play'.

When William Shakespeare began writing his plays, the English language was rapidly absorbing words from other languages due to wars, exploration, diplomacy and colonization. By the age of Elizabeth, English had become widely used with the expansion of philosophy, theology and physical sciences, but many writers lacked the vocabulary to express such ideas. To accommodate this, writers such as Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare expressed new ideas and distinctions by inventing, borrowing or adopting a word or a phrase from another language, known as neologizing [13]. Scholars estimate that, between the years 1500 and 1600, nouns, verbs and modifiers of Latin, Greek and modern Romance languages added 30,000 new words to the English language. His themes regarding the human condition make him more acclaimed than any of his contemporaries. Humanism and contact with popular thinking gave vitality to his language. Shakespeare also used groundlings widely in his plays. The use of groundlings "saved the drama from academic stiffness and preserved its essential bias towards entertainment in comedy". He represented English people more concretely and not as puppets. His skills have found expression in chronicles, or history plays, and tragedies. Nine out of eighteen plays he produced in the first decade of his career were chronicles or histories. His histories were based on the prevailing Tudor political thought. They portrayed the follies and achievements of kings, their misgovernment, church and problems arising out of these. Falstaff, although a minor character, has a powerful reality of its own. This shows that Shakespeare had developed a capacity to see the plays as whole, something more than characters and expressions added together. In Falstaff trilogy, through the character of Falstaff, he wants to show that in society "where touchstone of conduct is success, and in which humanity has to accommodate itself to the claims of expediency, there is no place for Falstaff", a loyal human-being. This sentiment is so true even after centuries. Shakespeare united the three main streams of literature: To the versification of the English language, he imparted his eloquence and variety giving highest expressions with elasticity of language. The second, the sonnets and poetry, was bound in structure. He imparted economy and intensity to the language. In the third and the most important area, the drama, he saved the language from vagueness and vastness and infused actuality and vividness. Influence on European and American literature[edit] The examples and perspective in this article may not represent a worldwide view of the subject. You may improve this article, discuss the issue on the talk page, or create a new article, as appropriate. June Learn how and when to remove this template message Shakespeare is cited as an influence on a large number of writers in the following centuries, including major novelists such as Herman Melville, [8] Charles Dickens, [9] Thomas Hardy [22] and William Faulkner. Some estimates at the number of words coined by Shakespeare number in the several thousands. Warren King clarifies by saying that, "In all of his work – the plays, the sonnets and the narrative poems – Shakespeare uses 17,000 words: Of those, 1,000 were first used by Shakespeare. These include, but are not limited to; "seen better days, strange bedfellows, a sorry sight," [34] and "full circle". Shakespeare helped to further develop style and structure to an otherwise loose, spontaneous language. Written Elizabethan English stylistically closely followed the spoken language. The naturalness gave force and freedom since there was no formalized prescriptive grammar binding the expression. While lack of prescribed grammatical rules introduced vagueness in literature, it also expressed feelings with profound vividness and emotion which created, "freedom of expression" and "vividness of presentment". Gradually his language followed the "natural process of artistic growth, to find its adequate projection in dramatic form". The dialogues in his plays were written in verse form and followed a decasyllabic rule. His work is still experimental in Titus Andronicus. After these two comedies, he kept experimenting until he reached a maturity of style. The free speech rhythm gave Shakespeare more freedom for experimentation. Poetry[edit] He introduced in poetry two main factors – "verbal immediacy and the

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moulding of stress to the movement of living emotion".

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5: Shakespeare's Use of the Chorus in Henry V and Romeo and Juliet

*Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Drama [Robert Bridges] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Especially since it was a time of religious reformation and fluctuating political relations, in which England was very much in the thick of. To best understand Shakespeare, it is crucial to understand the age in which he lived and worked. Most notably was the War of the Roses, in which the two Houses of Lancaster and York fought over possession of the English crown until finally the Lancastrians were defeated. However, their victory was short-lived for it was soon snatched away by the Duke of Gloucester, the same duke that legend say murdered two young princes in the Tower of London. He is also known as Richard III. At the same time, a religious reformation was taking place in England. The previous two monarchs before Elizabeth had failed to establish a fair compromise for both the Protestants and Catholics of England; Edward VI, the first heir after Henry VIII, had inherited the Protestant stance of his father and was constantly at odds with the Catholics. When Elizabeth rose to the throne, she saw the disputes and in a decisive move, chose an ambiguous stance over religious matters, although she had a slight leaning towards the Anglican Church. Elizabeth adopted the title of Supreme Governor Etc. Because of her lenity toward the state religion, the Dutch, German and French flocked to England because they were being persecuted in their own countries. Shakespeare himself, during his time in England, lodged with a Huguenot family, who were skilled Calvinist craftsmen from France. He brought up his own daughter as a Protestant, but it is never clear which religious beliefs Shakespeare personally held. Because of his upbringing and the Reformation, which probably heightened his sensitivity toward religious subjects, themes like atonement and redemption have been imparted into some of his plays. Some people believed that Shakespeare was a Catholic because of the references to Catholicism he used in his dramas. For example, Shakespeare, at times, used the word holy in the sacramental sense that Catholics used it. Characters in his plays showed devotion to various saints. They also blessed themselves with the sign of the cross. Shakespeare incorporated references to Purgatory into some of his plots. [His] upbringing certainly came into play in his familiarity of these subject. It is true that Shakespeare did have all of those references and signs of Catholicism in his plays, it should also be remembered that what a playwright instills in his characters does not necessarily reflect what he himself believes. Elizabethan era religious beliefs In any case, because the values and beliefs of the Protestant and Catholic religions were not extremely different, it would have been easy for Shakespeare to cater to both without showing any specific preference towards one or the other. His play, Measure for Measure, is based on the themes of morals and justice. He sets his characters into contemplating some tough ethical issues, which could be applied to both Protestantism and Catholicism. Unlike the conflicting views of the Reformation, a generally agreed-upon view of the universe adopted by the people of the Elizabethan era was the natural order of things. This, known as the Great Chain of Being, dictated that everything in the universe had its place. Everything, from the elements to the angels, had a place in this hierarchy of life. The bottom was composed of the elements and plants and minerals. Animals came next for they had not only existence and growth, but passion as well. Mankind is placed above the beasts for he had the power of reason. On the top of this hierarchy was God, who not only possessed the qualities that man had and the intuition of the angels, but more. Shakespeare incorporated this system into his play, and many times, his characters either fall in line with this Chain of Being, or they violate the order, causing tragedy to ensue. This turns out to be a simple weaver, Nick Bottom, who had his head turned into that of a donkey! Her infatuation with him is used as a comic device by Shakespeare and is not really a relationship that will survive to the end of the play, since it violates the laws of the chain of being, a grandiose Queen of Fairies having an affair with a common weaver and catering to his every whim. In the end of the play, all the mishaps and mistakes of the night have been set straight, and the Queen of Fairies reconciles with Oberon, the King of Fairies. Even the pair of lovers who were caught in a complicated love triangle before have found happiness

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with each other. As a result of this harmony and balance, the play ends on a high note with much celebrating and festivity and all the characters live happily ever after. The successful relationships that survive to the end of the play are always comprised of characters that have partners within their own class, such as the matches made in the end with Titania and Oberon, Lysander and Hermia, and Demetrius and Helena. This is also demonstrated in *The Merchant of Venice*, in how Portia marries Bassanio, a nobleman, and his friend Gratiano marries Nerissa, her lady-in-waiting. A contrasting view would be the disaster and suffering that Shakespeare bestows on his characters if they do, in fact, upset the order. Macbeth murders his liege and lord, Duncan, the King of Scotland and the devastating effect of this reverberates throughout the rest of the play. Living during the English Renaissance meant a renewed interest in the Latin and Greek classics. In many of his plays, Shakespeare has incorporated pagan themes and characters. Ovid, Livy and Plutarch, which he drew on extensively from. Because of the renewed interest in classical themes, it is no wonder that Shakespeare has such a strong classical basis in some of his plays. Borrowing themes from Plutarch, Shakespeare crafted *Antony and Cleopatra*. Nevertheless, the emphasis Shakespeare places on Cleopatra and the focus she receives after Antony dies is enough to differentiate him from his source. All through *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, the women that Shakespeare has portrayed are not the helpless damsels in distress that were ubiquitous in typical Medieval and Renaissance literature. The daughters of *King Lear* certainly were not subservient to their father and were also able to influence their husbands into their sway. Elizabeth was a cunning and wise leader, who often upstaged the men who would have dominated her. The empire she built from the ground up caused the male rulers of two of the most powerful countries, France and Spain, to fear her. In , she even defeated the mighty Spanish Armada. She never married, dying a virgin queen, because she was confident about her skills and felt she would rule better alone than being controlled by some intruding foreign prince. With this kind of monarch, Shakespeare has created numerous memorable females in his dramas. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Katharine is a spirited and hot-tempered young woman who refuses to marry. When forced into a marriage with the irreverent Petruchio, she rebels against him. Portia from *The Merchant of Venice* is an intellectual noblewoman who single-handedly saves her friends by impersonating a male lawyer. Although Shakespeare does restrict his characters in this way female lawyers were unheard of in Elizabethan England , many of his characters are able to breach the regulations set by society and triumph in her own right. After a cursory glance over the settings used in his works, one could even tentatively conclude that his influences and inspiration originated from everywhere except from Elizabethan England. In fact, not one of his plays have ever been set in the context of his own time period, except for *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and even today the integrity of that play is doubted. In spite of this, it is evident, even from just reading one of his works, that his sources and influences were indeed rich with the flavor of the Elizabethan era. He then continues on to suppose that was what Shakespeare strived to do in his plays, which one can see was very well his goal from the ways that the personalities of Elizabethan England provided rich ideas for underlying character development and the circumstances as subtle backdrops. Written by Ann Jennalie Cook No related posts.

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6: Introduction to Theatre -- The Audience in the Theatre

This positive factor is generally recognized in the endings of Lope's drama, and a deeper investigation of their affinities may serve to modify our responses to Shakespeare's drama. At least it offers an option not to send the audience home in quite so depressed a state of mind.

