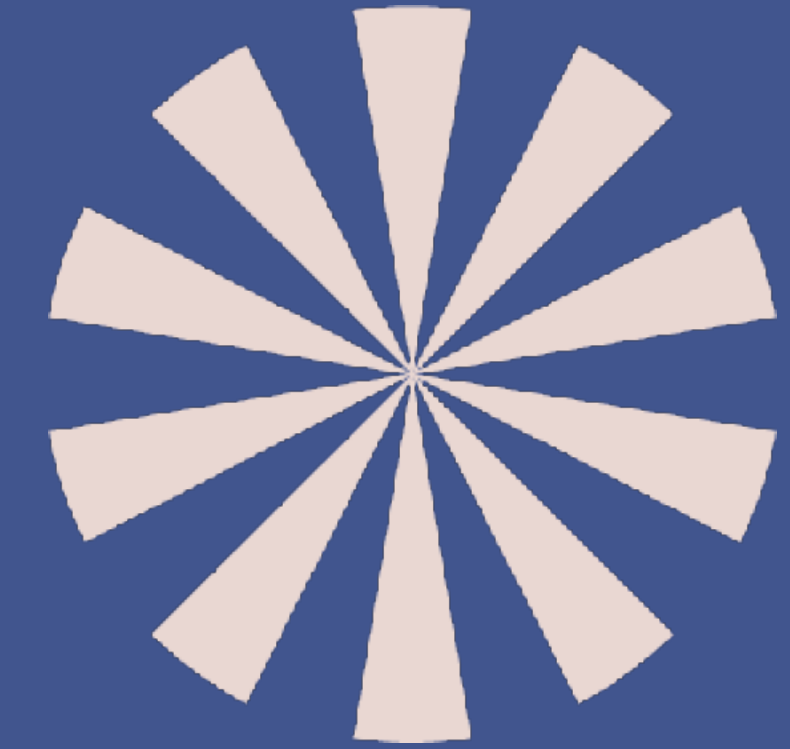

Greco-Roman Period

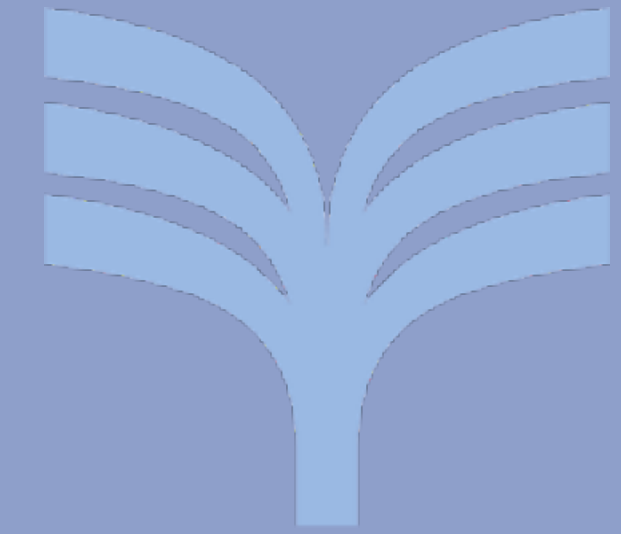


DR. KALYANI VALLATH

25 YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE



VTES IS NOW
Vallath



Greek Classicism

Ancient Greece

Three periods:

Archaic

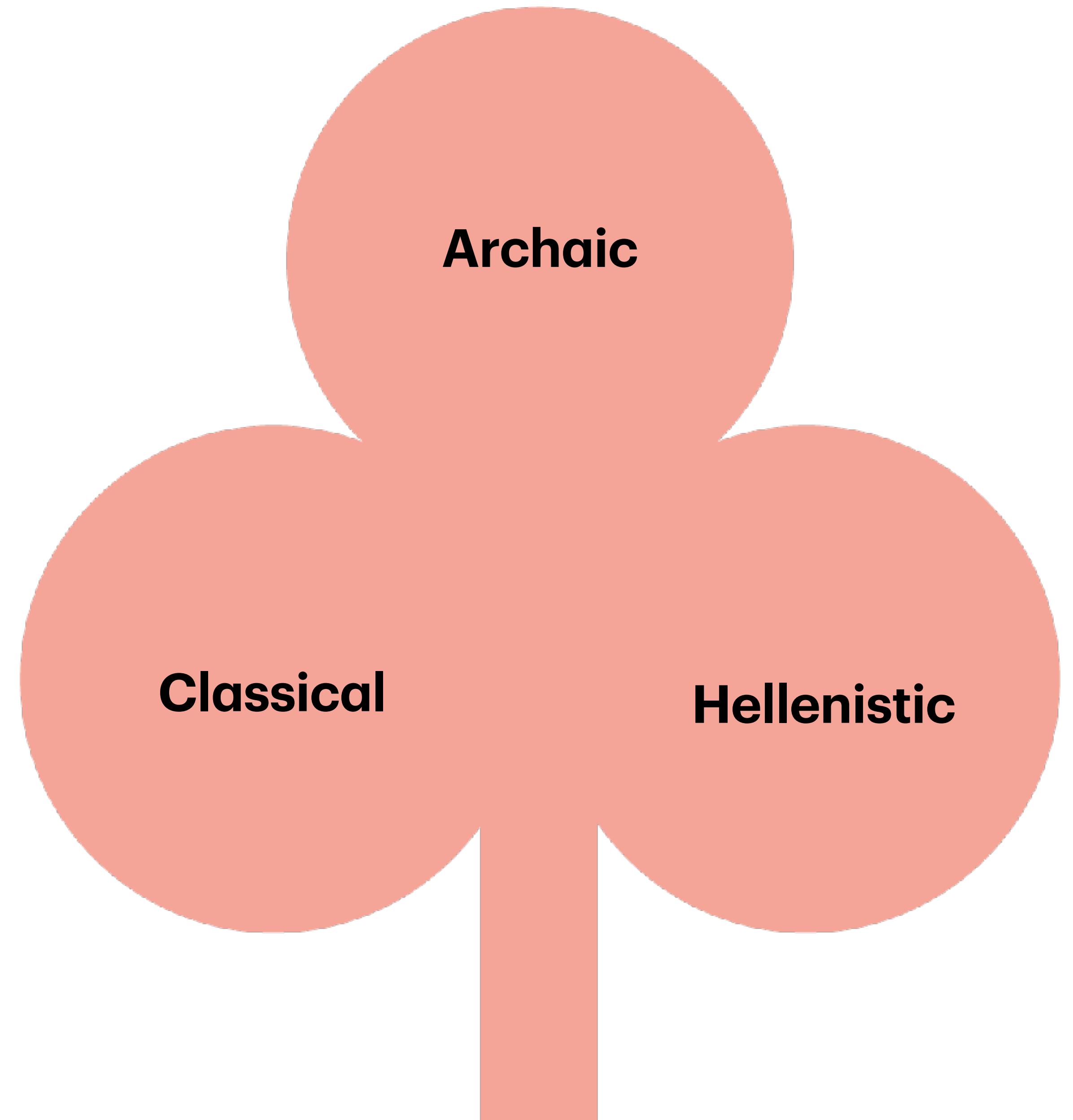
- Time of Homer
- Before this, it was the Greek Dark Ages, marked by ignorance, injustices, and various kinds of misery

Classical

- Flowering of arts and letters

Hellenistic

- Greece politically declined, but culturally dominated



Homer (8th century BC)

The Iliad

- Epic
- One of the oldest extant (existing) works in Western literature
- Set against the Trojan War
- Deals mainly with the fighting between Agamemnon and Achilles

The Odyssey

- Sequel to The Iliad
- Depicts the journey of Odysseus or Ulysses back home to Ithaca, after the fall of Troy

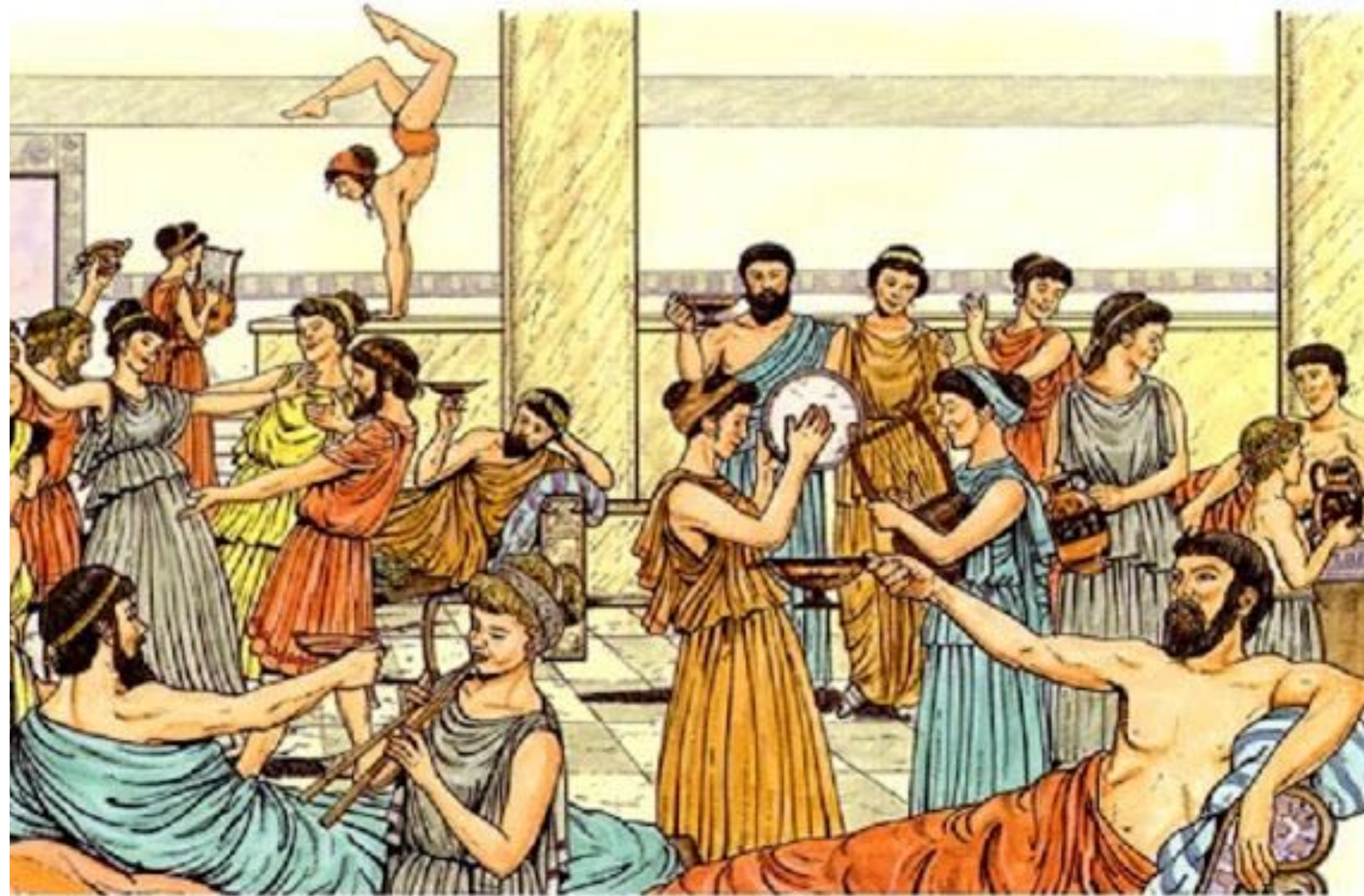


Classical Period



- 5th-4th century
- Athens
 - Athens emerged as the most powerful of the Greek city-states
 - Ruled by the famous ruler, Pericles
 - Tremendous flowering of the arts and letters
 - Disciplines such as political thought, aesthetics, physics, ethics, linguistics, biology, logic and mathematics developed

Classical Drama



Tragedy

- Emerged in Athens in the late 6th century BC
- As a part of religious festival Dionysia
 - Dionysus is the god of wine and ecstasy
 - Known as Bacchus among the Romans

Comedy

- Developed later in association with the “satyr play”
- Usually based on mythological subjects

Greek Theatre



- Koilon or Theatron
- Orchestra
- Thymele
- Scene or Skene
- Proscenion or Proscenium
- Diazoma

Greek Tragedy: Structure



- Prologue
- Parados
- Episodes and Stasimon
- Exodus

The Tragedians

- 3 tragedians
 - Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides
- At the beginning, there was only one actor in a tragedy, who interacted with the Chorus
- Aeschylus
 - Introduced the second actor and thus brought variety into drama (says Aristotle in Poetics)
 - Chorus has less importance
 - Made costumes more elaborate
- Sophocles
 - Introduced the third actor
 - No more than three actors were there in Greek tragedy



Aeschylus

(c. 525-c. 456 BC)

- Father of tragedy
- In the competitions held at the festival of Dionysia, Aeschylus always won the first prize
- His plays had a strong moral and religious basis
- Most famous work is the trilogy The Oresteia
- Sons Euphorion and Euaeon became tragic poets



The Oresteia



- A trilogy
 - Agamemnon
 - The Libation Bearers (Choephoroi)
 - The Eumenides
- Satyr Play Proteus
(lost except for two lines)

The Oresteia



- Story of the Greek hero Agamemnon, who is killed by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus
- Clytemnestra is the twin sister of Helen of Troy
- Helen and Clytemnestra were born of the “double egg” laid by Leda, the swan, who was raped by Zeus
- Agamemnon’s children Orestes and Electra take revenge upon her
- Orestes kills Clytemnestra, his mother
- Orestes is haunted by the Eumenides, as a punishment for committing matricide

Other Extant Plays

- The Persians
- The Suppliants
- Seven Against Thebes
- Prometheia
 - Prometheus Bound
 - Prometheus Unbound
 - Prometheus, the Fire-Bringer

Sophocles

- Also won prizes in dramatic competitions
- Believed to have written over a hundred plays; most of them lost.
- Initially imitated Aeschylus, but later developed a style of his own.
- Characters are more developed and individualistic than those of Aeschylus
- Theban Trilogy: Oedipus Rex (Oedipus the King), Oedipus at Colonus and Antigone



Oedipus Tyrannus (Latin, Oedipus Rex)



- When Oedipus is born to Laius and Jocasta, the King and Queen of Thebes, the Delphic Oracle prophesizes that he will kill his father and marry his mother
- Oedipus's parents sent the child to be killed, but he is brought up by a childless couple
- Oedipus eventually comes to know of the prophecy
- One day, he quarrels with a man and kills him, without knowing that he is his father, Laius
- By solving the riddle of the sphinx, Oedipus becomes the King of Thebes, marries the widowed queen, Jocasta, and has children by her
- When the truth is revealed by another prophecy, Jocasta kills herself and Oedipus blinds himself



Oedipus Colonus



- The last of the Theban plays to be written
- Starts in the grove of the Furies where Oedipus is a miserable beggar dressed in rags living in the company of his daughter Antigone
- King Theseus is kind to him, but he is neglected by his sons who are fighting each other
 - Oedipus knows it is because of his own curse, and will lead to their destruction
- Creon comes and tries to take Oedipus back to Thebes
 - Oedipus's death is prophesied to bring good fortune to the place where he dies and he refuses to leave Colonus
- Oedipus dies and is mourned by his daughters
- Theseus defends Colonus from Creon's army
- Polynices and Eteocles kill each other and Antigone decides to bury Polynices' body

Antigone



- Polynices and Eteocles have killed each other in a civil war
- King Creon gives Eteocles a hero's burial but leaves Polynices's body at the gates of Thebes as a punishment for rebelling against the state
- Antigone defies the law of the state and does her duty—buries her brother's body
- Tiresias warns Creon against making gods angry, but the king orders for her to be walled up alive in a cave
- Though Creon eventually relents, Antigone hangs herself in the cave
- Creon's son Haemon who loved her kills himself and so does Creon's wife Euridyce
- Creon's stubbornness and pride thus destroys him
- The play shows the conflict between the laws of the gods and the laws of the state



Euripides

- Author of over ninety plays, much of it lost
- Took the major step of depicting mythical heroes as ordinary people with inner lives and motives
- In his intellectual daring, Euripides is often compared to Socrates. (Neither of them cared much for accepted conventions and advocated unconventional and new ideas)
- Comic poets like Aristophanes lampooned Euripides as well as Socrates in their plays.
- Euripides's most famous play is Medea





Aristophanes

- 5th century BC
- Stalwart of comedy, which came to be known as Old Comedy, in contrast with the New Comedy of Menander
- Eleven surviving plays
- **The Clouds**
 - Cruelly caricatured Socrates, which led to the philosopher's trial and death according to Plato
- **The Wasps**
 - Through the character Philocleon, makes fun of the Athenians' excessiveness fondness of lawsuits
- **Lysistrata**
 - A woman ends the Peloponnesian War by getting women of the land to deny sex to their men
- **The Frogs**
 - Here, Dionysus himself, dressed in an absurd fashion, goes to Hades to bring back the best playwright from death
 - There is a famous scene in the play between Aeschylus and Euripides, regarding who is the better poet.