Palgrave Macmillan, , I am publishing it here under the terms I negotiated with Palgrave for self-archiving my work under my usual CC-BY-NC license; those terms were that I could post a pre-copyedited version of my contribution on my own website or institutional repository. So here you are! While on the one hand it is a commonplace that theatre needs, at minimum, both performers and audience, on the other hand, there is rarely sufficient questioning of what it is that audiences do. What does the presence of an audience bring to the dynamic of a performance? But what is it that actually takes place? Consider the list of questions we could ask about that relationship between spectator and actor: Or does an audience participate in a performance, bringing their own reactions and sensibilities to bear upon the meanings that are created in performance? Are they makers of meaning rather than receptacles for it? Is an audience a collective body, something of which we can speak in the singular? Or are audiences collections of individual bodies, an aggregation of many different responses that should more accurately be described in the plural? This chapter will not answer these questions definitively—these are questions that cannot be answered definitively, and it is not the purpose of this book to theorize the reception of theatre. Rather, I want to foreground these questions in order to think about how assumptions about the role of audience might affect how Shakespeare is made in the theatre. And if they are rowdy, are they being so in the same way that a s audience would have been? Whether they are the same or not, both audiences are responding to a script that is approximately the same and both audiences watch their own contemporaries performing that script onstage. And, indeed, those scripts make clear that audiences are often centrally involved to the performance of a play. All these elements come together in affecting the two-way interactions between audience and performance. Many though not all of the performances I discuss in this chapter are not typical of Shakespearean productions, especially in their conscious efforts to highlight the interactions between actor and audience. But if they are atypical, what seems different about them showcases more effectively those elements of making theatre and making audiences that are true for all productions. As their names indicate, they are less characters than roles, appearing not so much as full-fledged people than as windows into the play. They are not, of course, necessarily transparent windows. Rumour identifies his bias from the start, but leaves unsaid what the connection might be between the rumors that he tells us are being spread and the action that follows—what is the connection between history and theatre and rumor? But is his the only point of view in the play? The Chorus might directly address the audience, but the play stages actions that present an alternate point of view, one that is less boosterish of Henry and more cynical about his motives and actions. In the opening scene of *As You Like It*, after Oliver has fought with his brother Orlando and set him up to lose in the wrestling match, he speaks alone on stage and confesses, I hope I shall see an end of him, for my soul—and I know not why—hates nothing more than he. But it shall not be so long. The audience is likely to be wondering why Oliver treats Orlando as he does; here Orlando explains it. In *Taming of the Shrew*, what is Petruccio up to in refusing to let Katherine eat? He tells us in a soliloquy mid-way through the play: My falcon now is sharp and passing empty, And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged, For then she never looks upon her lure. The question to ask about these moments of direct address is not why is the character saying these lines, but why is the character saying these lines to the audience. If the purpose of moments such as these is to provide plot information and explanation, then why not have the character explicate his actions to another character onstage? Could Petruccio not divulge his strategy to Grumio? Bridget Escolme, in her study of the effects of audience address, argues that when a performer shares his or her process with the audience, speaking to them and involving them in the performance, a spectator becomes invested in that character. When Lear finds himself arguing with Goneril over the behavior of his

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retinue, he expresses his outrage over the insult: Does any here know me? This is not Lear. Does Lear walk thus, speak thus? Where are his eyes? Either his notion weakens, his discernings Are lethargiedâ€”ha, waking? Who is it that can tell me who I am? But in performance, are those questions that also take in the audience? Does Lear turn to the audience to include them in his address? Does the audience consider themselves addressed even if Lear does not look at them? If we are addressed, how is our relationship to Lear and to Lear affected? The moments in which a character explicitly or implicitly addresses the audience are moments that obviously create space for a production to speak to its audience and for the audience to speak back. But it is helpful to remember that unspoken moments can invite in the audience; problems in character motivation, for instance, can create a gap that an audience fills with its own sense of consistency. How can he dismiss her and their infant daughter so quickly? The playscript does not provide words to obviously answer these questions, but that absence need not be a block for the audience. See Hartley for an exploration of the phenomenology of theatre that makes both possible and necessary such responses. These examples have all been focused on the connections made with audiences by looking at the text for openings to invite them in. But it is also important to look at the theatre into which you are inviting them. Responding to the past: For while there can be signs in the text of direct address, there are no signs of how an audience might respond and no guarantee that an audience will react the way in which a performer expects. But her edition also records the resistance that audiences can put up to what they see and hear on stage. This anecdote is revealing in many ways: Shouting back at a production is extreme, but other indications of audience response are not, and thus might be more suitable to exploring what factors shape the reception of a performance. By this point in the performance, the audience has seen the division of the kingdom, riotous knights, naked wretches mingling with the audience during the storm scene, andâ€”most horrifyinglyâ€”a sexualized blinding of Gloucester, in which the plucking out of his eyes turns into an act of foreplay for Cornwall and, especially, Regan. Cordelia has reappeared into the story, dressed in a modest grey dress with a wimple-like head covering, and has been reunited and then captured with her father. Why does the audience laugh? What is funny about this moment? Nor do I recall this line in other productions getting such a reaction. So what is happening here? One possibility is that the line is funny because it sounds so very modern, so very much like how we talk today. It is also possible that the audience laughs because they are relieved that Goneril is finally getting her comeuppance. Is this the moment the villain gets caught, and good triumphs? But this is also a deeply gendered moment in a text that is full of slanders against women and in a production that flattened out any nuances of female behavior; in this King Lear, Regan and Goneril are especially evil, and Cordelia is especially goodâ€”a dynamic that does no favors to the audience appeal of any of them. Much of that is due to the dynamics of the playscript; those dynamics are further exaggerated by the choices of this production. In the early years of the Globe, journalists reviewing its productions tended to judge the Globe audience as having the wrong response, looking down on them as tourists jollyng up their London visit by pretending they were at a Disneyland experience rather than appreciating the theatrical importance of Shakespeare see Prescott. It can be tempting, from the perspective of a Shakespeare or theatre scholar, to feel that an audience fails to appreciate a performance; Helen Freshwater provides many examples of the sort of tensions and disdain that can run these lines But neither explanation addresses the ways in which meanings accrue in a performance through a variety of routes. For instance, in exploring this moment of audience response, ought we to consider the impact of the reconstructed playhouse? In a theatre building that prides itself on its Renaissance construction, how much of the audience response is shaped by how it conceives Renaissance culture? What sort of cues are audiences getting from the playhouse and its description in the program that might allow for this response? A second moment of laughter from a Globe production is helpful to consider here, this time focused on Rosalind in a performance of *As You Like It*: What I found surprising was that it got such big laughs, and applause, too. And in the Globe production, the same line also got only scattered laughs. At the Globe performance I saw, however, the audience response was enormous, so much so that it reminded me of the King Lear that I saw there the previous summer. It has its misogyny, including the slanders against women that Rosalind voices in the persona of

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Ganymede-as-Rosalind. But it is not generally a play that encourages a black-and-white view of women. Why, then, such an enthusiastic audience endorsement of the stereotype of the woman who cannot hold her tongue? In these ways, and in others, the production encouraged a participatory identification, setting up a dynamic in which the audience moves back into a Renaissance frame of mind, but moves back through the presentness of the play, through moments that are recognizably familiar. But they might also give license to a politics in the audience that is not set free in other venues. What attitudes do audiences bring with them to reconstructed theatres and how might those politics play out? If a theatrical space that looks early modernâ€”that sells itself as being connected to original practicesâ€”is a safe haven for at least some audience members to give voice to anti-feminist sentiments, what does that mean for actors and directors who might not intend for those politics to come into play, or who might wish to counter those politics? I want to emphasize that I am not insisting that the plays need to be staged as feminist, or through any particular political discourse. But an awareness of audience responses is a necessary part of creating a theatrical event. And for performances in reconstructed theatrical spaces, the question of what assumptions an audience brings to that spaceâ€”and how their gender politics are shaped by that spaceâ€”needs to be further explored. But it is also possible to see audiences as more immediately being part of a performance. Roman Tragedies is a six-hour performance of Coriolanus, Julius Caesar, and Antony and Cleopatra that toured internationally in Directed by Ivo van Hove and featuring a cast of actors as well as stage technicians who video and project live action and recorded clips, the production also centrally involved audience members who are invited onto stage, where they can sit on sofas to watch the live performance and the video playing on monitors, and where they buy and consume food and drinks. See Freshwater for a history of this theatre movement and a thoughtful critique of its limitations, pp And many of the reviews and buzz surrounding the show had to do with the movement of the audience, which was treated, correctly so, as a novelty for Shakespearean theatre. But the effect of this audience movement situated spectators not as participants in the drama, but as fractured consumers of it. Audience members did not interact with the actors, even when seated next to them. And much of the time, especially for those seated on stage, spectators preferred to watch the videos playing on the screens in front of them, rather than the live actors next to them. Even when occupying the same space, audience and actors did not share the stage. One effect of this was to highlight the ways in which all spectators see different performances. Even in traditionally designed theatre, one individual audience member will react to and understand a performance differently than another audience member.

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7: Shakespeare's Influence on Other Writers

Shakespeare is alerting the audience to the conflict between Claudius and Hamlet. Shakespeare is making sure the audience knows early on that Hamlet is a tragic hero. Shakespeare is contrasting Hamlet with Laertes to create suspense for the audience.