Menander

- 4th century BC
- Associated with New Comedy
- More generalized situations and stock characters
 - In contrast to Old Comedy of Aristophanes, which satirized real individuals and local issues
- Menander's New Comedy eventually led to the development of Comedy of Manners



Pindar

- 5th cent BC poet, at the beginning of the Classical Period
- Odes
 - Encomiastic
 - Accompanied by music and dance
 - Bold and formal language
 - Three types of stanzas in each ode, based on choral dance positions: strophe, anti-strophe and epode
- A major group of Pindar's odes are the "Victory Odes"
- A variation of the Pindaric Ode, called Irregular Ode, was developed by Abraham Cowley



Plato

(c. 428 BC-c. 348 BC)

- Born of an aristocratic family in the island of Aegina near Athens in 428 BC
- Real name was Aristocles, which means “glorious” and he was called Plato, meaning “broad-shouldered”
- Received excellent education, which aroused in him a respect for tradition and a keen political sensibility
- By the age of 20, like all young men of Athens, Plato came under the influence of Socrates



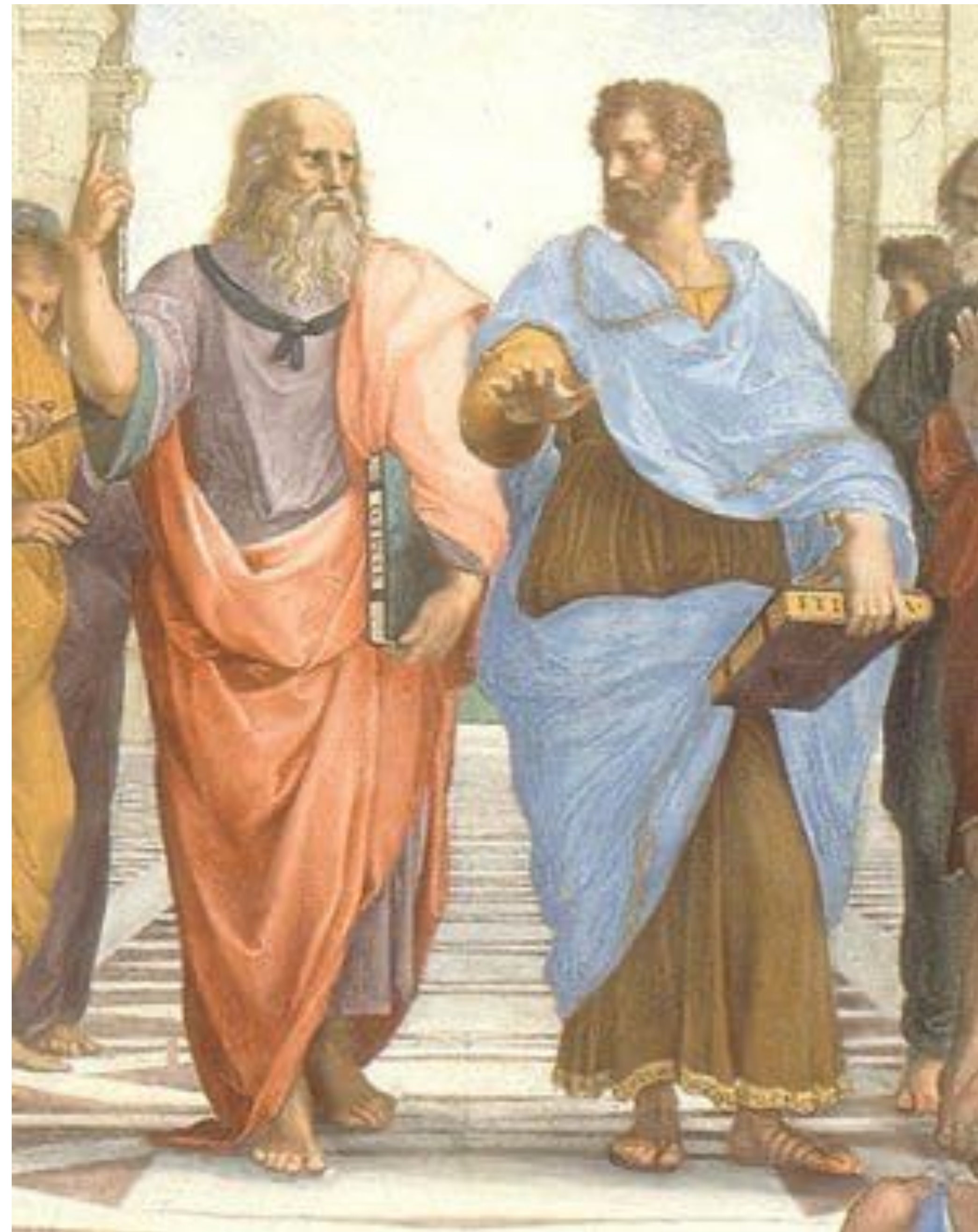
The Academy



- After the death of Socrates in 399 BC, Plato left Athens and travelled to Italy, Sicily and Egypt
- Later, he returned to Athens
- In 387 B.C. Plato, along with the mathematician Thaetetus, founded the philosophical school, the Academy
- The Academy became very famous due to the Neoplatonists, and functioned until A.D. 526, when it was closed down by emperor Justinian for its pagan orientations
- At Plato's Academy, subjects like mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, biology and political theory were taught
- At the gate of the academy was written: "Let no one without mathematics (geometry) enter."
- Aristotle was a student at the Academy, and later teacher

The Dialogues

- Much of Plato's philosophy is in the form of dialogues, usually between Socrates and someone else
 - Called Socratic Dialogues
 - Deal with some moral or philosophical problem
- 36 Dialogues, including
 - Republic, Protagoras, Apology, Gorgias, Ion, Phaedrus
- Republic is a vindication of the idea that good life is possible only in an ideal state. And the aim of a good life is justice.
- Never wrote a single work on poetry. His ideas on poetry have to be extracted from various Dialogues



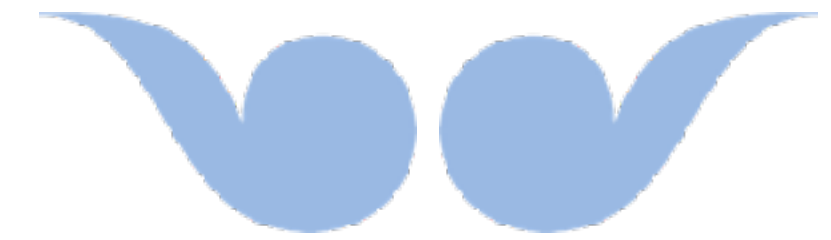
Aristotle

(384 BC-322 BC)

- Aristotle was born to a well-to-do family in the Macedonian town of Stagira in 384 BC
- His father, Nicomachus, was a physician
- In 367, when Aristotle was seventeen, his uncle sent him to Athens to study at Plato's Academy
 - Spent 20 years there, as a pupil and as a teacher
- After Plato's death, Aristotle left the Academy



Life away from Athens



- Joined the philosophical circle of Hermeias in Assos, in Asia Minor, where Hermeias was the tyrant
- When Hermeias was killed by the Persians, Aristotle moved to the island of Lesbos in the eastern Aegean
- Philip of Macedon invited Aristotle to serve as tutor to his thirteen-year-old son Alexander.

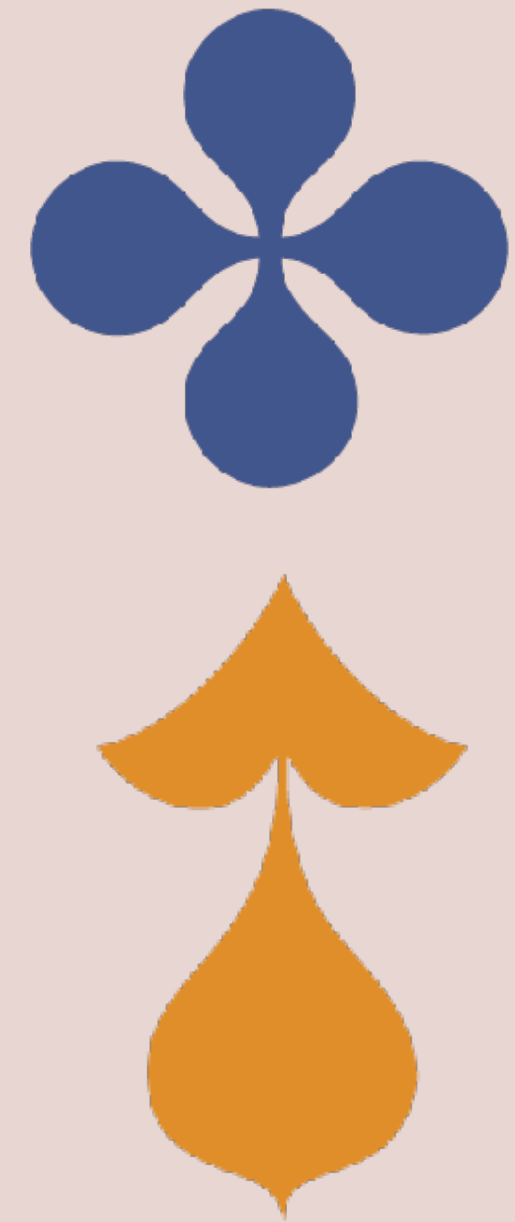
Lyceum and After



- Back in Athens, founded his own school, Lyceum
- Most of his great works written during this period
- Under his direction, his students and associates carried out research on philosophical and scientific topics
- In 323 BC, Alexander died
- Aristotle once again left Athens and took refuge in his mother's birthplace, Chalcis
- He died in 322 at the age of sixty-two

Aristotle's Works

- What the Westerners know of Aristotle today was left to them by Arab philosophers such as Averroes in the twelfth century
- The works known in Aristotle's own lifetime were some 27 dialogues modelled on those of Plato, but these are now lost
- Surviving works include Poetics, Rhetoric and Nichomachean Ethics
- Poetics
 - Written for serious students in the manner of notes for lectures
 - First edited by Andronicus in the first century BC



Greek Historians

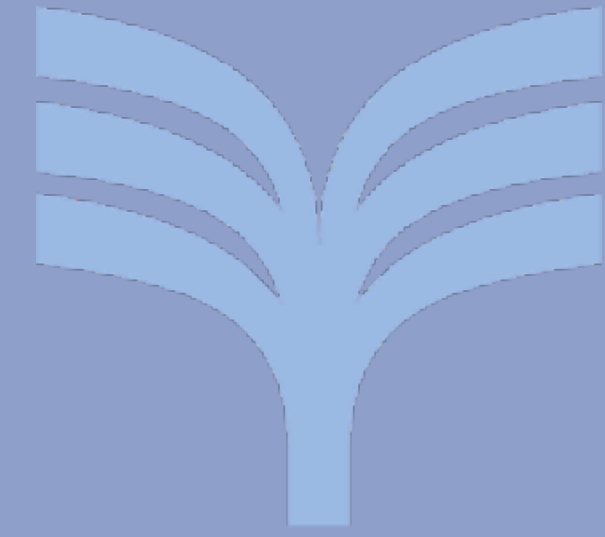


- Herodotus
- Thucydides
- Polybius
- Plutarch
 - Philosopher, teacher, biographer
 - Wrote Parallel Lives

Hellenistic Period



- The period is from the time of Alexander the Great
 - Alexander died in 323 BC
 - Alexander's successors established Greek cities and kingdoms in Asia and Africa
- Upto the Roman annexation of Greece in 146 BC (2nd cent.)
 - After this, the "Roman period" in Greece
- Rise of the Roman Empire during this period
 - Rise of Roman Classicism



Roman Classicism

Early Roman History



- In Rome, monarchy was overthrown and replaced by the republic in the 6th century BC
- 1st cent. BC: Transitional period, Republic was transforming into an Empire
- Caesar, Pompey and Crassus formed First Triumvirate
- Julius Caesar rose to being dictator (equivalent of emperor)
- On the Ides of March, that means the 15th of March, 44 BC, Julius Caesar was assassinated by the republicans (people who supported the republic against the empire)
- Civil War broke out between republicans and Caesar's supporters

The Roman Empire



- In the Civil War, republicans were defeated
- Antony, Octavian and Lepidus formed the Second Triumvirate
- Another Civil War broke out between Octavian and the combined forces of Mark Antony and his beloved, Cleopatra of Egypt
 - This was the Battle of Actium of 31 BC, the final war of the Roman Republic
 - Antony and Cleopatra died
- Octavius Caesar won and became the first emperor of Rome. And he took the title Augustus Caesar

Roman Classicism



- Profoundly influenced by Greek philosophy, culture and literature
- **Stoic philosophy**
 - Duty, discipline, political involvement
- **Epicureanism**
 - Pleasures of everyday life
 - As in the expression “Carpe Diem”
- **Skepticism**
 - Loss of belief in higher values
 - Beauty is fleeting
- **Cynicism**
 - The belief that people are motivated purely by self-interest
- Roman Classicism influenced European Renaissance

Virgil

(70-19 BC)

- Father of pastoral poetry
 - Eclogues (or Bucolics)
 - Georgics
- **The Aeneid**
 - Epic modelled after Homer's Iliad and Odyssey
 - Follows the Trojan refugee Aeneas as he struggles to fulfil his destiny and arrive on the shores of Italy, thus founding the city of Rome
 - Makes use of the symbolism of the Augustan regime
 - Strong associations between Augustus and Aeneas, the one as founder, and the other as re-founder of Rome
- Virgil's work has profound influence on Western literature
 - In Dante's Divine Comedy, Virgil appears as Dante's guide through hell and purgatory



Horace

(65-08 BC)

- Roman classicist who lived in the first century BC
- **Odes**
 - Homostrophic (same stanza throughout the ode)
 - Calm, meditative, colloquial
- **Satires**
 - Speaker is an urbane, witty, tolerant man of the world
 - Aimed “to laugh people out of their follies”
- **Epistles (Letters)**
 - Ars Poetica (Epistle to Piso)



Ovid

(43 BC-c. AD 17)

- Witty, sophisticated love poems
- **Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)**
 - Scientific, didactic work on how to find and keep a lover
 - Humorous satirical style
- **Metamorphoses**
 - Narrative poem beginning with the creation of the world and ending in Ovid's time
 - The greatest source of mythology for Renaissance writers
- Augustus Caesar banished Ovid to an isolated island and he died in exile
 - This is the story of David Malouf's novella *An Imaginary Life* (1978)



Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BC-AD 65)

- Roman statesman, dramatist, poet and Stoic philosopher
- Emperor Nero's teacher and confidant
 - It is legendary that Nero played the fiddle while Rome burnt
- Seneca committed forced suicide at Nero's orders
- Upheld the principles of Stoicism, Cynicism & Epicureanism
- Tragedies of Blood
 - Intense, violent melodramas in rhetorical language
 - Famous: Thyestes
- Senecan revenge tragedies rediscovered by Italian humanists in the mid-16th century; became the models for tragedy on the Renaissance stage



Major Plays



- Thyestes
- Agamemnon
- Oedipus
- Phaedra
- Medea

Plautus

(c. 254 BC-184 BC)

- Wrote comedies that are versions of Greek New Comedy
- Stock characters: young men in love with slave girls, mistaken identities, cunning servants, deceived masters
- **Amphitryon**
- **Menaechmi**
- **Cistellaria** (The Casket Comedy)
- **Miles Gloriosus** (The Swaggering Soldier)
- Rediscovered in the Renaissance, Plautine plots furnished the basis for hundreds of comedies in every European language
 - English Restoration Comedy is Plautine in form and spirit



Terence

(c. 195 BC-159 BC)

- Younger contemporary of Plautus, who wrote comedies that are the earliest intact works of Roman literature
- Slave who was later freed
- More refined style of expression
- Plays are Latin versions of Greek plots
- All his 6 comedies have survived



Cicero

(106 BC-43 BC)

- Statesman, lawyer, scholar, writer and orator
- Upheld republicanism during the final civil war of Roman Republic that killed Julius Caesar
- Founder of Ciceronian rhetoric
 - A kind of dramatic performance where judgment is possible because the speaker and audience assume character roles
- Wrote very famous historical and philosophical works
 - “On Arguments” (De Inventione)
 - “On the Orator” (De Oratore)
 - “On the Commonwealth” (De Re Publica)
 - "On Laws" (De Legibus)



Short Essays

- **Greek Classicism**
 - How will you structure the answer? How will you write the introduction? What are the main points?
- **Senecan Tragedy**



Which of the following is NOT a feature of classicism?

- Symmetry
- Control
- Harmony
- Spontaneity



Which of the following is NOT a primary epic?

- Iliad
- Odyssey
- Mahabharata
- Faerie Queene



Old English Period

The Celts (Britons)



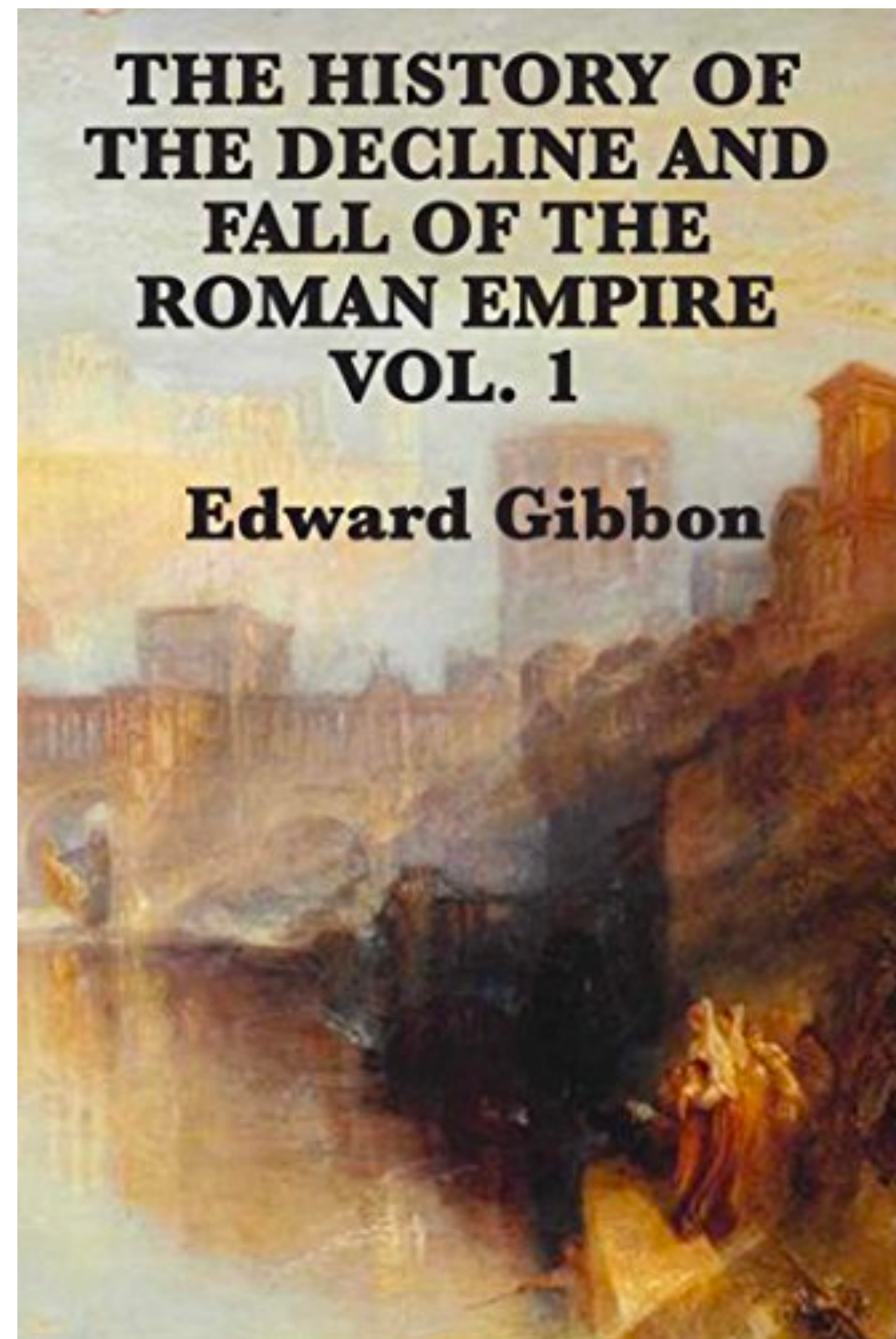
- Original inhabitants of Britain from Iron Age
- Iron Age roughly from 800 BC to 100 AD, when Romanization was complete
- Spoke Celtic languages, called “Britain” or Brythonic
- Society had class structure (Druids were the priestly learned class, like Brahmins)
- Many striking connections have been found between the cultures of ancient Vedic India and the Celtic people, pointing to the fact that these seemingly different cultures split from each other.
- Celtic languages and cultures survive today in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany (Breton, Cornish, Scottish, Gaelic, Irish, Welsh)

Romans in Britain



- The Roman conquest of Britain was a gradual process.
- Julius Caesar's expeditions to Britain— 55 and 54 BC
- Britain had diplomatic and trade links with Rome since then
- Romans under Emperor Claudius invaded Britain in AD 43; invasion ended in the AD 80s
- Britain became “Britannia”, a province of the Roman Empire
- Roman Empire became very powerful in the subsequent centuries

Romans in Britain



- Empire divided into Western Roman Empire and Eastern Roman Empire
- Economic decline and barbarian invasions in Western Roman Empire at the end of 4th century AD
- Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire
 - Book by Edward Gibbon published in 6 volumes in 1776-89
 - Covers the history of the Roman Empire, Europe and the Catholic Church
 - Discusses the decline of the Western Roman Empire (in 4th century AD) and Eastern Roman Empire (in 1453, Fall of Constantinople)
- End of Roman rule in about 410 AD
- Christian historian Augustine of Hippo says Rome brought the downfall upon itself by its own corruption

Anglo-Saxons



- After the Romans left Britain, Picts, Scots and Irish invaded the island
- The Celtic war-lord Vortigern invited the Germanic mercenary tribes, the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, to assist in fighting the warring tribes; their leaders were Hengist and Horsa
- Anglo-Saxons settled in the south and east of Britain in the 5th century AD
- The Anglo-Saxon period is called Old English period

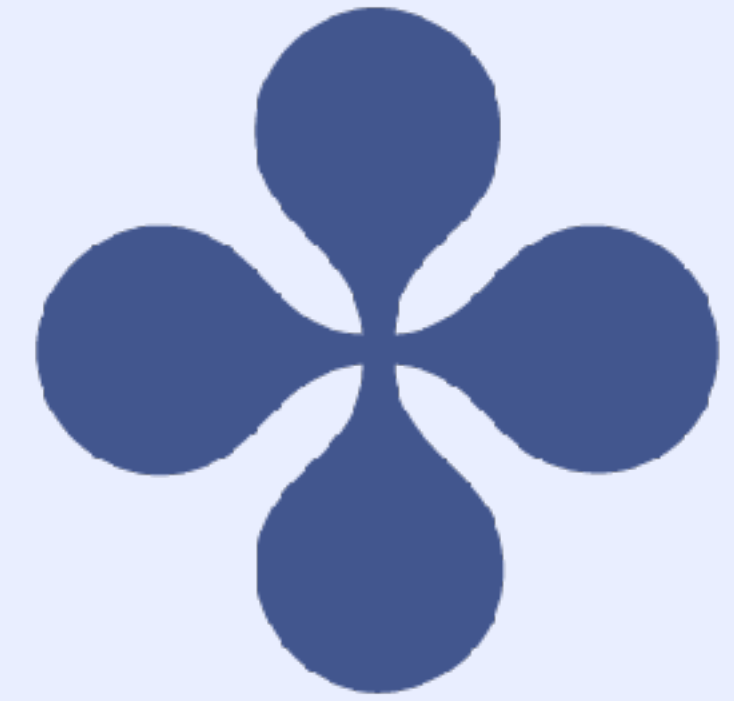
King Arthur



- Believed to have lived in the 5th or early 6th century
- Celtic king, probably of Roman descent
- Fought against the Saxon invasions of Britain
- Religious aspect: Arthur is a Christian king who fought 12 battles against the pagan Saxons

Arthurian Legends

- In the Middle Ages, Arthur became an international figure; Arthurian legends appeared in English and French
- Important elements of these legends:
 - Knights of Arthur's Round table
 - His sword Excalibur, horse Llamrei
 - His castle and court at Camelot
 - Arthur's wife Guinevere and her lover Launcelot
 - Perceval and the quest for the Holy Grail
 - The love of Tristan and Iseult
 - Arthur's final battle against Mordred at Camlann
 - His final rest in Avalon



Anglo-Saxons

- Heptarchy 600-800 AD
 - Seven kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons
 - The idea that there was a Heptarchy in the Anglo-Saxon period was first proposed in the 12th century AD by the historian Henry of Huntingdon
 - Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, Essex, Sussex, Wessex, Kent
- In 8th and 9th centuries AD, persistent Danish (Vikings from Scandinavia) attacks on Anglo-Saxon kingdoms
- Society: kinship groups led by strong warrior chief
- English emerged as a written language
- Their pagan religions offered no hope of an afterlife
- People valued earthly virtues of bravery, loyalty, generosity, and friendship
- Bards (scops) strummed the harp and sang of heroic deeds of warriors who thus gained immortality

The Spread of Christianity

- Christian monks first reached Britain during the Roman period.
- Around AD 400
 - Christian monks settle in Britain
 - Christianity and Anglo-Saxon culture co-exist
 - By the year 550, the native Britons had been converted to Christianity and the religion became firmly established within their culture.
 - St. Augustine of Canterbury's Gregorian mission in AD 597; converted King Aethelbert of Kent & his wife
- By A.D. 699
 - British pagan religions replaced by Christianity
 - 7th century AD is also the time of Prophet Muhammad.