And Other Principles of Dramatic Criticism. Henry Holt and Company, I The drama is the only art, excepting oratory and certain forms of music, that is designed to appeal to a crowd instead of to an individual. The lyric poet writes for himself, and for such selected persons here and there throughout the world as may be wisely sympathetic enough to understand his musings. The essayist and the novelist write for a reader sitting alone in his library: It is the same with painting and with sculpture. Though a picture or a statue may be seen by a limitless succession of observers, its appeal is made always to the individual mind. But it is different with a play. Since a drama is, in essence, a story devised to be presented by actors on a stage before an audience, it must necessarily be designed to appeal at once to a multitude of people. We have to be alone in order to appreciate the Venus of Melos or the Sistine Madonna or the Ode to a Nightingale or the Egoist or the Religio Medici; but who could sit alone in a wide theatre and see *Cyrano de Bergerac* performed? The sympathetic presence of a multitude of people would be as necessary to our appreciation of the play as solitude in all the other cases. And because the drama must be written for a crowd, it must be fashioned differently from the other, and less popular, forms of art. No writer is really a dramatist unless he recognizes this distinction of appeal; and if an author is not accustomed to writing for the crowd, he can hardly hope to make a satisfying play. Tennyson, the perfect poet; Browning, the master of the human mind; Stevenson, the teller of enchanting tales: A literary artist who writes for the individual may produce a great work of literature that is cast in the dramatic form; but the work will not be, in the practical sense, a play. They are not devised to be presented by actors on a stage before an audience. For even though, in this particular piece, Browning did try to write for the theatre at the suggestion of Macready, he employed the same intricately intellectual method of character analysis that has made many of his poems the most solitude-compelling of modern literary works. It is not written for a crowd; *The Two Orphans*, less weighty in wisdom, is. The second is a play. The crowd, therefore, has exercised a potent influence upon the dramatist in every era of the theatre. One person the lyric poet has to please--himself; to a single person only, or an unlimited succession of single persons, does the novelist address himself, and he may choose the sort of person he will write for; but the dramatist must always please the many. His themes, his thoughts, his emotions, are circumscribed by the limits of popular appreciation. He writes less freely than any other author; for he cannot pick his auditors. Henry James may, if he choose, write novels for the super-civilized; but a crowd is never super-civilized, and therefore characters like those of Mr. James could never be successfully presented in the theatre. *Treasure Island* is a book for boys, both young and old; but a modern theatre crowd is composed largely of women, and the theme of such a story could scarcely be successful on the stage. In order, therefore, to understand the limitations of the drama as an art, and clearly to define its scope, it is necessary to inquire into the psychology of theatre audiences. This subject presents two phases to the student. First, a theatre audience exhibits certain psychological traits that are common to all crowds, of whatever kind--a political convention, the spectators at a ball-game, or a church congregation, for example. Second, it exhibits certain other traits which distinguish it from other kinds of crowds. These, in turn, will be considered. II By the word crowd, as it is used in this discussion, is meant a multitude of people whose ideas and feelings have taken a set in a certain single direction, and who, because of this, exhibit a tendency to lose their individual self-consciousness in the general self-consciousness of the multitude. Any gathering of people for a specific purpose--whether of action or of worship or of amusement--tends to become, because of this purpose, a crowd, in the scientific sense. Now, a crowd has a mind of its own, apart from that of any of its individual members. The psychology of the crowd was little understood until late in the nineteenth century, when a great deal of attention was turned to it by a group of French philosophers. The subject has been most

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fully studied by M. Gustave Le Bon, who devoted some two hundred pages to his *Psychologie des Foules*. Le Bon, a man, by the mere fact that he forms a factor of a crowd, tends to lose consciousness of those mental qualities in which he differs from his fellows, and becomes more keenly conscious than before of those other mental qualities in which he is at one with them. The mental qualities in which men differ from one another are the acquired qualities of intellect and character; but the qualities in which they are at one are the innate basic passions of the race. A crowd, therefore, is less intellectual and more emotional than the individuals that compose it. It is less reasonable, less judicious, less disinterested, more credulous, more primitive, more partisan; and hence, as M. Le Bon cleverly puts it, a man, by the mere fact that he forms a part of an organized crowd, is likely to descend several rungs on the ladder of civilization. Even the most cultured and intellectual of men, when he forms an atom of a crowd, tends to lose consciousness of his acquired mental qualities and to revert to his primal simplicity and sensitiveness of mind. The dramatist, therefore, because he writes for a crowd, writes for a comparatively uncivilized and uncultivated mind, a mind richly human, vehement in approbation, emphatic in disapproval, easily credulous, eagerly enthusiastic, boyishly heroic, and somewhat carelessly unthinking. Now, it has been found in practice that the only thing that will keenly interest a crowd is a struggle of some sort or other. But, so far as I know, no one has yet realized the main reason for this, which is, simply, that characters are interesting to a crowd only in those crises of emotion that bring them to the grapple. A single individual, like the reader of an essay or a novel, may be interested intellectually in those gentle influences beneath which a character unfolds itself as mildly as a water-lily; but to what Thackeray called "that savage child, the crowd," a character does not appeal except in moments of contention. There never yet has been a time when the theatre could compete successfully against the amphitheatre. Forty thousand people gather annually from all quarters of the East to see Yale and Harvard meet upon the field, while such a crowd could not be aggregated from New York alone to see the greatest play the world has yet produced. For the crowd demands a fight; and where the actual exists, it will scarcely be contented with the semblance. Hence the drama, to interest at all, must cater to this longing for contention, which is one of the primordial instincts of the crowd. It must present its characters in some struggle of the wills, whether it be flippant, as in the case of Benedick and Beatrice; or delicate, as in that of Viola and Orsino; or terrible, with Macbeth; or piteous, with Lear. The crowd is more partisan than the individual; and therefore, in following this struggle of the drama, it desires always to take sides. There is no fun in seeing a football game unless you care about who wins; and there is very little fun in seeing a play unless the dramatist allows you to throw your sympathies on one side or the other of the struggle. Hence, although in actual life both parties to a conflict are often partly right and partly wrong, and it is hard to choose between them, the dramatist usually simplifies the struggle in his plays by throwing the balance of right strongly on one side. Hence, from the ethical standpoint, the simplicity of theatre characters. Desdemona is all innocence, Iago all devilry. Hence also the conventional heroes and villains of melodrama--these to be hissed and those to be applauded. Since the crowd is comparatively lacking in the judicial faculty and cannot look upon a play from a detached and disinterested point of view, it is either all for or all against a character; and in either case its judgment is frequently in defiance of the rules of reason. It idolizes Raffles, who is a liar and a thief; it shuts its ears to Marion Allardyce, the defender of virtue in Letty. It wants its sympathetic characters, to love; its antipathetic characters, to hate; and it hates and loves them as unreasonably as a savage or a child. The trouble with Hedda Gabler as a play is that it contains not a single personage that the audience can love. The crowd demands those so-called "sympathetic" parts that every actor, for this reason, longs to represent. And since the crowd is partisan, it wants its favored characters to win. Hence the convention of the "happy ending," insisted on by managers who feel the pulse of the public. The blind Louise, in *The Two Orphans*, will get her sight back, never fear. Next to this prime instinct of partisanship in watching a contention, one of the most important traits in the psychology of crowds is their extreme credulity. A crowd will nearly always believe anything that it sees and almost anything that it is told. An audience composed entirely of individuals who have no belief in ghosts will yet accept the Ghost in Hamlet as a fact. Bless you, they have seen him! The crowd accepts the