Alfred & the Vikings



King Alfred
Statue in Winchester

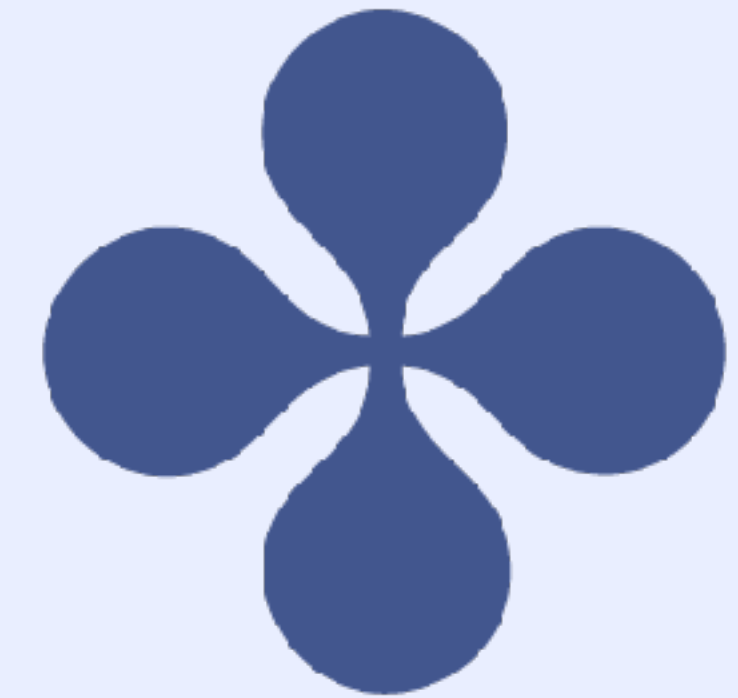
- King Alfred of Wessex (849-899)
 - King of Wessex from 871 until his death in 899
- Fought the Vikings (Danes)
- Viking Age in Britain (800-1066)
 - Great but sporadic violence by Viking raiders
 - Danish Rule in many parts of Britain
 - Danelaw
 - Common law developed during Alfred's time
 - Basis of all law in the UK

Norman Conquest 1066



- The last Anglo-Saxon king Edward the Confessor promised William, Duke of Normandy, the English throne
- Edward went back on the promise and designated Harold his successor
- William of Normandy defeated Harold and Anglo-Saxon army
- French replaced English as the language of the ruling class

Arthurian Literature: 12th century



- Flowering of “historical” literature on Arthur
- Gesta regum anglorum (William of Malmesbury)
- Historia regum Britanniae (Geoffrey of Monmouth)
 - Gives accounts of other early kings also, starting from Brutus
 - Focus is on Arthur himself, not his world of romance
- Five Arthurian romances by Chrétien de Troyes
 - Part of “Matter of Britain”
 - Inaugurated Arthurian romance tradition
 - Depicts Arthurian world as a lost golden age
 - Focus is on chivalry, quest, and exploits of the knights

Arthurian Literature: 12th century

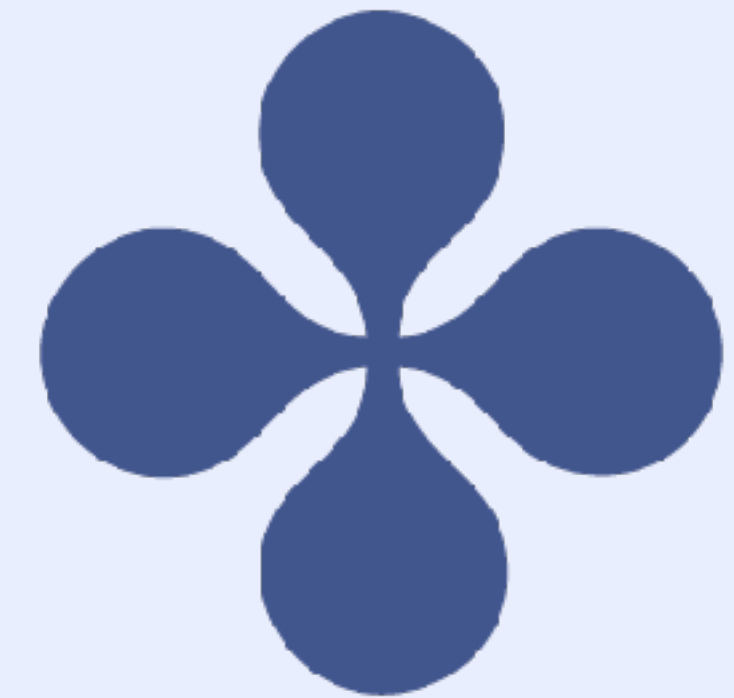


A manuscript miniature from *Roman de Brut* [from a 14th century manuscript]

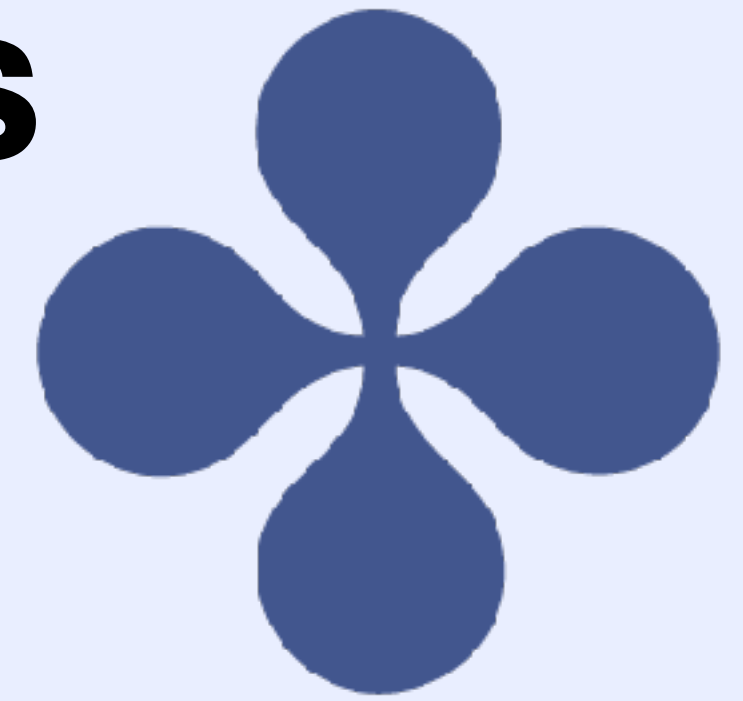
- Roman de Brut (by Wace, written in Norman language)
- Expands Geoffrey's account
- Inspired Layamon's Brut
- Focus is on the king and his battles, and his knight Gawain

Later Arthurian Literature

- French Vulgate Cycle of Arthurian romances (13th c.)
 - Arthur's world as epitome of chivalry
- The Alliterative Morte Arthure (c. 1400)
- Le Morte D'Arthur (Thomas Malory, 1469-70)
 - Based on French prose romances
 - Caxton printed this work

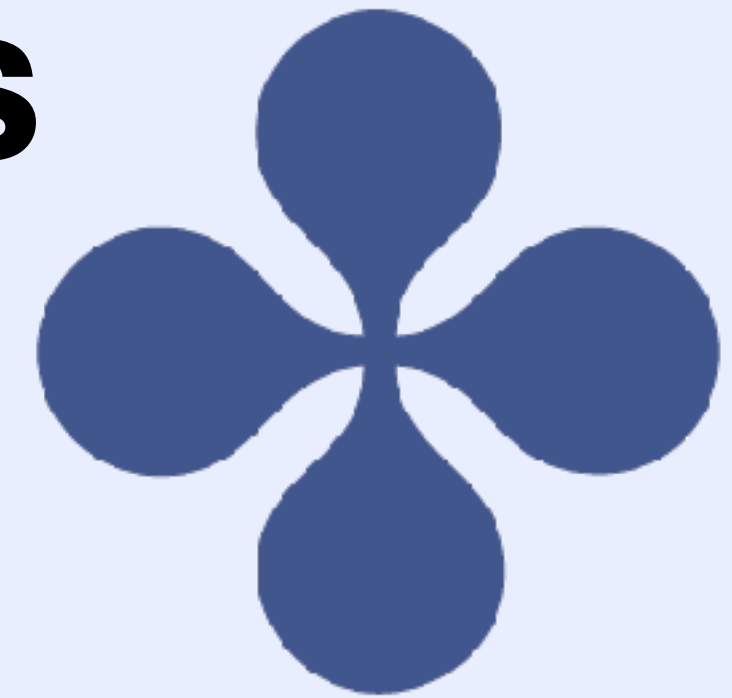


Other Writers of Arthurian Legends



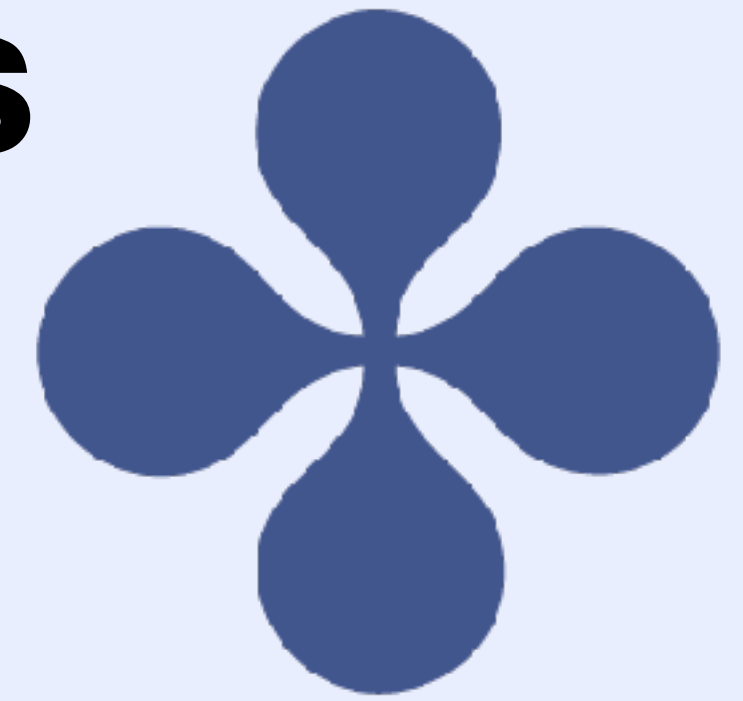
- John Leland
- Michael Drayton
- Edmund Spenser (The Faerie Queene)
- George Gascoigne (The Masque at Kenilworth)
- John Dryden (with Henry Purcell, opera King Arthur, or The British Worthy)
- Walter Scott (Marmion, The Bridal of Triermain)

Other Writers of Arthurian Legends



- Victorian Revivers of Arthurian legends
 - Lady Charlotte Guest
 - Alfred Tennyson (Idylls of the King: 12 poems which include “The Lady of Shalott”, “Morte d’Arthur”, “Sir Galahad”)
 - William Morris (Defence of Guenevere)
 - Swinburne (“The Day before the Trial”, “Lancelot”, Tristram of Lyonesse)
 - Matthew Arnold (Tristram and Iseult)
 - Aubrey Beardsley (Art Nouveau painter who illustrated Malory’s Morte D’Arthur)

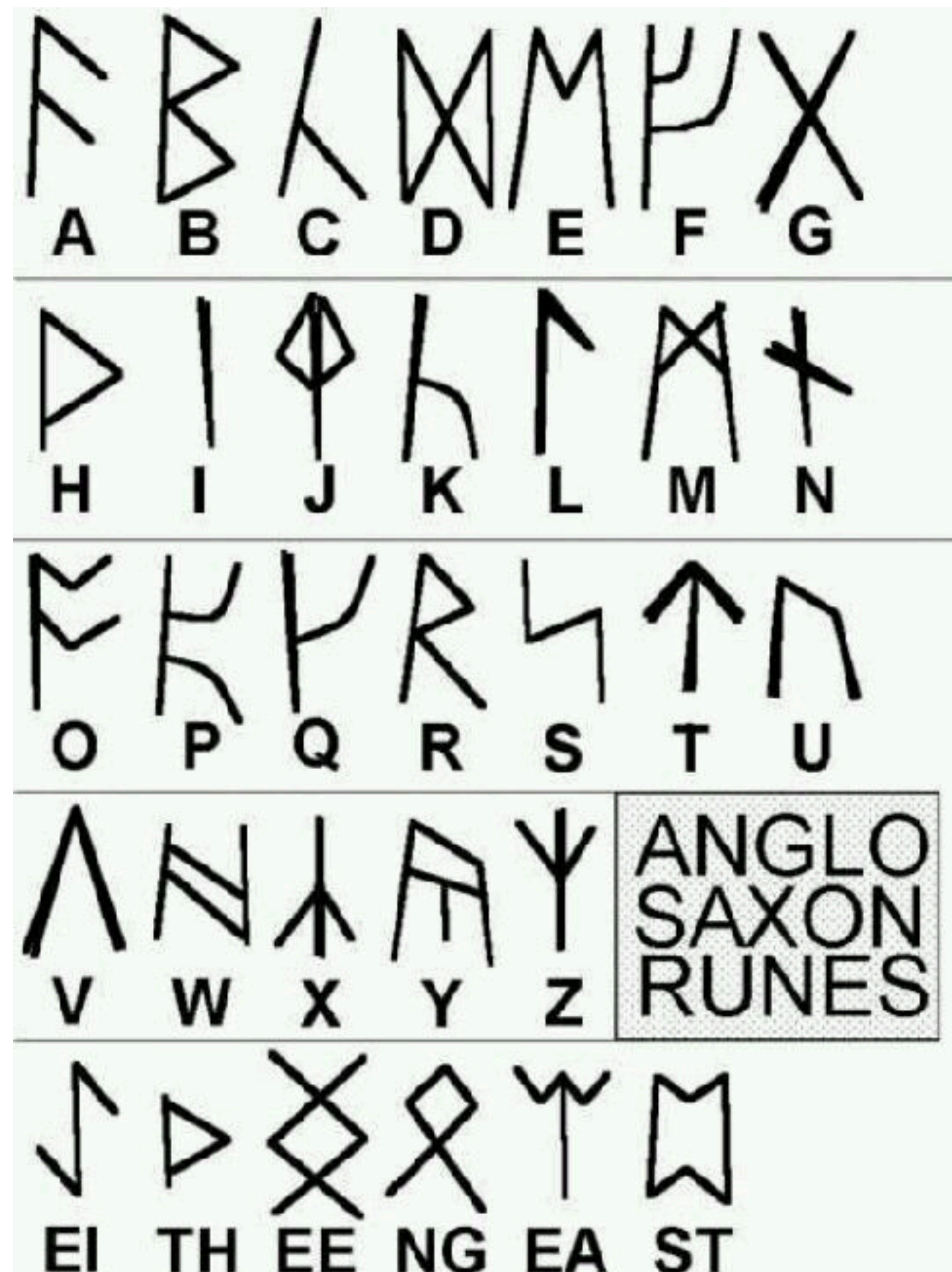
20th c. Writers of Arthurian Legends



- TS Eliot (The Waste Land)
- Charles Williams (two cycles of Arthurian poetry)
- CS Lewis (science fiction that draws on Grail mythology)
- David Lodge (Small World—draws on Arthurian motifs)
- Arthurian motifs abound in contemporary children's fiction

Old English Language & Literature

Old English Language



- English developed from the dialects (closely related but not uniform) of the Germanic tribes, Angles, Saxons and Jutes
- English belongs to the Germanic family, a sub-group of the Indo-European family
- Old English has four major dialects:
 - Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon and Kentish
 - Northumbrian & Mercian were found in the region north of the Thames, and are collectively called Anglian
 - Kentish was the dialect of the Jutes in the southeast
 - In the late OE period, West Saxon dialect (of Wessex) became the most important, and the standard for written prose
 - Nearly all the surviving Old English texts are in West Saxon

Characteristics of Old English

- Pronunciation and Spelling
 - Pronunciation, especially of long vowels, was different
 - Had letters and consonant clusters we no longer employ
- Vocabulary
 - Purely Germanic words
 - Absence of French and Latin derivatives
- Grammar
 - Old English is a synthetic inflectional language
 - Words themselves change to indicate person, number, tense, etc
 - Modern English is an analytical language
 - More than changes within the word, changes of word order and use of prepositions and auxiliary verbs are employed



Old English Literature: An Overview



- Period from the 7th century to the Battle of Hastings (Norman Conquest) of 1066
- Poetry chanted by a scop (bard) to the accompaniment of a harp
- The period was characterized by the imposing scholarship of the Christian monasteries
- Major genres
 - Epic poetry, Hagiography, Sermons, Bible translations, Chronicles
- Greatest work: Beowulf
- Major authors: Caedmon, Cynewulf, Venerable Bede

Old English Manuscripts



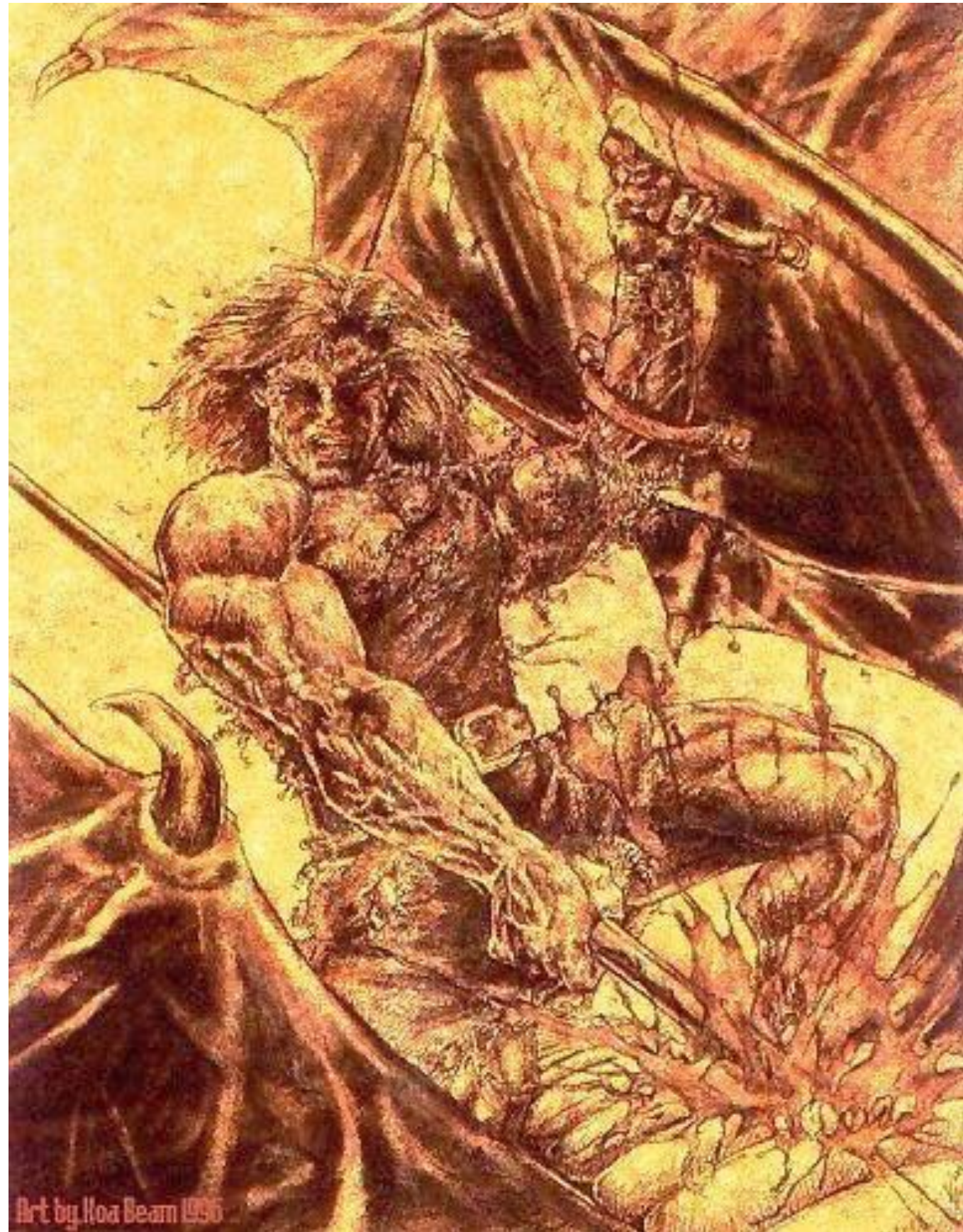
- Four major Manuscript collections
 - Junius Manuscript
 - Exeter Book
 - Vericelli Book
 - Nowell Codex (or Beowulf Manuscript)

Old English Poetry



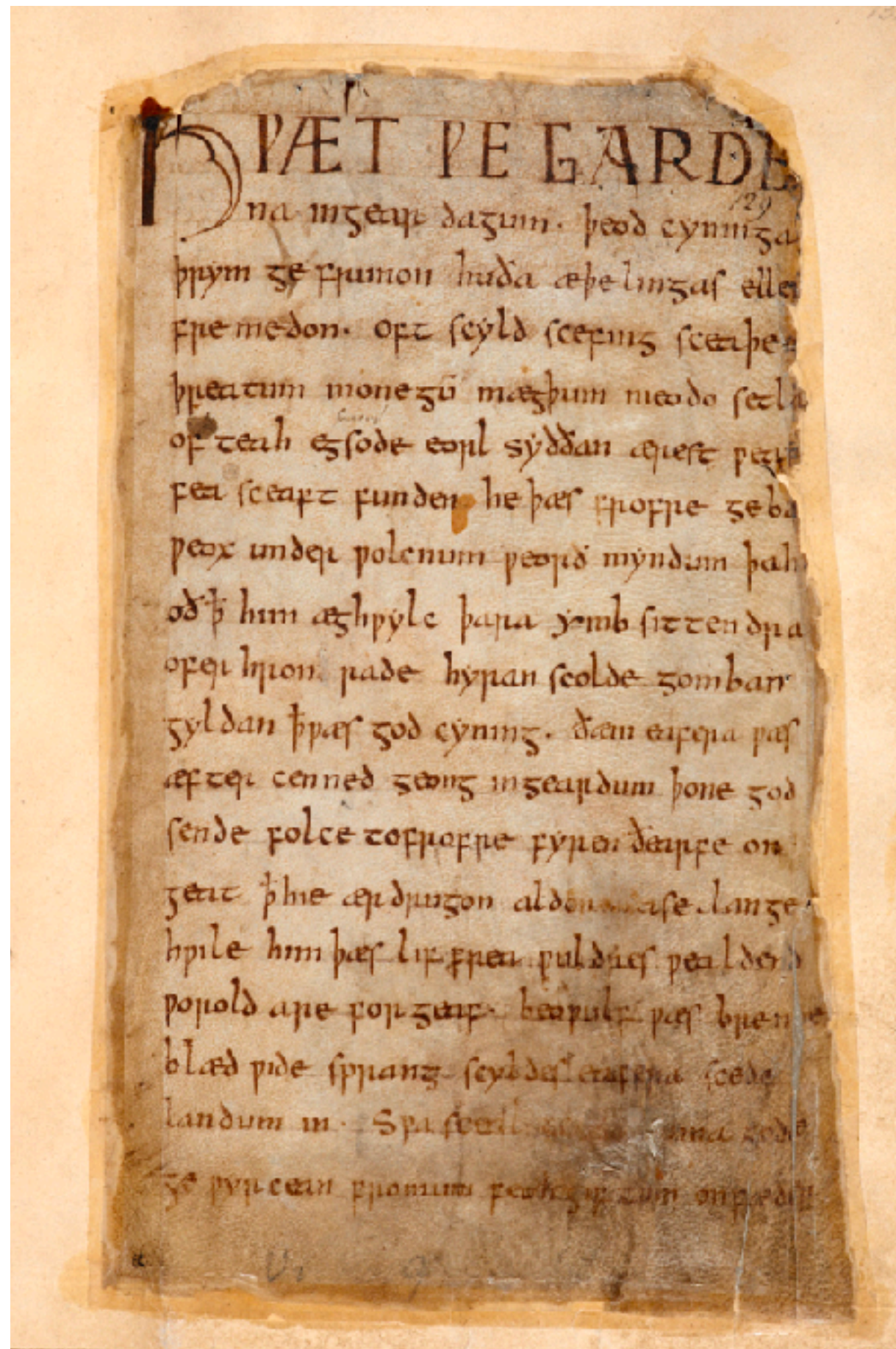
- General Features
 - Bold and strong
 - Mournful and elegiac
 - Sings of sorrows and the ultimate futility of human life
 - Two types: (i) Heroic Germanic and (ii) Christian
 - Portrays the helplessness of man before the power of fate
 - Alliteration and kenning (elaborate descriptive phrases)
 - Internal rhyme
 - Poems are mostly anonymous

Beowulf



- England's oldest extant national epic
- Written probably in the 7th century AD
- Survives in a 10th century manuscript called Cotton Vitellius A.xv (or Nowell Codex)
 - The manuscript was badly damaged in a fire in 1731
- Contains 3,182 lines
- Scandinavian story of the Geatish hero Beowulf

The Plot of Beowulf



- First Part
 - The Geatish warrior Beowulf kills Grendel, a monster who attacks Heorot, the hall of the Danish king Hrothgar
 - Grendel's mother, who seeks revenge, is also killed
- Second Part
 - Set 50 years later
 - Beowulf is now King of the Geats
 - Beowulf kills a dragon who attacks his people, and is himself mortally wounded
 - Ends with Beowulf's sorrowful burial

Features of Beowulf

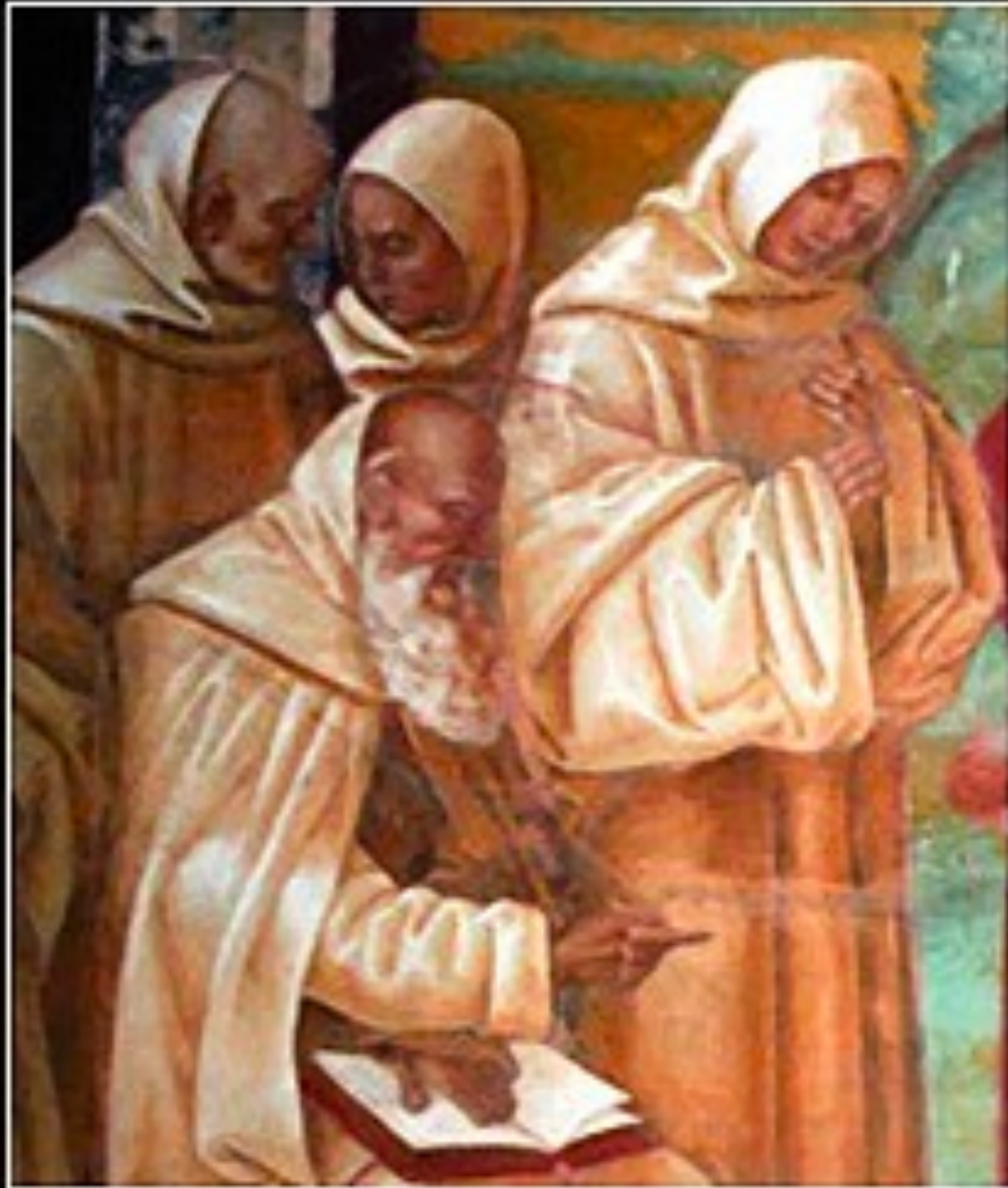
- Sustained grandeur
- Brilliant style
- Baroque diction
- Set the standards for heroism
- Offers lessons in moderation and humility
- Warns about the transitory nature of worldly glories
- Fascinating representation of court culture
- Use of communal memory and shared tribal history
- Digressions, moving back and forth in time
- Pagan philosophical poem rather than a Christian work
- However, Biblical narrative is woven into the poem through references to Cain

Caedmon



- 7th century Northumbrian poet; “Father of Old English poetry”
- Was a brother at the monastery of Whitby
- Details of his life are known from Venerable Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English Race (year 731)
 - Was an illiterate cow-herd
 - A miracle happened in his life: At a feast that Cædmon attended, everyone was asked to sing a song on a harp. Cædmon left the hall, ashamed that he could not contribute a song. Later a man appeared to him in a dream and said, “Sing to me the beginning of all things.” Cædmon was then able to sing verses and words that he had not heard of before.
- According to Bede, Caedmon founded the school of Christian poetry called “Caedmonian School”

Cynewulf



- Lived in the 9th century
- Nothing known for certain about his life
- Was probably very religious
- Believed to have lived to an old age, which he felt to be a burden
- At some point of his life, seems to have enjoyed the favour of princes
- Was certainly a Latin scholar
- In his poetry, the personal note is emphasized, and even lyrical

Cynewulf

- With him, Anglo-Saxon religious poetry moved beyond Biblical themes into the didactic, the devotional and the mystical
- Poems
 - The Fates of the Apostles
 - Juliana
 - Elene
 - Christ II (or The Ascension)
- School of Cynewulf
 - The Dream of the Rood
 - Andreas
 - The Phoenix
 - Judith

Elegies



- Exeter contains a collection of seven Old English elegies
- Themes of loss and consolation
- The seven elegies are
 - Deor
 - Wulf and Eadwacer
 - The Wife's Lament
 - The Husband's Message
 - The Ruin
 - The Wanderer
 - The Seafarer

Old English Prose

- Sermons and translations from Latin
- Two types
 - Christian
 - Alfred the Great
 - Aelfric
 - Secular
 - Alfred the Great
 - Aelfric
 - Wulfstan
 - Works on medicine, law, mathematics, rhetoric, geography, astronomy, etc
 - Riddles



Venerable Bede



- Lived in the 7th-8th century
- 40 books to his credit, dealing with theology and history
- Varied themes, including commentaries on the Bible, observations of nature, music and poetry
- Ecclesiastical History of the English Race (731)
 - Originally in Latin: *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum*
 - Written in 5 books
 - Authentic historical document

King Alfred the Great (c. 848-899)



- King of Wessex from 871 until his death in 899
- Successfully resisted Danish attacks
- Translated theological and philosophical prose from Latin
 - Pastoral Rule (or Pastoral Care) by Pope Gregory
 - History of the World by Orosius
 - Ecclesiastical History of the English Race by Venerable Bede
 - Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius (written in prison while awaiting execution)
- Initiated work on the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
 - Collection of annals; a major historical document
 - Compiled in AD 890; continued till 12th century

Other Writers / Works

- Aelfric of Eynsham
 - Homilies
- Wulfstan
 - Contemporary of Aelfric
 - Wrote sermons, of which Sermon of the Wulf is important
 - Blames the sins of the English for the Viking invasion
- Martyrology
 - Prose work about saints and martyrs
 - Believed to have been by a Mercian author
- Prose on astronomy, geography, medicine, law, etc has survived

Middle English Period

The Medieval Period



- Extends from the Norman Conquest (11th c.) to the Renaissance (16th c.)
- Three phases in Europe
 - Early Middle Ages (5th c to 10th c; in England, this is Old English Period)
 - High Middle Ages (11th to 13th c)
 - Late Middle Ages (14th to 16th c)
- French influence in culture and society
- Feudalism; strict social hierarchy
- Three social classes (called Estates)
 - Aristocracy (king, barons and knights)
 - Episcopacy (clergy)
 - Peasantry (serfs)

The Aristocracy



- The kings ruled by “Divine Right” theory
- The right to rule
 - is granted by God
 - is passed on by heredity
- Barons were the king’s direct subordinates
 - were given large portions of the king’s land, known as manors / fiefs
 - paid homage or “fealty” to the king
 - support to the king at all times
 - governed the king’s land
 - provide troops and fight for the king
 - paid “shield money” with which the king maintained his army
- Aristocracy spoke French and read French poetry
- Associated with the ideals of chivalry

Chivalry



How patriarchal is chivalry?

- Knights constituted the lower nobility who became identified with the ideals of chivalry during the Late Middle Ages.
- A boy under training as a knight was called a squire.
- Chivalry was a knight's code of behaviour
 - Faith in, and deep love of, the Christian religion; ready to die for the Church
 - Generosity
 - Strength to protect women and the weak
 - Fight against injustice and evil
 - Courage in the face of the enemy
 - Wore special armour and clothing
- Songs about knights were sung by troubadours.