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disguise of Rosalind, and never wonders why Orlando does not recognize his love. To this extreme credulity of the crowd is due the long line of plays that are founded on mistaken identity--farces like *The Comedy of Errors* and melodramas like *The Lyons Mail*, for example. The crowd, too, will accept without demur any condition precedent to the story of a play, however impossible it might seem to the mind of the individual. King Oedipus has been married to his mother many years before the play begins; but the Greek crowd forbore to ask why, in so long a period, the enormity had never been discovered. The central situation of *She Stoops to Conquer* seems impossible to the individual mind, but is eagerly accepted by the crowd. But Heywood, writing for the crowd, said frankly, "If you will grant that Mrs. Frankford was unfaithful, I can tell you a lovely story about her husband, who was a gentleman worth knowing: There is this to be said about the credulity of an audience, however--that it will believe what it sees much more readily than what it hears. If a dramatist would convince his audience of the generosity or the treachery of one character or another, he should not waste words either praising or blaming the character, but should present him to the eye in the performance of a generous or treacherous action. It also affords a reason why plays of which the audience does not understand a single word are frequently successful. Another primal characteristic of the mind of the crowd is its susceptibility to emotional contagion. A cultivated individual reading *The School for Scandal* at home alone will be intelligently appreciative of its delicious humor; but it is difficult to imagine him laughing over it aloud. Yet the same individual, when submerged in a theatre crowd, will laugh heartily over this very play, largely because other people near him are laughing too. Laughter, tears, enthusiasm, all the basic human emotions, thrill and tremble through an audience, because each member of the crowd feels that he is surrounded by other people who are experiencing the same emotion as his own. In the sad part of a play it is hard to keep from weeping if the woman next to you is wiping her eyes; and still harder is it to keep from laughing, even at a sorry jest, if the man on the other side is roaring in vociferous cachinnation. Successful dramatists play upon the susceptibility of a crowd by serving up raw morsels of crude humor and pathos for the unthinking to wheeze and blubber over, knowing that these members of the audience will excite their more phlegmatic neighbors by contagion. The practical dictum that every laugh in the first act is worth money in the box-office is founded on this psychologic truth. Even puns as bad as Mr. Scenes like the football episodes in *Strongheart*, or the battle in *The Round Up* are nearly always sure to raise the roof: Here the audience felt that he was every inch a king: This same emotional contagion is, of course, the psychologic basis for the French system of the *claque*, or band of hired applauders seated in the center of the house. The leader of the *claque* knows his cues as if he were an actor in the piece, and at the psychologic moment the *claqueurs* burst forth with their clatter and start the house applauding. Applause begets applause in the theatre, as laughter begets laughter and tears beget tears. But not only is the crowd more emotional than the individual; it is also more sensuous. It is fond of flaring flags and blaring trumpets. Hence the rich-costumed processions of the Elizabethan stage, many years before the use of scenery and hence, in later days, the success of pieces like *The Darling of the Gods* and *The Rose of the Rancho*. Color, light, and music, artistically blended, will hold the crowd better than the most absorbing story. This is the reason for the vogue of musical comedy, with its pretty girls, and gaudy shifts of scenery and lights, and tricksy, tripping melodies and dances. Both in its sentiments and in its opinions, the crowd is comfortably commonplace.