The Episcopacy



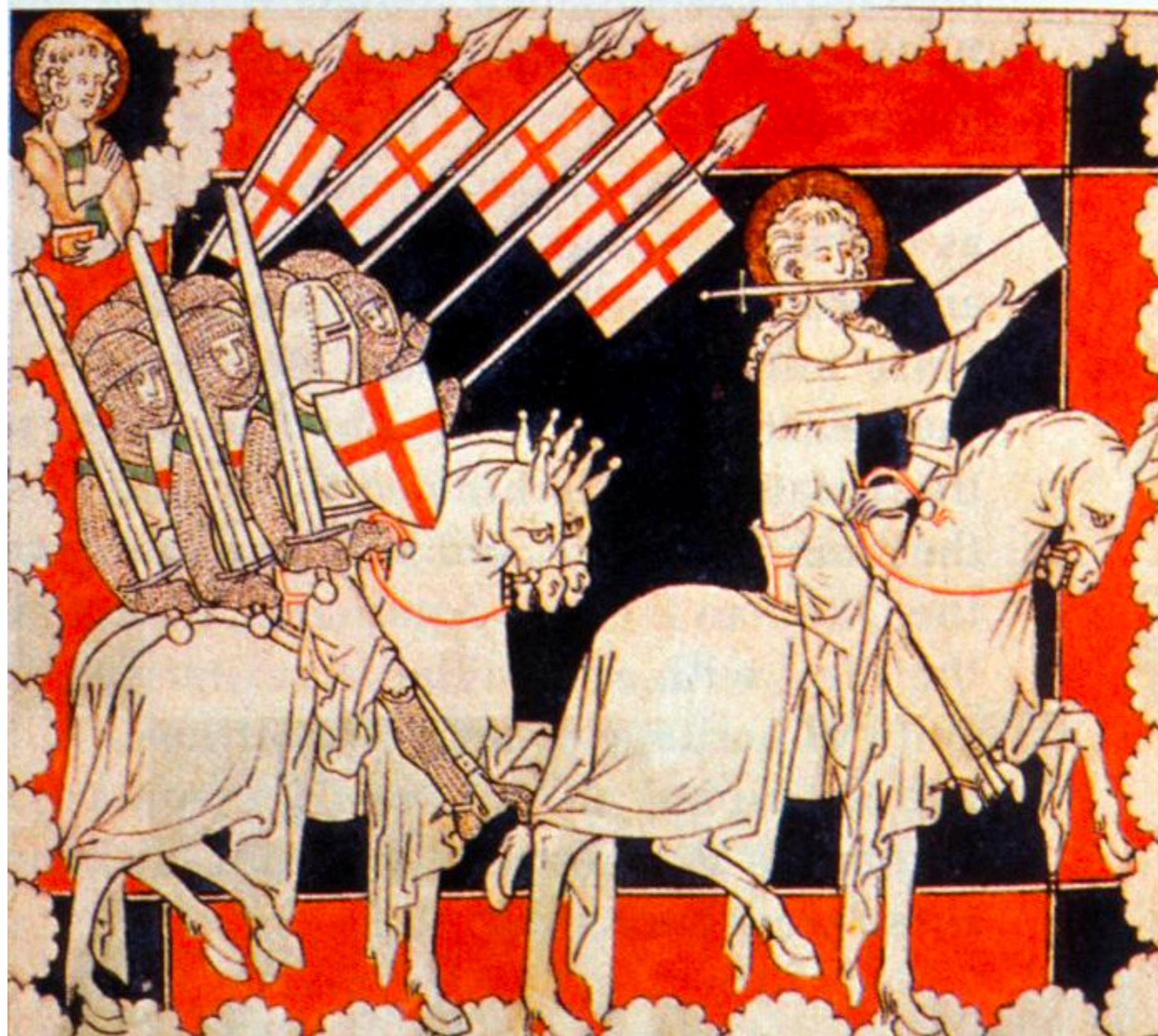
- The clergy were divided into
 - High clergy (who were like the Barons)
 - Low clergy (who were like the serfs)
- The church leaders
 - held great power over the peasants / serfs
 - were active in politics and government
- A diocese was like a “spiritual manor” headed by a bishop
- Many bishops also governed real manors
- Spoke and wrote in Latin (prose)

The Peasantry



- The serfs / peasants
 - lived in “bondage” and were treated mercilessly by the nobility and high clergy
 - were treated like animals, and were sold along with land
- The peasants believed that their after-life would be in heaven if
 - they gave more money to the church
 - served the clergy unquestioningly
- The peasants lived a life of squalor, superstition and ignorance

The Crusades



- A series of religion-driven military campaigns waged by much of Christian Europe against external and internal opponents, mainly Muslims who were very powerful in the Middle Ages
- The Crusades originally had the goal of recapturing Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Muslim rule
- 9 major Crusades from 11th to 13th centuries
- For Muslims the Crusades is a symbol of Western brutality and hostility toward Islam
- For Christians, the Crusades is a war to protect Christendom

Early Middle English Period (5th to 13th c)

- Transformation of the English language
 - Simplified in spelling, grammar
 - Influence of Norman French
- London became the administrative centre
 - This later determined the spoken and written forms of standard English
- Aristocratic society and taste for French Literature
 - This affected the nature and scope of English literature
- Militaristic culture
 - England became aggressive, confident and militaristic, which later determined the boundaries of a vast empire.
- England entered the full current of European life; enriched by cosmopolitan cultures and literatures

England in the 14th century



- Population increased, leading to calamities like the Black Death in the Late Middle Ages
- Economy prospered
- Intellectual, spiritual and artistic flowering in the Christian monasteries

Late Middle English Period

- 14th to 16th century, following High Middle Ages
- Beset with famines, plague and revolts
 - Great Famine (1315-17)
 - Black Death (1348 onwards)
 - Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)
 - Peasants' Revolt (1381)
 - Fall of Constantinople (1453)
 - Invention of printing by movable types (1456)
 - Wars of the Roses (1455-1485)
 - Awakenings of Renaissance and Reformation

The Famine (1315-1317)



- By 1300, Europeans were farming almost all the land they could cultivate.
- A population crisis developed.
- Climate changes in Europe produced three years of crop failures between 1315-17 because of excessive rain.
- As many as 15% of the peasants in some English villages died.
- One consequence of starvation & poverty was susceptibility to disease.

The Black Death



- Attack of bubonic plague that ravaged the Middle East and Europe
- Reached England in 1348; reappeared several times
- Death of one third of English population
- Led to social chaos, labour shortages, Peasants' Revolt and the introduction of the wage system

Hundred Years' War



- War between France and England
- Broke out in 1337 and ended in 1453
- First European War
- Covered the reigns of five English kings from Edward III
- French gained ultimate victory following the appearance of Joan of Arc (1429)
- Since then, the English resented French supremacy, leading to the decline of feudalism and the nationalistic interest in English as a literary language.

The Peasants' Revolt (1381)



- Uprising of peasants across England
- Aftermath of Black Death and resultant economic and political insecurities
- Immediate cause: King Richard II (aged 14 then!) attempted to collect a poll tax
- Violence in all parts of the country
- Peasants sought the end of unpaid serfdom
- Led by Wat Tyler & clergyman John Ball
- Tyler beheaded and the Revolt put down
- Revolt described in Gower's *Vox Clamantis*, which was completed sometime after the Revolt

Fall of Constantinople

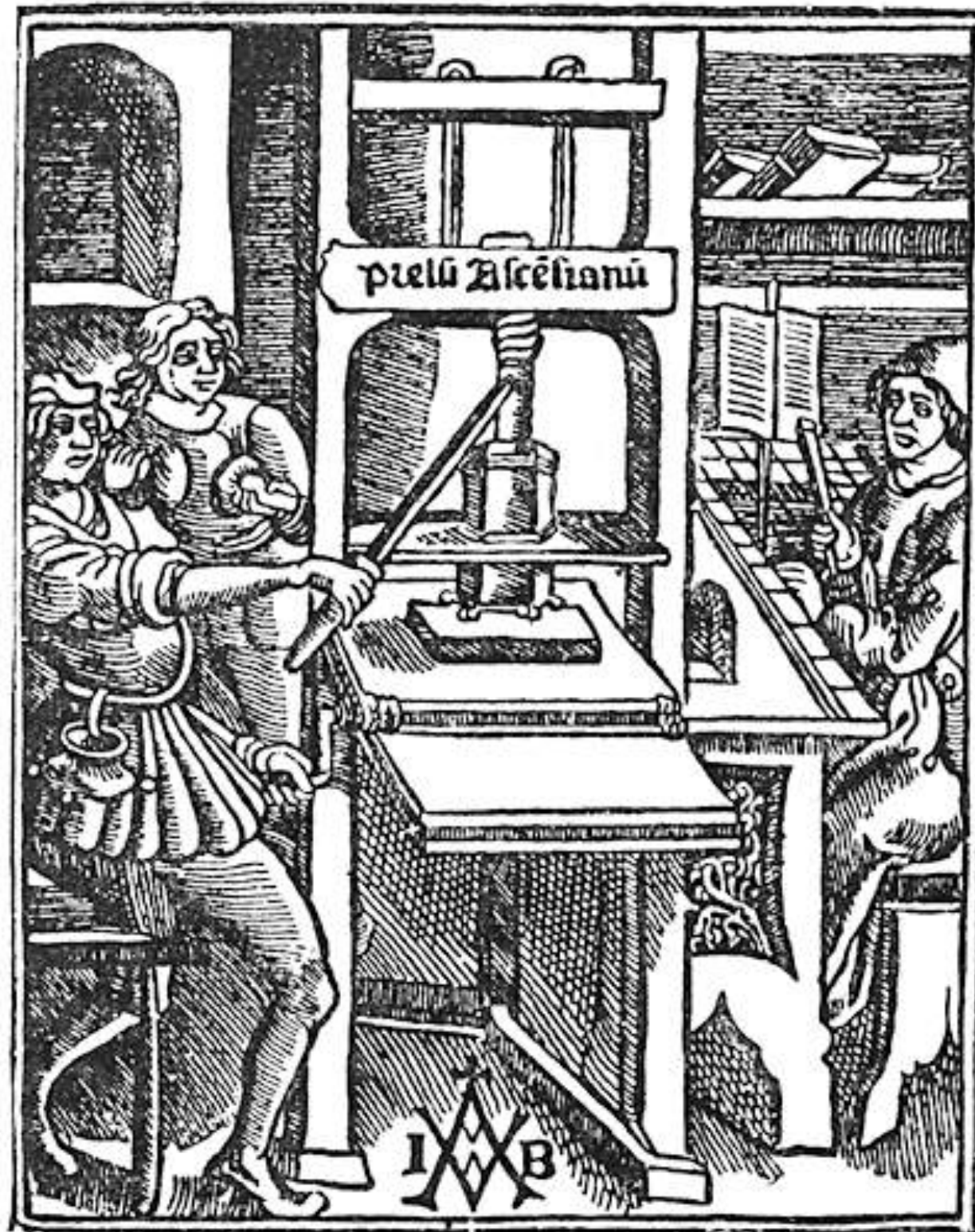


- Constantinople
- The capital of Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire, founded by Emperor Constantine I in the 4th c. AD
- A second Rome, the centre of culture, trade and learning
- In 1453, Emperor Constantine XI was defeated by the Ottoman Turkish Sultan Mahomet II
- The Christians subsequently lost all their territories to the Ottoman Turks

Effects of the Fall of Constantinople

- Defeat of the Byzantine Empire (after 1100 years) and rise of the Ottoman Empire
- Constantinople was renamed Istanbul
- Christian monks fled to the west, and spread learning
- This led to Humanism and Renaissance
- Increased European trade with the East

Invention of Printing



- Woodblock printing was invented in China in the 3rd c. AD
 - This method was tedious and difficult
- The Koreans were the first to print books with movable metal types, in late 14th c.
- Movable type printing was introduced into Europe by German artisan Johannes Gutenberg
 - The first printed book in Europe (produced by Gutenberg) was the Vulgate Bible (1456), now called Gutenberg Bible
- For the first time, texts (including the Bible) were made available in vernacular languages, which led to the Reformation.

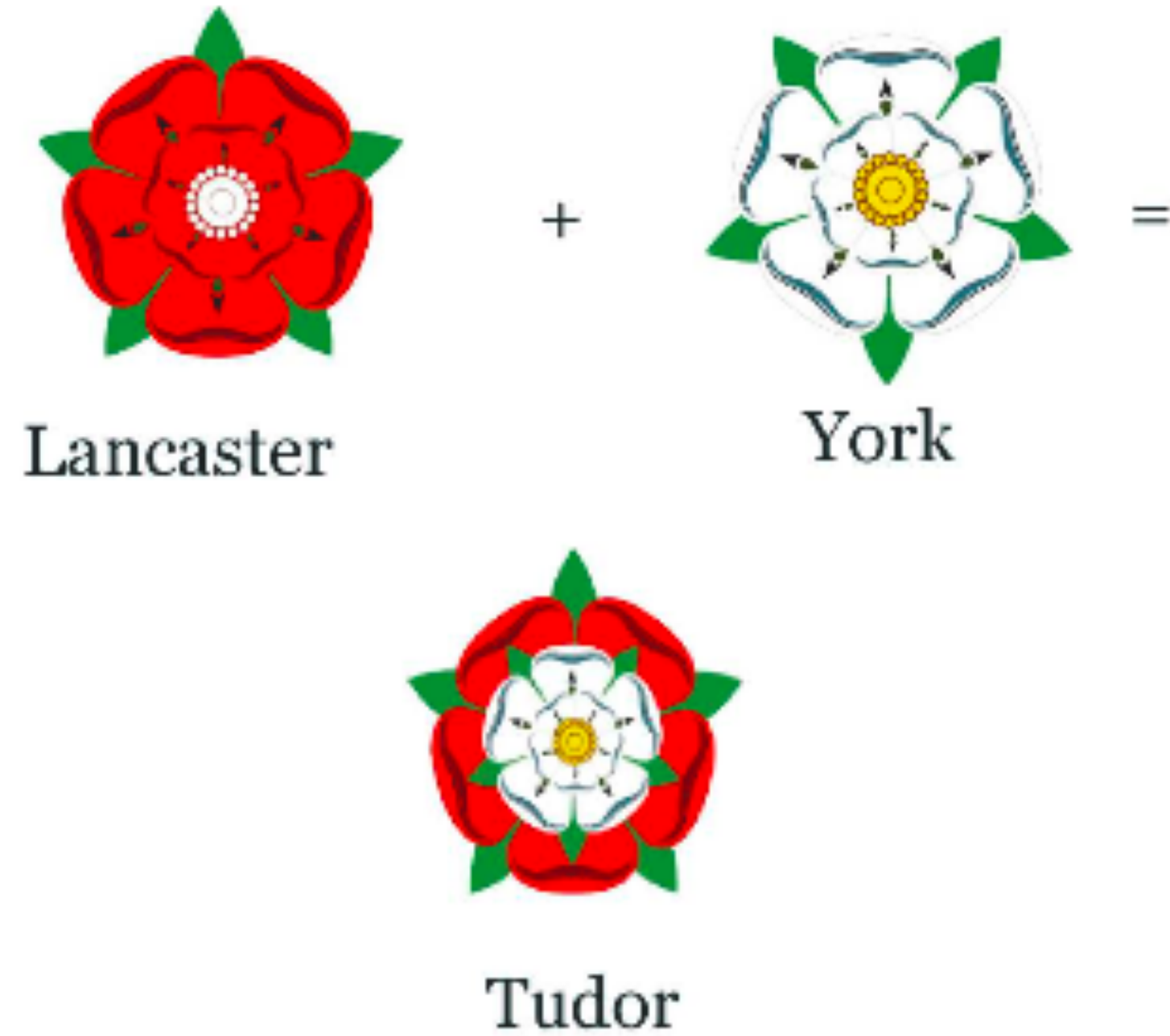
William Caxton (d. 1492)



- William Caxton, English merchant, diplomat and translator, introduced the printing press at Westminster in England in 1476.
- He printed the 1st English book in Belgium in 1473
 - His own translation of the French courtly romance Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye
- The 1st book to be printed at the Westminster press
 - Probably an edition of Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales
- The 1st book to be printed with a date
 - The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers (18 Nov 1477)

Wars of the Roses (1455-1485)

- Civil War between the two branches of the Plantagenet dynasty
- Lancaster (Red Rose), and
- York (White Rose)
- Resulted in the establishment of the Tudor dynasty



Wars of the Roses (1455-1485)

- King Henry VI held the throne in 1455
- His grandfather Henry IV had seized power in 1399
- Richard, Duke of York laid claim on the throne
- Richard was killed in battle in 1460
- But his son Edward IV crushed the Lancastrians and ruled till 1470
- In 1470, Lancastrians under Queen Margaret of Anjou brought back Henry VI
- Seven months later, Edward returned and regained power; after him, his brother Richard III ruled
- Richard III was killed by Henry Tudor (Henry VII) who put an end to the Wars of the Roses and established the Tudor rule.

Major Kings of the Medieval Period

- Edward the Confessor (r. 1042-1066)
- William, the Conqueror (r. 1066-1087)
- Henry II (r. 1154-1189)
- Richard, the Lion-Heart (r. 1189-1199)
- King John (r. 1199-1216)
- Edward II (r. 1307-1327)
- Edward III (r. 1327-1377)
- Richard II (r.1377-1399)
- Henry IV (r.1399-1413)
- Henry V (r. 1413-1421)
- Henry VI (r. 1422-61; 1470-71)
- Edward IV (r. 1461-70; 1471-83)
- Richard III (r. 1483-85)

Medieval Society

- Medieval feudal society was divided into three Estates (social classes): clergy, nobility, peasantry
- Peasants were of three types: non-free slaves, semi-free serfs, and free tenants
- Feminine estates: virgin, wife and widow
- The three estates began to break down in Chaucer's time due to the rise of
 - The mercantile class in the cities
 - The intellectuals or clerics among the clergy

Middle English Literature: An Overview

- Extensive influence of French literature
- Major genres
 - Allegory (Piers the Plowman)
 - Tales of Chivalry and Adventure (Gawain and the Green Knight)
 - Arthurian Legends (Morte d'Arthur)
- Period of Chaucer

Dream Allegory: Famous Examples



- Roman de la Rose (The Romance of the Rose, French)
- Divina Commedia (The Divine Comedy, Latin, 1321) by Dante Alighieri
- The Pearl (English)
- Piers Plowman (English, c. 1394) by William Langland
- The Book of the Duchess, The House of Fame and The Parliament of Fowls (English)
 - Geoffrey Chaucer (14th century)

Later Dream Allegories

- Pilgrim's Progress (John Bunyan, 1678)
- The Triumph of Life (P.B. Shelley, 1824)
- The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream (John Keats, 1819)
- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Lewis Carroll, 1865)
- News from Nowhere (William Morris, 1890)
- Finnegans Wake (James Joyce, 1939)



Famous Chivalric Romances

- Lancelot and Perceval (2 romances)
- King Horn
- Parzifal
- Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
- Le Morte D'Arthur

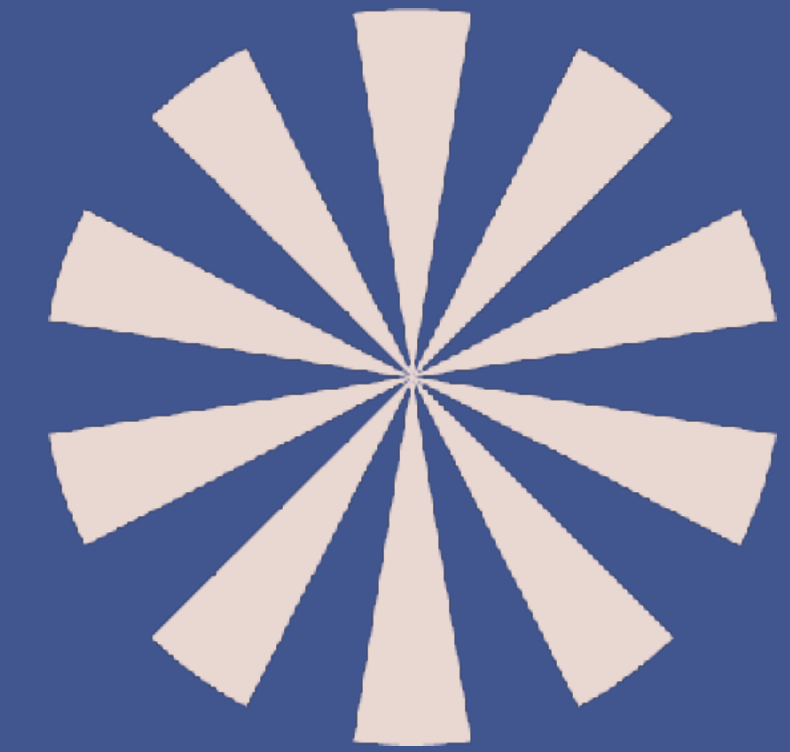


Alliterative Revival (c. 1350-c.1500)



- Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (by the Pearl poet)
- The Alliterative Morte Arthure (anonymous)
- Piers Plowman (by William Langland)
- The Destruction of Troy (John Clerk from Lancashire)
- Poetry by William Dunbar

Chaucer and Contemporaries



DR. KALYANI VALLATH

25 YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE



VTES IS NOW
Vallath

Transition from the Medieval to the Modern

- Literature changed from the oral to the written.
With printing, anonymity gave way to authorship
- English established as a literary language
- Chivalry and feudalism declined
- In Chaucer's youth, England at the height of glory
in Hundred Years War with France
- TROUBLES
 - Black Death: attacks of bubonic plague 1348-76
 - Economic troubles. Serfdom changed to wage
system
 - Disastrous turn in Hundred Years' War
 - Peasants' Revolt— 1381

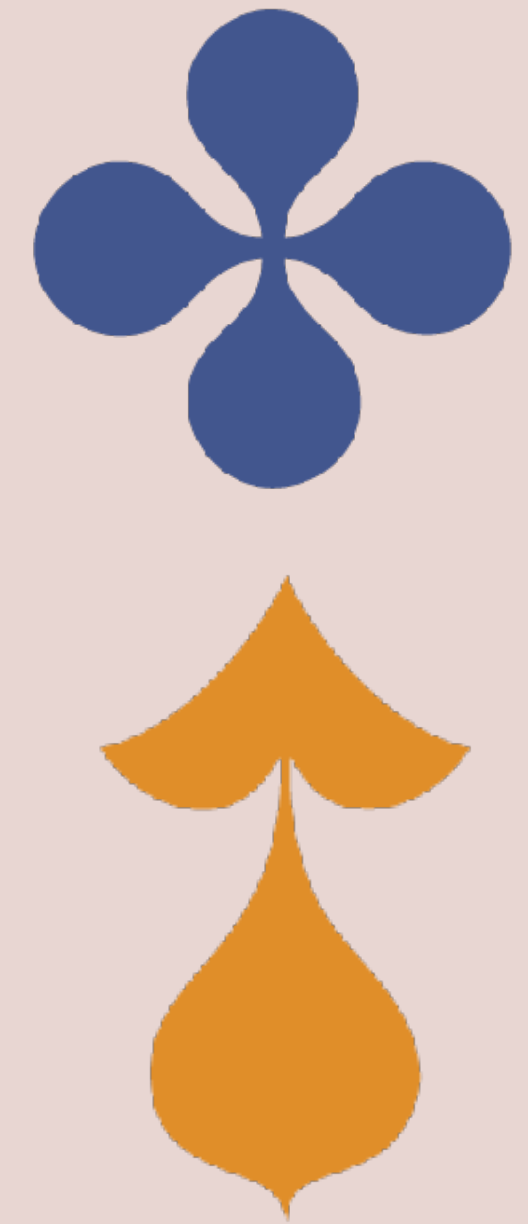
Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340-1400)

- Father of English poetry
- First poet of national importance
- Genius recognized in all ages including his own
- His career is divided into three phases:
 - French period, Middle period, Italian period, or
 - French period, Italian period, English period
- Patron was John of Gaunt
- Wrote in East Midland dialect



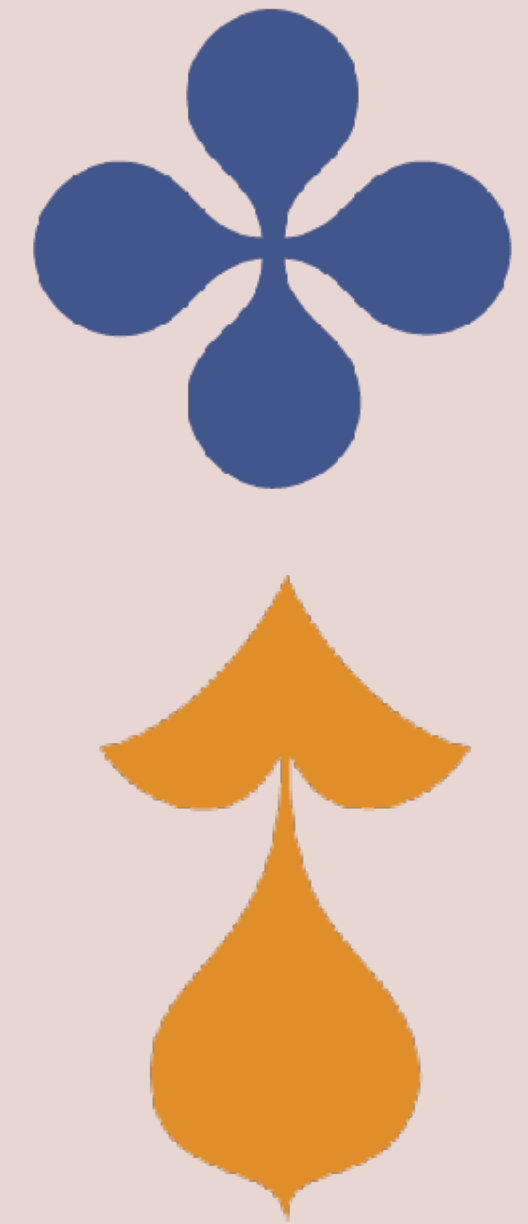
Chaucer's Life

- Son of a wealthy London vintner (wine merchant)
- Educated at St Paul's Cathedral School, and later at Inner Temple, where he studied law
- In 1357, he became a noblewoman's page, and moved on to become a courtier, a diplomat, and a civil servant
- Around 1366, Chaucer married Philippa Roet, a lady-in-waiting in the queen's household
- Chaucer died in 1400 of unknown causes.
- He was buried at what is called Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.



Official Life

- Edward III sent him on diplomatic missions to France, Genoa and Florence (c. 1368-1378)
- His travels exposed him to the work of authors such as Dante, Boccaccio and Froissart.
- In 1374, Chaucer was appointed comptroller of the London customs.
- In 1386, during the reign of Richard II, he was elected member of parliament for Kent, and he also served as a justice of the peace.
- In 1389, he was made clerk of the king's works, overseeing royal building projects.



Geoffrey Chaucer: Works

- Early period (up to c. 1370)
 - Translation of Roman de la Rose
 - The Book of the Duchess
- Middle period (up to c. 1387)
 - The House of Fame
 - The Parliament of Fowls
 - Translation of Consolation of Philosophy
 - Troilus and Criseyde
 - The Legend of Good Women
- Last period (after 1387)
 - The Canterbury Tales



The Book of the Duchess (c. 1368-72)

- First of Chaucer's dream visions
- Octosyllabic couplets
- Long prologue
- Depicts the sorrow of a bereaved knight (who represents John of Gaunt)
- An allegorical lament on the death of Blanche, the wife of John of Gaunt, who died in 1368
- Lydgate's A Complaynt of the Black Knight (A Complaynt of a Loveres Lyfe) is based on it



The Book of the Duchess (c. 1368-72)

- Poet unable to sleep because of love-sickness or depression
- Falls asleep while reading Ovid
- In his dream, he first follows, then wanders away from, a hunting party
- Meets a knight in black who laments the loss of his lady
- Knight describes her beauty and virtue
- Tells the dreamer about her death, first metaphorically, then explicitly.
- Hunters re-appear, a bell strikes twelve, and the dreamer wakes



The House of Fame (after 1374)

- Unfinished dream allegory in octosyllabic couplets
- Allegorical meanings of this poem not very clear
- Echoes of Ovid, Virgil, Dante
- Lydgate's *The Temple of Glass* & Alexander Pope's *The Temple of Fame* are based on it
- The poet dreams and finds himself in a glass temple adorned with images of the famous warriors and lovers
- He emerges into a desert and is carried off by a talking eagle (a common guide in dream allegories)
- He is dropped next to a tower of ice on which the names of the famous are melting and unreadable.



The House of Fame (after 1374)

- He enters a castle and sees Fame, a woman of varying heights, with numerous eyes, ears and tongues
- He watches people being indiscriminately awarded or refused fame and notoreity and learns of the arbitrary nature of fame
- The eagle then guides him into the house of Rumour built of sticks
- The dreamer is approached by an imposing figure when the poem ends abruptly
- The book has been described as a parody of Dante's Divine Comedy



The Parliament of Fowls (c. late 1370s-early 1380s)

- Dream allegory in the seven-lined Chaucerian stanza
 - Rhyme scheme ababbcc
- Believed to be an allegory on the betrothal of King Richard II to Anne of Bohemia
- The poet falls asleep while reading Cicero's *The Dream of Scipio* in which Africanus appears to Scipio in a dream and shows him heaven and the future.
- Similarly, the Chaucerian dreamer is led by Africanus to a garden where he visits the temple of Venus
- In Venus's palace, the goddess of Nature oversees the birds choosing their mates on St. Valentine's Day.
- Three male eagles want to choose the same female eagle. Nature asks the female herself to choose a suitor and the female asks leave to wait a year.



Troilus and Criseyde (completed by 1388)

- Finished poem in Chaucerian stanza
- Chaucer's longest single poem
- Modelled on Boccaccio's Filostrato
- Less cynical and misogynistic than Boccaccio's version
- Resembles courtly romance



The Legend of Good Women

- Written in decasyllabic couplets (heroic couplet)
- A Prologue and nine tales
- Theme: betrayal of good women by wicked men
- Stories of Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle & Medea, Lucrece, Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, Hypermnestra
- Incomplete
- Believed to be a palinode, retracting Chaucer's earlier depiction of woman as bad in Troilus and Criseyde



Other Works

- Legend of St. Cecilia (famous virgin martyr legend later revised as The Second Nun's Tale)
- Palamon and Arcite (later revised as the Knight's Tale; based on Boccaccio's Teseida)
- Treatise on the Astrolabe (Prose essay on an astronomical device written for his son "Little Lewis")
- An ABC
- To lead a virtuous and honest life



The Canterbury Tales (c. 1387)

- Based on Boccaccio's Decameron
- General Prologue—Portrait gallery of 14th c. England
- 29 pilgrims meet at Tabard Inn, Southwark (31 incl. poet & Harry Bailey)
- Pen-pictures of 21 pilgrims
- 23 pilgrims tell stories
- 24 stories; Chaucer tells two
- Tale of Sir Thopas and Tale of Melibeus (prose)
- Begins with Knight's Tale, ends with Parson's (prose treatise)



Here is God's plenty!

Men and women
being mere
players in
Chaucer's
Canterbury Tales



Upper Class	Middle Class		Lower Class	
	Upper	Lower	Virtuous	Immoral
Knight	Merchant	Cook	Yeoman	Miller
Squire	Clerk of Oxford	Shipman	Parson	Manciple
Prioress	Man of Law	Doctor of Physique	Plowman	Reeve
Monk	Franklin	Wife of Bath		Summoner
Friar	Five Guildsmen			Pardoner

The Knight



- Member of the Household Group
 - Along with his son Squire and Yeoman; the first to arrive Tabard Inn, after Chaucer
- Epitome of chivalry
 - “He was a verray parfit gentil knight”
 - Represents ideals of truth, honour, generosity, courtesy, modesty and gentleness; prudent
 - Hero of over 15 religious battles (Crusades)
 - Has come on the pilgrimage in his armour, the rust and oil of which has stained his clothes
- Widely travelled and prudent

The Squire



- Son of the Knight
- Medium height, curly hair; “as fresh as the month of May”
- “a lover. . . and lusty bachelor” who “slept no more than doth a nightingale”
- Has fought battles like his father, but were for winning his ladyloves
- Humble and modest (chivalric)
- Spends leisure in singing, dancing and playing flute
- Fashionably dressed in a short gown with long sleeves

The Prioress



- Name was Eglantyne (sweet briar)
- Beautiful, lady-like
- Her French was fashionable
- Had fine table manners
- Wore a coral rosary with a brooch inscribed “A” (“Amor vincit omnia” or “Love conquers all”)
- Loved her dogs
- Sang her service divine in a fashionable nasal tone
- Swore fashionably by the oath of St. Loy
- Accompanied by three priests and a nun

The Monk



- “A manly man, to be an abbot able”
- Shiny bald head and face, as if anointed with oil
- Compared to the Prioress in religious affectation
- His sleeves were fringed with fur and cloak pinned with gold brooch
- Scorned books
- Loved hunting, full-blooded horses, good food (especially roasted swan) and fine clothes
- His grey hounds were as swift as birds

The Friar



- Wanton and merry
- Belonged to the mendicant order
 - Supposed to live a poor life by begging
- “married many a woman at his own cost”
- His bag is full of pins and knives which he gave to young wives
- Knew barmaids and tavern owners more than beggars and lepers
- Good singer; plays the fiddle
- Good at soliciting donations; takes bribes
- His neck was as white as a lily although he had an athletic body
- Lisped in an affected manner

The Pardoner



- Chaucer's masterpiece in character drawing
- Implies a whole world of moral hypocrisy
- Good story-teller; sing hymns beautifully
- Has long, greasy, yellow hair and is beardless; probably homosexual
- Wallet full of fake pardons "come from Rome all hot"
- Has a collection of fake relics

The Summoner



- Pardoner's companion
- Lecherous, dishonest and "hot and wanton as a sparrow"
- Children are afraid of his fiery-red face full of pimples
- Had scaly eyebrows
- Loves garlic, onion, leeks & blood-red wine; drinks to excess
- Spouts the few Latin phrases he knows
- Took bribes; was disdainful of the teachings of the church
- Had control over the young people of his diocese

The Parson



- Ideal parish priest
- Pious and devoted to his duty
- Very gentle, diligent, and always patient in the face of adversity
- Does not look down on the parishioners for not donating money; gave them the little he had
- Preaches only what he practised
- Never leaves the parish to make money in London
- Always asked himself “if gold rusts, what would iron do ?”

The Clerk of Oxford



- A neutral portrayal
- Devoted to the study of philosophy
- He as well as his horse is lean
- Poor and wears threadbare clothes
- Rather than have a job and own worldly possessions, he would own 20 books
- Prays for the souls of those who helped him study
- Polite, and spoke only when necessary

The Merchant



- Wealthy businessman
- Has a forked beard
- Wears rich and multicoloured clothes, and hat from Holland
- Makes sure everyone knows how wealthy and successful he is
- Carries himself so well that no one realized he was heavily in debt
- Newly and unhappily married
- The narrator regrets that he doesn't know his name

The Sergeant of Law



- Wise and slightly suspicious of everything
- Speaks well
- Has vast knowledge of law
- Knows every statute of law by heart
- Can cite cases as far back as William the Conqueror's time
- Wealthy land-buyer; social climber
- Seemed busier than he really is
- Wears a multicolored coat

The Franklin



- Man of Law's companion
- Wealthy gentleman farmer of sanguine temperament
- His beard was as white as a daisy
- Liked to have wine, with pieces of bread or cake dipped into it
- Because he loves pleasure, he is called the "son of Epicurus"
- Compared to St. Julian in his hospitality
- Meat and wine are plenteous in his house

The Five Guildsmen

- The Five Guildsmen are artisans, and are newly rich, representing the urban middle class
- They are a Haberdasher, a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer and a Tapestry Maker
- They are dressed in the livery, or uniform, of their guild (workers' union), which was fresh and newly trimmed
- Their sword-sheaths were tipped with silver, and not brass, and their belts and purses were beautifully wrought after the same manner
- Their wives undoubtedly pushed them to such a high position for they liked to be called "madams"
- The guildsmen are accompanied by the Cook

The Wife of Bath



- Gap-toothed
- Deaf in one ear
- Expensive clothes
 - Wide hat, sharp spurs, and a pleated cloak over her legs
 - Scarlet stockings
 - Kerchiefs made of high-quality fabric, a veil that must weigh ten pounds
- Expert in weaving/embroidery
- Lived an “honourable” life
- Pretentious
- Widely travelled

The Doctor of Physique



- Extremely good at his profession
- Learned man
- Knew of every disease and where it came from, and gave cure immediately
- He has made a deal with the apothecary about giving which medicines would benefit them most
- Eats a simple, moderate diet. But has little knowledge of the Bible.
- Loves gold perhaps because “gold in phisik is a cordial”

The Reeve



- Slender and choleric (irritable) man named Oswald
- Came from Norfolk and lived near a town called Baldewelle
- Head was tonsured (shaven) like that of a priest
- Legs were lean and long like a walking stick
- For twenty years, he has managed estates
- Was fully in charge of his master's sheep, cattle, dairy, swine, horses, stock and poultry
- He was good at keeping a granary and a bin
- He could foretell the harvest

The Shipman (The Sailor)



- Lived in the west country, and comes from Dartmouth
- Wore a coarse gown and hung a dagger on a cord about his neck
- His complexion was brown
- Bold and prudent; beard shaken by many a tempest
- He stole wine while the merchant slept and his prisoners into the sea
- Widely travelled

The Miller



- Short, stout fellow; can out-wrestle even a ram
- Had a broad beard red
- Nostrils were black and wide and his mouth as big as a furnace
- There was a wart on the tip of his thick nose, with a tuft of red hair on it
- Fond of telling indecent tales
- Expert in grinding corn
- Stole corn by pushing the scales with his thumb

The Ploughman



- Parson's brother
- Wore a simple shirt
- A lowly labourer who worked with his hands
- Sincere, humble and good at his work
- Thought only about God and the needs of other people
- He donated a good portion of his income in paying tithes (taxes) to the church

The Yeoman



- Wore a coat and hood of green and carried a bow and arrows fitted with peacock feathers, a sword and shield, and a spear-shaped dagger
- Knew all the techniques of carpentry
- Wore a shining silver picture of St. Christopher
- Also carried a horn which had a green baldric (belt)
- He is a Woodsman, compared to Robin Hood

The Cook



- The Cook was employed by the Guildsmen
- For them, he would boil chicken with marrow-bones, sharp flavoured powder and spice.
- He could recognize the flavour of London ale, and could roast, steam, boil and fry, make stew and bake a pie well.
- The narrator pities him for the running sore on his shin.
- His masterpiece was minced chicken in white sauce.

The Manciple



- Worked at a college for lawyers
- Whether he bought for cash or on credit he always came out well and ahead of everyone else
- He had more than 30 masters who were expert and skilled lawyers
- His masters would help him in any legal case that rose against him
- Yet, in spite of all this, the Manciple made fools of them all

The Host



- Acts as a guide to the pilgrims, like the director of a play
- Built-in audience of the tales
- Impressive man; bold, wise and well-instructed
- Takes the tales seriously, becomes involved emotionally
- His name is Harry Bailey

The Narrator



- Chaucer himself
- The narrator's accounts of the other pilgrims show the narrator's own prejudices and interests
- Depicted as fat, sociable and naïve, eager to think well of others (this, however, amounts to irony)

Characterization

- Representatives of every class in the England of that time
- Except the very highest and the very lowest
- Each pilgrim is
 - Highly individualized
 - Representative of his class or profession
- Theory of physiognomy
 - Appearance determines character
 - Character is revealed through clothing and physical features

Major Concerns

- Springtime
- Pilgrimage
- Chivalry and courtly love
- Marriage and position of women
- Corruption in church
- Clothing

William Langland (c. 1332-c. 1386)

- Reformer yet a pious Catholic
- The Vision of Piers the Plowman
 - Vivid and trustworthy source for the social and economic history of the time
 - 50 manuscripts, 3 versions (A, B, C texts)
- Some critics think the text could have been written by several authors
- Part of the Alliterative Revival
- Noble and lofty style
- Great imaginative power



Piers Plowman

- Two sections—Visio and Vita
- Begins with a vision of the world seen from Malvern Hills
- Series of dream visions dealing with socio-spiritual predicament held together by unity and directness of structure and lack of digressions
- Combination of realism and allegory, theological reasoning and satire, sublime religious feeling and political comment



An Outline

- The dreamer goes to sleep among the Malvern hills
- Sees a vision of the world as a field full of folk (people)
- The people are in a valley bounded on one side by a cliff, on which stands the tower of Truth, and, on the other lies the dungeon of Wrong.
- Here begin the incidents of his first vision
- The visions are diverse, but there is no discontinuity
- At the end of the vision the dreamer wakes for only a moment, and, immediately falling asleep, dreams again
- Piers's actions become indistinguishable with that of Christ and the Passion of Christ is described



John Gower (1330-1408)

- Best known contemporary of Chaucer
- Aristocrat in sympathies, hostile to peasantry and rebels
- Scorn for everything simply English (dying attitude)
- Didacticism, moral intent
- Chaucer's Troilus dedicated to Gower



Gower's Works

- Speculum Meditantis (French, 1376-79)
 - Meaning “the mirror of one meditating”
 - Manner of a French allegory
- Vox Clamantis (Latin, completed after 1381)
 - Meaning “the voice of one crying in the wilderness”
 - On the Peasants’ Revolt: Gower decries the peasants’ claims
- Confessio Amantis (English, 1390)
 - Meaning “the confession of a lover”
 - Subtitled “Tales of the Seven Deadly Sins”



15th century

- Spirit of nationalism
- Wars of the Roses
- Hundred Years War ended
- End of feudalism
- Development of trade, commerce and industry
- Printing
- Intellectual Progress
- Age of Exploration

Chaucerians

- All the major poets of the 15th century were imitators or disciples of Chaucer
- Both English and Scottish writers
- Major English Chaucerian
 - John Lydgate
 - The Story of Thebes
 - The Book of Troy
 - Fall of Princes
 - The Temple of Glas
 - The Complaint of the Black Knight

Scottish Chaucerians (Makars)