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Audience for sports (spectators) -- competition -- outcome not pre-determined (as it is with most theatre--though some plays have varied outcomes (Night of January 16 and The Mystery of Edwin Drood). The audience gives its "permission" to the art.

Two related entertainment genres sharing common themes: The telling of a story 2. The revelation of character

Experiencing Theatre – the influences of theatre - Theatre, like all performing arts, takes place in time as well as space. We use the word theatre to describe activity in daily life. Acting is part of our everyday lives: Theatricality is all around in many of the popular art forms that engage us: The relationship between theatre, film and television is very apparent. On television, we see a wide range of dramatic offerings: Movies provide dramatic material of many kinds. Theatre also informs rock and roll in a variety of ways Current rock concerts are often highly theatrical events, using live performers, lights, sound, costumes and props that are multimedia stage presentations. We have come to expect theatricality as part of popular entertainment Why go to the theatre and why study theatre? Historical - Theatre is the foundation of all drama. The ancient Greeks established the categories of tragedy and comedy years ago that are still used today. They also developed dramatic structure, acting, and theatre architecture at least for the Western world. Each time we see a performance we are participating in theatre history. Theatre is different from all other forms of theatrical presentation because it is live. In many ways, the presentation of drama in theatre, film and television are much alike: Both offer a story told in dramatic form – an enactment of scenes by performers who speak and act as if they were actually the people they represent. There is a fundamental difference when we contrast theatre to movies and it has nothing to do with technical differences – it is in the relationship of the performer to the audience. The experience of being in the presence of the performer is more important to theatre than anything else. At the heart of the theatre experience is the performer – audience relationship: Theatre has a twofold appeal: Sheer excitement or amusement of a theatrical event. Elements of Theatre –

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9: THEATRE AND FILM

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William Shakespeare The English playwright, poet, and actor William Shakespeare is generally acknowledged to be the greatest of English writers and one of the most extraordinary creators in human history. Born 6 years after Queen Elizabeth I had ascended the throne, contemporary with the high period of the English Renaissance, Shakespeare had the good luck to find in the theater of London a medium just coming into its own and an audience, drawn from a wide range of social classes, eager to reward talents of the sort he possessed. His entire life was committed to the public theater, and he seems to have written nondramatic poetry only when enforced closings of the theater made writing plays impractical. Shakespeare was born on or just before April 23, , in the small but then important Warwickshire town of Stratford. His mother, born Mary Arden, was the daughter of a landowner from a neighboring village. By , however, John Shakespeare had begun to encounter the financial difficulties which were to plague him until his death in . Like other Elizabethan schoolboys, Shakespeare studied Latin grammar during the early years, then progressed to the study of logic, rhetoric, composition, oration, versification, and the monuments of Roman literature. A plausible tradition holds that William had to discontinue his education when about 13 in order to help his father. At 18 he married Ann Hathaway, a Stratford girl. They had three children Susanna, ; Hamnet, ; and his twin, Judith, and who was to survive him by 7 years. Shakespeare remained actively involved in Stratford affairs throughout his life, even when living in London, and retired there at the end of his career. The earliest surviving notice of his career in London is a jealous attack on the "upstart crow" by Robert Greene, a playwright, professional man of letters, and profligate whose career was at an end in though he was only 6 years older than Shakespeare. If the first of the comedies is most notable for its plotting and the second for its romantic elements, the third is distinguished by its dazzling language and its gallery of comic types. Already Shakespeare had learned to fuse conventional characters with convincing representations of the human life he knew. Nothing so ambitious had ever been attempted in England in a form hitherto marked by slapdash formlessness. When the theaters were closed because of plague during much of , Shakespeare looked to nondramatic poetry for his support and wrote two narrative masterpieces, the seriocomic *Venus and Adonis* and the tragic *Rape of Lucrece*, for a wealthy patron, the Earl of Southampton. Both poems carry the sophisticated techniques of Elizabethan narrative verse to their highest point, drawing on the resources of Renaissance mythological and symbolic traditions. Writing at the end of a brief, frenzied vogue for sequences of sonnets, Shakespeare found in the conventional line lyric with its fixed rhyme scheme a vehicle for inexhaustible technical innovationsâ€”for Shakespeare even more than for other poets, the restrictive nature of the sonnet generates a paradoxical freedom of invention that is the life of the formâ€”and for the expression of emotions and ideas ranging from the frivolous to the tragic. Though often suggestive of autobiographical revelation, the sonnets cannot be proved to be any the less fictions than the plays. The identity of their dedicatee, "Mr. But the chief value of these poems is intrinsic: The company performed regularly in unroofed but elaborate theaters. Required by law to be set outside the city limits, these theaters were the pride of London, among the first places shown to visiting foreigners, and seated up to 3, people. The actors played on a huge platform stage equipped with additional playing levels and surrounded on three sides by the audience; the absence of scenery made possible a flow of scenes comparable to that of the movies, and music, costumes, and ingenious stage machinery created successful illusions under the afternoon sun. For this company Shakespeare produced a steady outpouring of plays. *Romeo and Juliet* , *Julius Caesar* , and *Hamlet* Different from one another as they are, these three plays share some notable features: More impressively than the first tetralogy, the second turns history into art. Spanning the poles of comedy and tragedy, alive with a magnificent variety of unforgettable characters, linked to one another as one great play while each is a