- James I (began the 1st phase of Scottish Chaucerianism)
 - The Kingis Quair (King's Book)
- Robert Henryson (began the 2nd phase of Scottish Chaucerianism)
 - The Morall Fabillis of Esope, The Testament of Cresseid
- William Dunbar (1456-1513)
 - The Goldyn Targe, The Thrissil and the Rois
 - Two Married Women and the Widow, The Tretis (recalls Wife of Bath)
- Gavin Douglas (1475-1522)
 - The Palice of Honour, King Hart, The Aeneid (translation)

The Ballad

- Absence of major genres
- Popularity of folk or popular ballads (the most prominent literary genre of the age)
- Ballads
 - Narrative, lyrical, objective pieces of folk songs which originate, and are communicated orally, among unsophisticated and partly literate rural folk
 - Border revolts, love, witchcraft, superstitions are the recurring themes
 - “Sir Patrick Spens”, “Chevy Chase”, “The Wife of Usher’s Well”

Thomas Malory (c. 1415-1471)

- Uncertain identity
- Le Morte D'Arthur written while imprisoned in Newgate prison
- Knight, landlord and Member of the Parliament
- Wrote a cycle of Arthurian legends
- Le Morte D'Arthur (1469-70)
 - Mostly translations from French prose romances
 - 8 tales in 21 books
 - Features: Simplicity, Concrete, sensuous words, Vernacular idiom, Chivalry

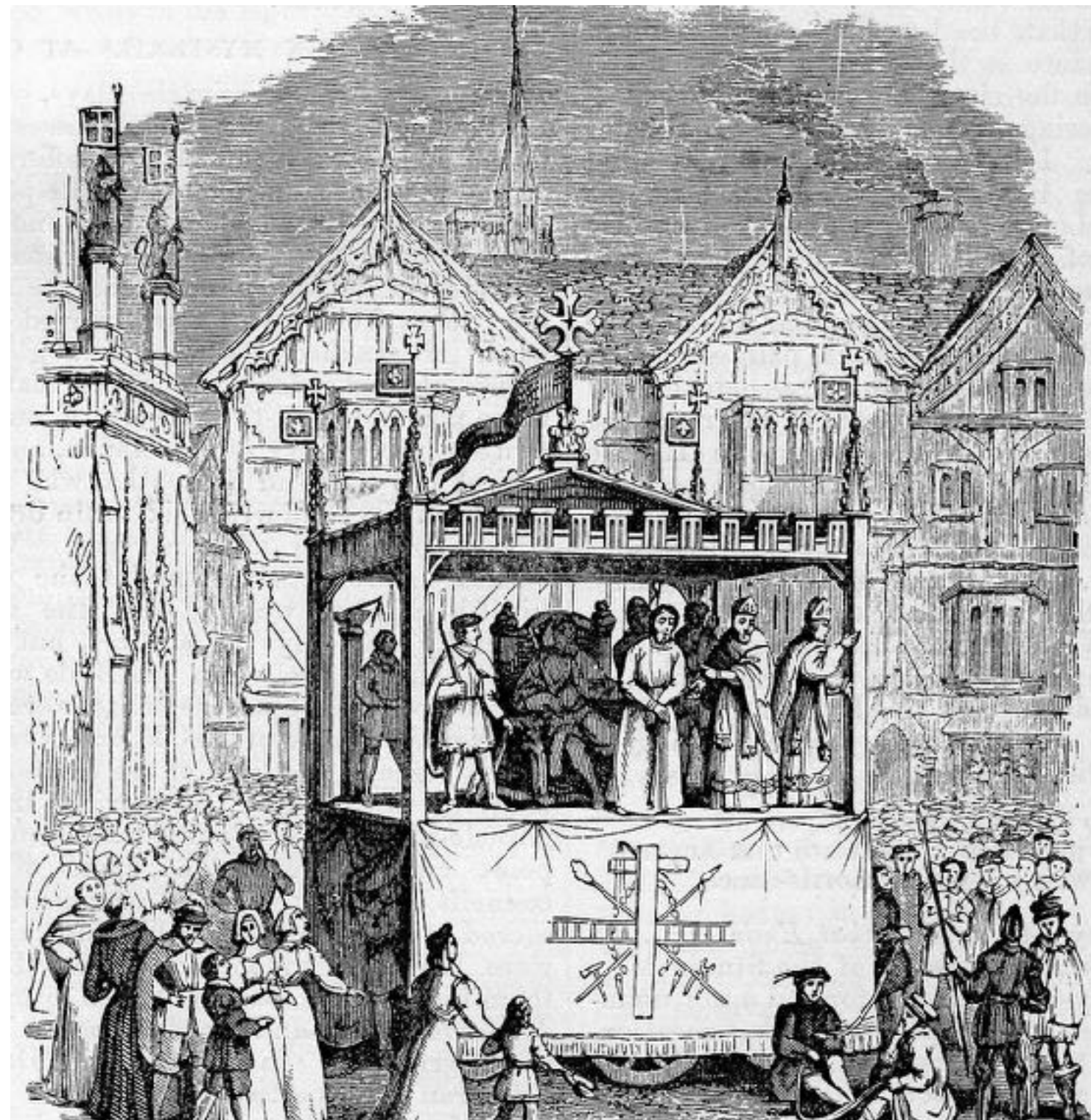
Origins Of Drama

- Began as religious ritual
- First plays performed in church by clergymen during Easter
- From church to churchyard to noblemen's houses to public places
- Performed on pageant wagons
- Suspicion of clergy
- Revival of Corpus Christi festival (1311)—public holiday dedicated to drama

Miracle Plays

- Date back to 12th century
- Deal with lives of saints
- Examples— Harrowing of Hell
St. Nicholas
Raising of Lazarus
(last two by Hilarius)
- In these plays, Mary and Nicholas are always presented as coming to the aid of those who invoke them, as healing the sick, and protecting Christian values

Mystery Plays or the Corpus Christi cycle



- From late 14th c., Mystery Plays and Morality Plays were in vogue
- Long cyclical dramas acted in relation to religious festivals
- Themes: major events in the Christian Scriptures
- York, Chester, Wakefield, E. Anglia (Coventrie) are main cycles

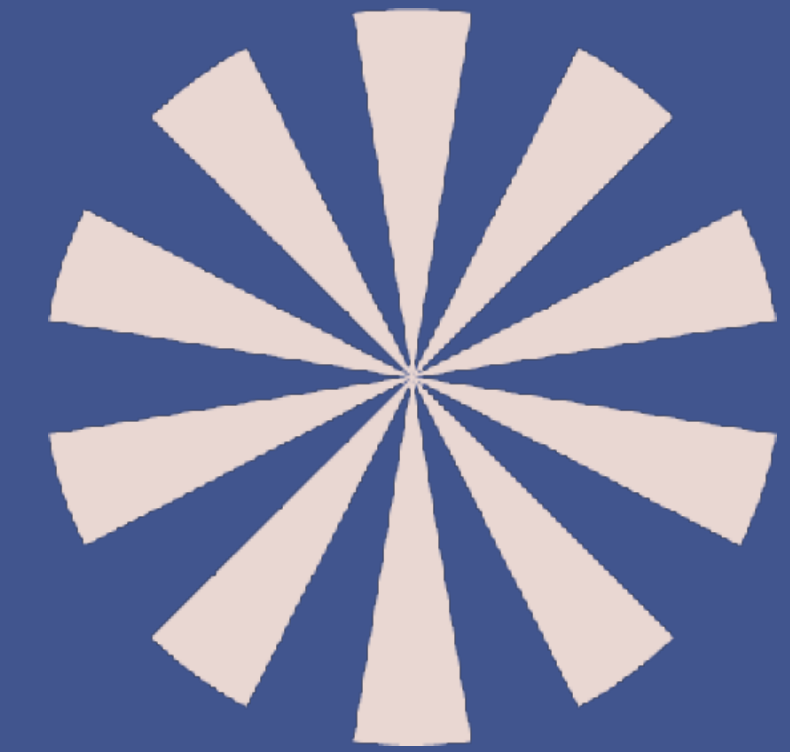
Morality Plays

- Allegorical
- Progress of a single universal character from the cradle to the grave and sometimes beyond
- Personified virtues and vices, God, Devil, etc.
- The character of Vice most important
- Everyman (Best known Morality)
- The Castle of Perseverance (oldest extant Morality)

Interludes

- Morality grew into the Interlude
- Born out of the social need to amuse rather than instruct
- Patronage of Henry VIII
- Short, allegorical, farcical pieces fillings intervals
- Forerunner of regular drama
- Examples
The Four Ps (by John Heywood)—
Palmer, Pedlar, Pardoner, 'Pothecary
- The Interlude of the Student and the Girl
—one of the earliest secular plays in English

Early Tudor Period



DR. KALYANI VALLATH

25 YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE



VTES IS NOW
Vallath

Background

Introduction

- Intellectual background: Renaissance
- Associated movements: Humanism & Reformation
- The new geographic discoveries broadened imagination
- Influence of Italians like Dante, Ariosto & Petrarch
- Literary experimentation

Renaissance Humanism

- Founder of Renaissance humanism was Petrarch
- Humanism originally meant Studying / teaching a curriculum including grammar, rhetoric, moral philosophy, poetry and history through classical literature
- As against medieval scholasticism, the medieval education based on the 7 liberal arts was followed
 - Trivium: grammar, logic, rhetoric
 - Quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy
- Two concerns
 - Centrality and dignity of man
 - Study of classical texts

Renaissance Humanism

- Coincided with the flourishing of printing
 - Religious and political ideas were debated in multitudes of pamphlets
 - Ushered in new ideas
- Associated with the new idea of the “gentleman”
 - Reflected in Italian courtesy books, such as Baldassare Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* (The Courtier), translated by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561
- Ideal of education
 - Study of Greek, Latin, classics, and use of the vernacular promoted
 - The complete education of the gentleman promoted
- Important figures
 - Roger Ascham
 - Sir Thomas Elyot

Roger Ascham (c. 1514-68)

- Princess Elizabeth's tutor in Greek & Latin
- The Schoolmaster (1570)
 - A guide to pedagogy in simple, lucid, English prose
 - Influenced by Johann Sturm of Strasbourg
 - Offers a complete program of humanistic education
 - Is also an evocation of the ideals of education
 - The idea of the book emerged from a conversation regarding
 - Themes: psychology of learning, the education of the whole person, and the ideal moral and intellectual personality
- Toxophilus, The School of Shooting ("Lover of the Bow", 1545)
 - Written in the form of a dialogue
 - The first book on archery in English

Thomas Elyot (c. 1490-1546)

- Championed English prose
- Member of Thomas More's circle
- Best-known work: *The Book Named The Governor* (1531)
 - A plan for the upbringing of gentlemen's sons who were to bear authority in the future
 - This book contributed to the ideal of the Renaissance gentleman
- *Castel of Helth* (1534)
 - Offers a regimen of health
- Produced the first English dictionary of classical Latin

Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1467-1536)

- Also called Erasmus of Rotterdam
- Dutch humanist and scholar who advocated liberal Catholic reform
- Thomas More was his good friend
- First editor of the New Testament
- Moriae Encomium (The Praise of Folly, 1511)
 - A mock encomium written for amusement, punning on the name of Thomas More
 - Folly ironically praises herself
 - Satire on corruption and ignorance of the clergy
- Other works: Adagia, Apophthegmata, Colloquia

16th Century England

- England emerged as the leading naval and commercial power of Europe
- Defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588
- Spirit of nationalism
- Gallery of authors
- Rising population
- Race for cultural development, education
- Clash of the old and the new

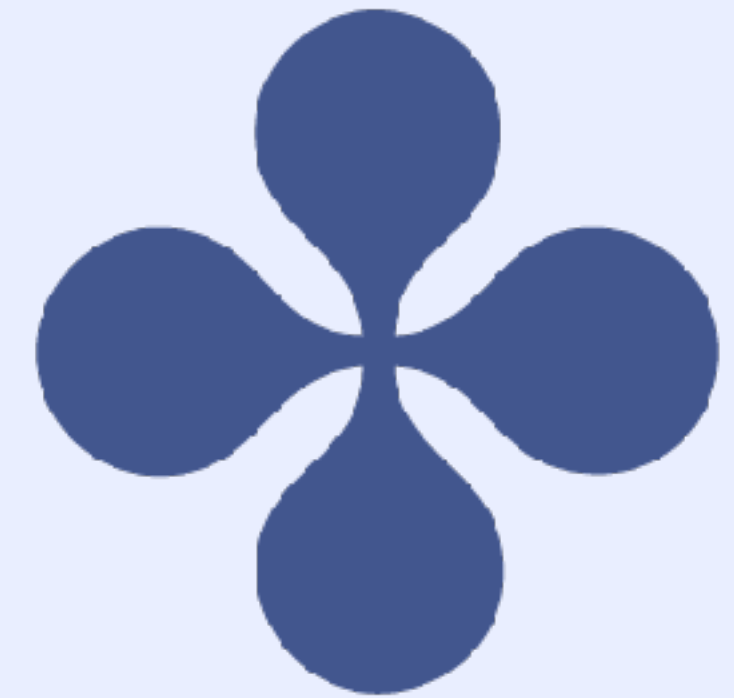
Monarchs



- Henry VII (r. 1485-1509)
- Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547)
 - Chief Minister Thomas Cromwell
 - Archbishop Thomas Cranmer
- Mary I (r. 1553-1558)
- Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603)

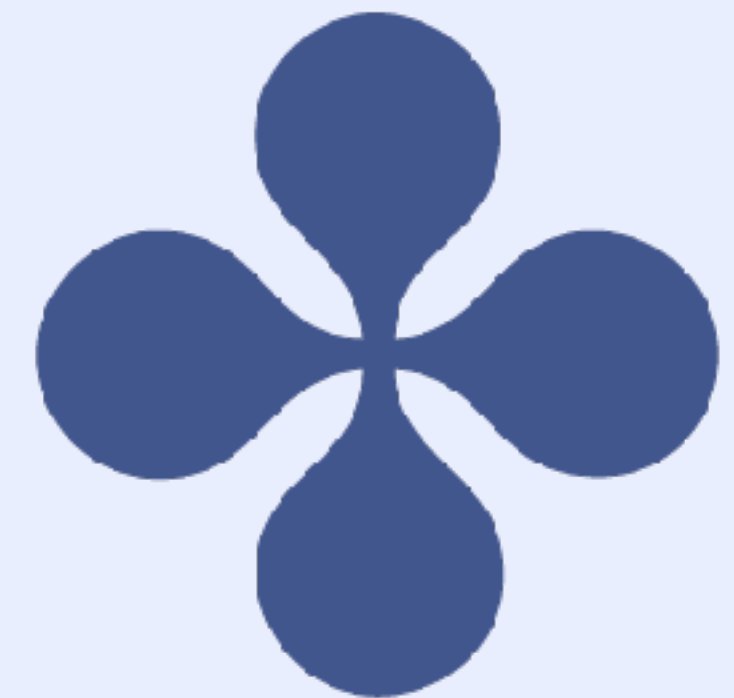
Major Literary Conventions

- Petrarchanism
 - A tradition of authentic lyrical expression modelled on the sonnets of the Italian poet, Petrarch
 - Employs Petrarchan conceit and blazon convention
 - Petrarchan Sonnet
 - Octave and sestet, with a caesura (pause) in between
 - Rhyme scheme: abba abba cdc cdc or cde cde
 - English Sonnet
 - Three quatrains and couplet
 - Rhyme scheme: abab cdcd efef gg
 - Spenserian Sonnet a variation (rhyme scheme abab bcbc cdcd ee)



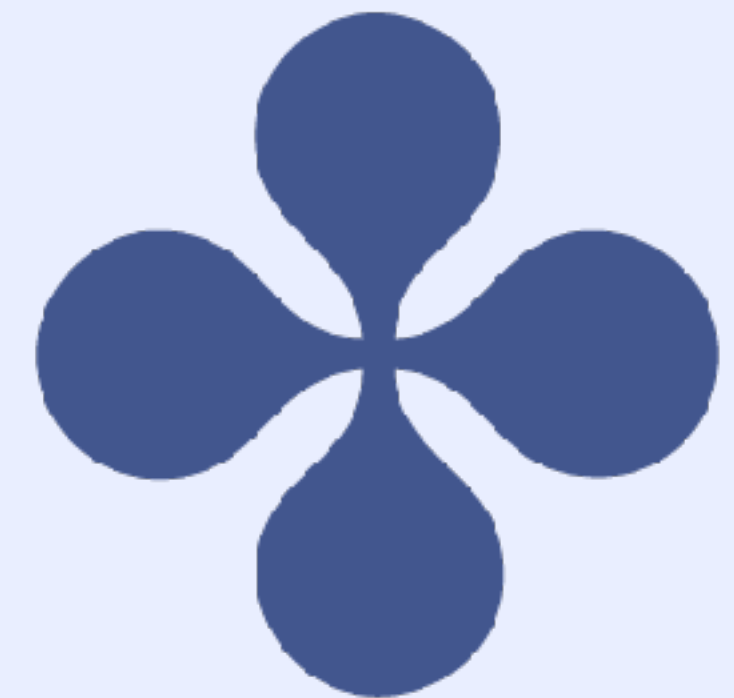
Major Literary Conventions

- The Pastoral
 - Set in the countryside, which is ideal, unspoilt, beautiful
 - Characters are shepherds / shepherdesses who are also poets
 - Associated with
 - The classical Golden Age in Greece, and the Latin Eclogues of Virgil
 - Christian representations of Garden of Eden
 - A tone of deliberate artificiality at odds with the simplicity of nature which is described



Major Literary Conventions

- The Epic
 - Seen as the master-genre that contains elements of all the others
 - Virgil's Aeneid highly influential during this period
 - Epics in English appeared in the later Tudor period and 17th century
 - Spenser's The Faerie Queene
 - Milton's Paradise Lost
 - Epyllions (or little epics)
 - Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis
 - Marlowe's Hero and Leander
 - Nashe's The Choice of Valentine



John Skelton (c. 1460-1529)

- Informal “poet laureate” and academic
- Was tutor to Henry VIII
- “Skeltonic verse”
 - Irregular, energetic and satirical poetry
 - Linguistic and metrical innovations
 - Resembles the poetry of John Donne
- Poem The Boke of Phyllyp Sparowe (1505)
- Colyn Cloute



Sir Thomas More (1478-1535)

- Humanist
- Courtier and Lord Chancellor to King Henry VIII
- Beheaded in 1535 for refusing to give up the authority of the Pope
- Utopia (Latin, 1516); trans. Ralph Robinson in 1551

Utopia

- The principal literary work of Sir Thomas More
- An essay in two books
- Originally written in Latin in 1516
- Influenced by travelogues such as that by Amerigo Vespucci printed in 1507
- Opens with a historical event, a delegation to Bruges in 1515 in which Thomas More had taken part
- First book describes the oppressive injustices of England
- Second book contrasts England with Utopia, or “Nowhere Land,” described by the protagonist Raphael Hythloday, whom More claims to have met at Antwerp. In Utopia, there is complete individual freedom in social and religious spheres



Sir Thomas Wyatt (c. 1503-42)

- Wyatt & Surrey founded English Renaissance poetry
- Influence of Petrarch, the 14th c. Italian master of the sonnet of idealized love
- Introduced terza rima of Dante and ottava rima
- Wyatt also introduced the Horatian satire
- None of his poems published in his lifetime
- 96 poems posthumously published in Tottel's Miscellany
- "Whoso List to Hunt", "They Flee from Me", "Blame Not My Lute", "I find no peace"

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (c. 1517-47)

- 14 years younger than Wyatt; Wyatt's poetic disciple
- Executed on charge of treason when barely 30
- Sonnets addressed to Geraldine
- Introduced blank verse from the Italian into English poetry in his translation of books II and IV of Aeneid
- Experimented with the Poulter's Measure
 - Alternating lines of 12 and 14 syllables
- "A Praise of His Love", "The Means to Attain a Happy Life", "My Friend, the Things I Do to Attain"

Tottel's Miscellany

- Original title: Songs and Sonnets (5 June 1557, 1st edition 271 poems)
- First anthology to be published in English
- Established the Petrarchan sonnet-form
- Bears the cultural impact of English Reformation. Poems have references to both Catholicism and Protestantism