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complete and independent success in its own right—the four plays pose disturbing and unanswerable questions about politics, making one ponder the frequent difference between the man capable of ruling and the man worthy of doing so, the meaning of legitimacy in office, the value of order and stability as against the value of revolutionary change, and the relation of private to public life. The plays are exuberant works of art, but they are not optimistic about man as a political animal, and their unblinkered recognition of the dynamics of history has made them increasingly popular and relevant in our own tormented era. *Troilus and Cressida*, hardest of the plays to classify generically, is a brilliant, sardonic, and disillusioned piece on the Trojan War, unusually philosophical in its language and reminiscent in some ways of *Hamlet*. During his last decade in the theater Shakespeare was to write fewer but perhaps even finer plays. Almost all the greatest tragedies belong to this period. Though they share the qualities of the earlier tragedies, taken as a group they manifest new tendencies. The heroes are dominated by passions that make their moral status increasingly ambiguous, their freedom increasingly circumscribed; similarly the society, even the cosmos, against which they strive suggests less than ever that all can ever be right in the world. The late tragedies are each in its own way dramas of alienation, and their focus, like that of the histories, continues to be felt as intensely relevant to the concerns of modern men. *Othello* is concerned, like other plays of the period, with sexual impurity, with the difference that that impurity is the fantasy of the protagonist about his faithful wife. Iago, the villain who drives *Othello* to doubt and murder, is the culmination of two distinct traditions, the "Machiavellian" conniver who uses deceit in order to subvert the order of the polity, and the Vice, a schizophrenically tragicomic devil figure from the morality plays going out of fashion as Shakespeare grew up. Transformed from its fairy-tale-like origins, the play involves its characters and audience alike in metaphysical questions that are felt rather than thought. *Macbeth*, similarly based on English chronicle material, concentrates on the problems of evil and freedom, convincingly mingles the supernatural with a representation of history, and makes a paradoxically sympathetic hero of a murderer who sins against family and state—a man in some respects worse than the villain of *Hamlet*. Both of these tragedies present ancient history with a vividness that makes it seem contemporary, though the sensuousness of *Antony and Cleopatra*, the richness of its detail, the ebullience of its language, and the seductive character of its heroine have made it far more popular than the harsh and austere *Coriolanus*. One more tragedy, *Timon of Athens*, similarly based on Plutarch, was written during this period, though its date is obscure. Despite its abundant brilliance, few find it a fully satisfactory play, and some critics have speculated that what we have may be an incomplete draft. The handful of tragedies that Shakespeare wrote between and comprises an astonishing series of worlds different from one another, created of language that exceeds anything Shakespeare had done before, some of the most complex and vivid characters in all the plays, and a variety of new structural techniques. A final group of plays takes a turn in a new direction. While such work in the hands of others, however, tended to reflect the socially and intellectually narrow interests of an elite audience, Shakespeare turned the fashionable mode into a new kind of personal art form. Though less searing than the great tragedies, these plays have a unique power to move and are in the realm of the highest art. *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* seem somewhat tentative and experimental, though both are superb plays. Like a rewriting of *Othello* in its first acts, it turns miraculously into pastoral comedy in its last. *The Tempest* is the most popular and perhaps the finest of the group. Prospero, shipwrecked on an island and dominating it with magic which he renounces at the end, may well be intended as an image of Shakespeare himself; in any event, the play is like a retrospective glance over the plays of the 2 previous decades. After the composition of *The Tempest*, which many regard as an explicit farewell to art, Shakespeare retired to Stratford, returning to London to compose *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* in ; neither of these plays seems to have fired his imagination. In , at the age of 52, he was dead. His reputation grew quickly, and his work has continued to seem to each generation like its own most precious discovery. His value to his own age is suggested by the fact that two fellow actors performed the virtually unprecedented act in of gathering his plays together and publishing them in the Folio edition. Without their efforts, since Shakespeare was apparently not interested in publication, many of the plays would not have survived. Further Reading Alfred Harbage, ed. For editions of

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individual plays the New Arden Shakespeare, in progress, is the best series. The authoritative source for biographical information is Sir Edmund K. A Study of Facts and Problems 2 vols. Reliable briefer accounts are Marchette G. A Biographical Handbook The body of Shakespeare criticism is so large that selection must be arbitrary. Twentieth-century criticism can be sampled in Leonard F. Modern Essays in Criticism ; rev. Other noteworthy studies include G. Wilson Knight, The Wheel of Fire: Traversi, An Approach to Shakespeare ; rev. Clare Byrne 4 vols. Studies of the theaters are in C. Walter Hodges, The Globe Restored: A Study of the Elizabethan Theatre , and A. The best account of early Renaissance drama is in Frank P. Campbell and Edward G.

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