Other Sonneteers in English

- Samuel Daniel – Delia (1592, 50 sonnets)
- Henry Constable – Diana (1592)
- Thomas Watson – The Tears of Fancie (1593)
- Giles Fletcher – Licia (1593)
- Michael Drayton – Ideas Mirrour (1594, 64 sonnets addressed to Phoebe; later reworked as Idea)

Elizabethan Society

- Feudal structure
- Four humours
- Great Chain of Being
- Extended family included friends and servants
- Misogyny and high female mortality



Elizabethan houses

Elizabethan Theatre: Beginnings

- Early 16th c. travelling actors
 - Considered vagabonds and thieves
 - Later, a licence was given to nobles for maintaining actors
 - Thus, acting troupes came into being
- Acting Troupes
 - Played in the courtyards of taverns (called Inn-yards)
 - Temporary stage erected
- Permanent Theatres
 - The 1st permanent theatre was James Burbage's 'The Theatre'

Elizabethan Theatre

- Round, wooden, roofless building
- Three galleries of seats
- Pit (no seats) cost a penny “groundlings”
- Main stage
 - 40 feet wide
 - 27 feet projection into the pit
- Recessed inner stage (curtains and balcony)
- Music Room
- Provisions for Heaven and Hell



The Globe Theatre Today

The First Folio (1623)

- Titled “Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies”
- Compiled by John Heminges and Henry Condell
- Dedicated to the “incomparable pair of brethren” William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, and his brother Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery.
- This was the first collected edition of his plays
 - Only 36 included in the First Folio (Pericles not included)

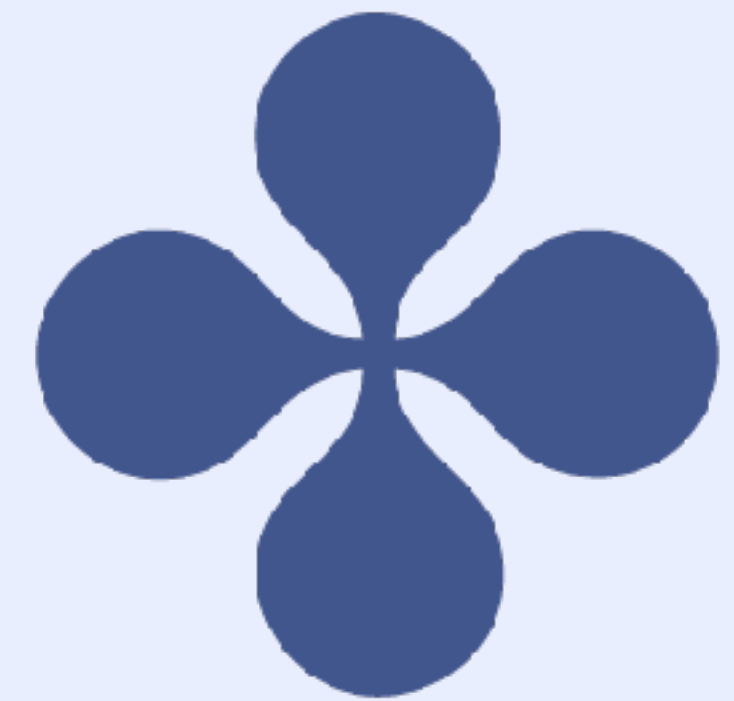


Shakespeare in the 18th century

- Shakespeare's pre-eminence was recognized in the 18th century, since Nicholas Rowe's edition of 1709
 - Rowe was the first editor of Shakespeare's plays as well as his first biographer
- After the Licensing Act of 1737
 - Restoration Comedies were curbed
 - Shakespearean plays dominated the London stage
- Many editions of Shakespeare appeared
- David Garrick was a major Shakespearean actor
- Shakespeare became a cult figure in the 18th century in Germany

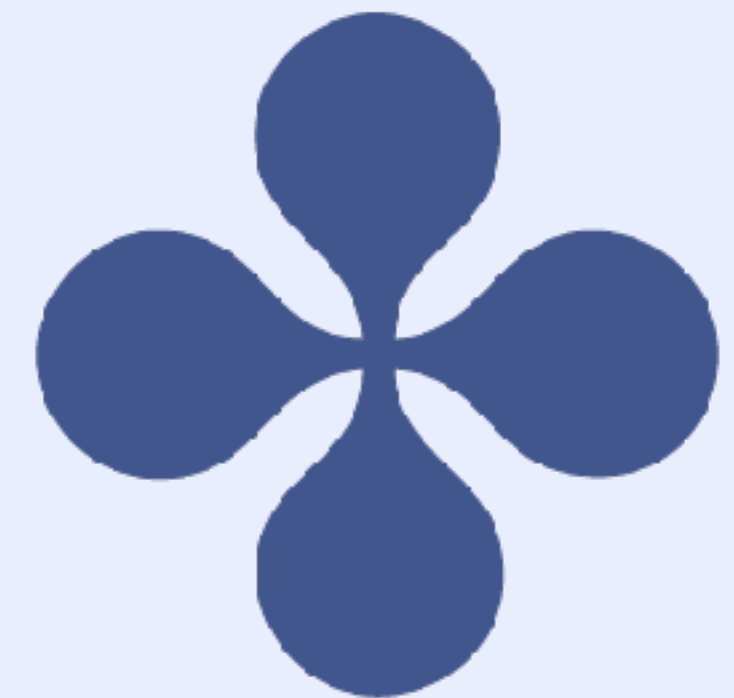
Elizabethan Tragedy

- Did not follow classical rules strictly (despite the insistence of classical critics like Ben Jonson)
- Has been called romantic tragedy
- Disregarded the unities: use of elaborate subplots
- Mixed tragedy and comedy to form tragicomedy
- Gave much importance to action, spectacle, and sensation
- Acted violence on stage (classical drama insisted on reporting violence)



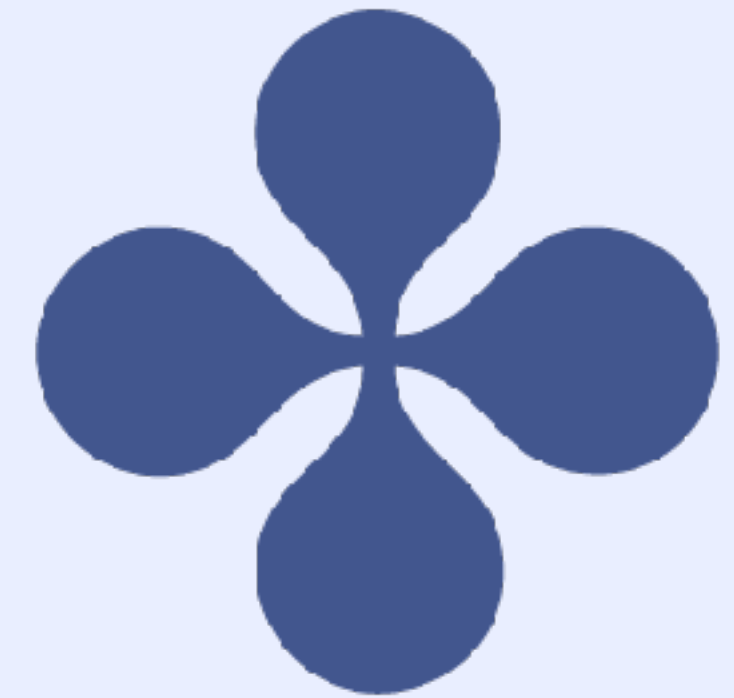
Features of Senecan Revenge Tragedy

- A secret murder, usually of a ruler
- A ghostly visitation of the victim to a younger kinsman, generally a son
- A period of disguise, intrigue, or plotting, in which the murderer and the avenger scheme against each other, with a slowly rising body count
- A descent into either real or feigned madness by the avenger
- An eruption of general violence at the end, which (in the Renaissance) is often accomplished by means of a feigned masque or festivity
- A catastrophe that generally destroys the characters, including the avenger



Elizabethan Comedy

- Ralph Roister Doister (written in c.1553) written by the schoolmaster Nicholas Udall, to be enacted primarily by his pupils
- The second comedy considered to be Gammer Gurton's Needle written either by William Stevenson or John Still



Plautus and Terence

- Plautus
 - 3rd century BC Rome
 - Important Works: Miles Gloriosus, Pseudolus, Menaechmi
- Terence
 - 2nd century BC Rome
 - 6 short plays
 - Most popular playwright of his day
 - Influenced by New Comedy of Greek Menander (4th c. BC)
 - Plautus also was influenced, to a lesser extent
 - Developed Comedy of Manners

Gorboduc or Ferrex and Porrex (1561)

- First tragedy in English
- First play to be written in blank verse
- Theme of political rivalry
- Thomas Norton wrote the first three acts of Gorboduc, and Thomas Sackville, the last two.



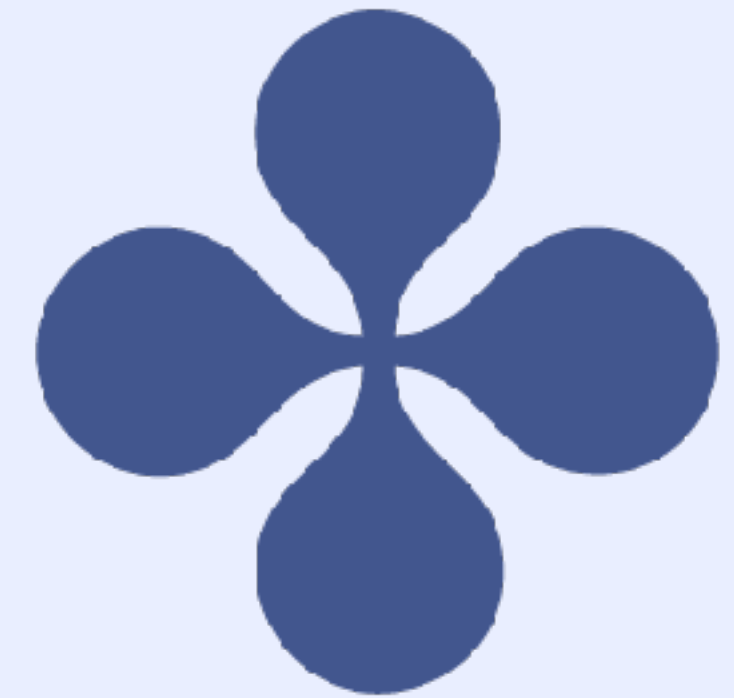
The Plot

- King Gorboduc of Britain
 - Decides to disregard the rule of primogeniture and divide Britain between his two sons, Ferrex and Porrex
 - He is warned against it, but his mind is made up
- The brothers get wrong advice and turn against each other
 - Porrex kills Ferrex
 - Queen Videna kills Porrex
 - The people rise in rage and kill the king and the queen
 - A new king is chosen for Britain



Commedia dell'arte

- In contrast to the learned Elizabethan plays, much of European drama of this period was influenced by Commedia dell'arte, a bawdy street theatre of 15th century Italy.
- It is characterized by improvised dialogue and a cast of colorful stock characters
- Rapidly gained popularity throughout Europe.
- Traces of the form are visible in much Renaissance drama, including Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, Taming of the Shrew, Love's Labour's Lost, As You Like It, The Tempest, and A Midsummer Night's Dream



Shakespeare's Life



Shakespeare

- William Shakespeare was born the son of John and Mary Arden Shakespeare in a small town, Stratford-upon Avon, 100 miles northwest of London
- His father John belonged to a farming family near Stratford
- He worked as a leather worker, a glover, and soon became a leading merchant
- William was the third child of their eight children



Shakespeare's Family

- In 1582 at age 18, he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years his senior and three months pregnant with their first child.
 - Pregnant brides were not uncommon at that time, nor particularly censured
- Their daughter, Susanna, was born in 1583, and twins, Hamnet and Judith, came in 1585.
 - The twins were possibly named after Shakespeare's friends, Hamnet Sadler, a baker, and his wife Judith.
 - Hamnet died in 1596.
- As was unusual at that time, the Shakespeares had no more children.

Shakespeare in London

- Shakespeare seems to have departed to London sometime in the 1580s.
- The 7 years from 1585 to 1592 are called “lost years”
 - There is no historical evidence on what he did at this time
- In 1592, we have the first clear reference to Shakespeare as an actor / playwright in London
- Robert Greene, in *A Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), makes the famous attack on Shakespeare

Shakespeare & the London Theatre

- In London, the Lord Chamberlain's Men (also called Lord Strange's Men) performed his plays, and also probably the Queen's Men
- Shakespeare owned shares in the Second Blackfriars Theatre, an indoor theatre built by James Burbage, and later, the Globe.
- In the 1590s, the London theatre scene was unsettled
 - Actors' companies were forming and disbanding themselves under the pressure of the plague.
 - All London theatres were closed from 1592 to 94 due to the plague.
- Shakespeare seems to have turned to non-dramatic poetry at this time

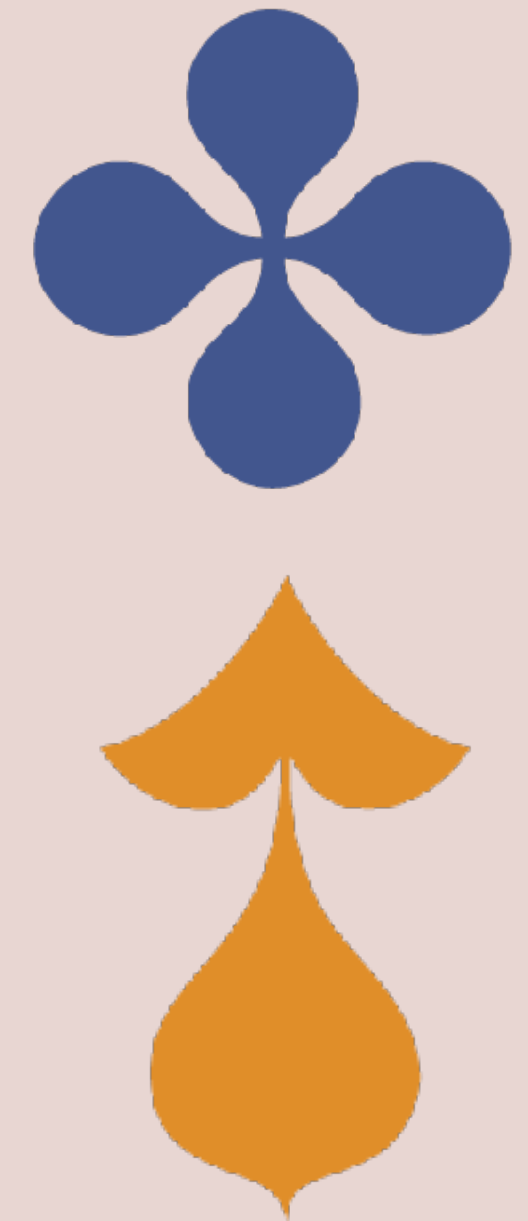
Shakespeare's Non-Dramatic Poetry

- Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry
 - Venus and Adonis – 1593
 - The Rape of Lucrece – 1594
- Both dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, probably seeking his patronage
- The Sonnets
 - Circulated in manuscripts before 1598
- In 1609, the sonnets were first published in quarto format by Thomas Thorpe, probably without the author's knowledge
- The quarto edition has a mysterious dedication from the publisher to “Mr. W.H.” as “the only begetter of these poems”



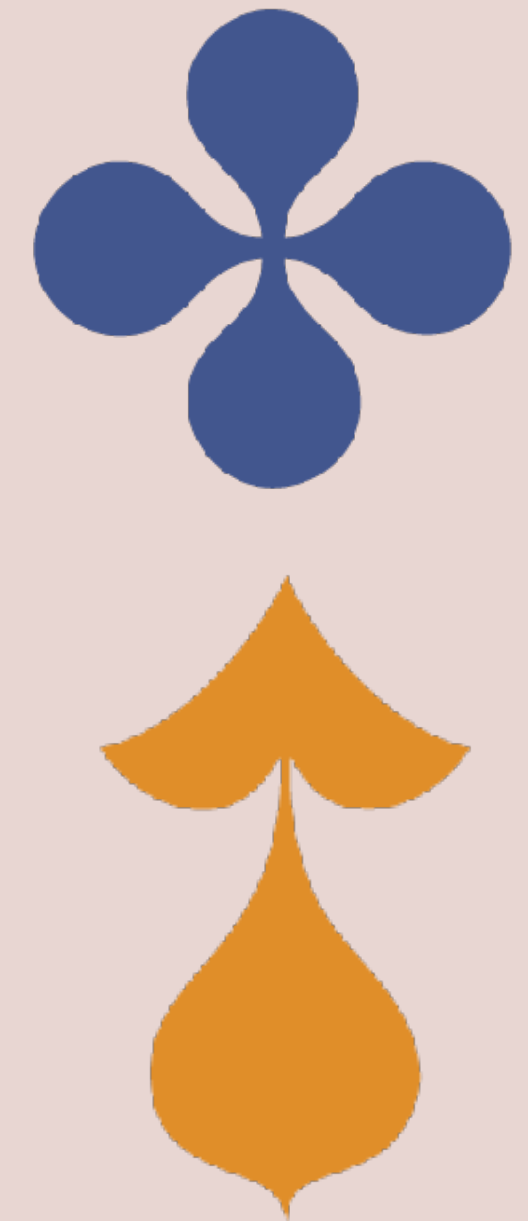
Lord Chamberlain's Men

- When the theatres reopened in 1594, the company of actors called Lord Chamberlain's Men was formed
 - Under the patronage of Henry Carey, Lord Chamberlain
 - Richard Burbage leading actor
 - Shakespeare played minor roles
 - Company's clown was William Kemp
 - Shakespeare remained with this company for the rest of his career
 - After the accession of King James I in 1603, the company was renamed "King's Men"



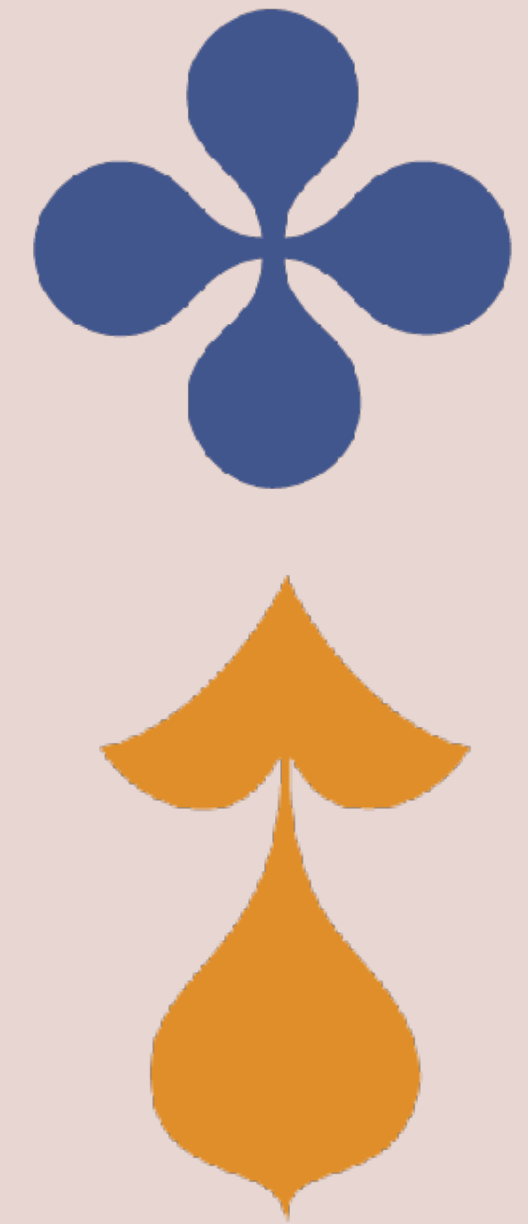
The Globe

- At first the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed in The Theatre built by James Burbage in 1576
- In 1597, after a dispute with the Puritan landlord over the terms of lease, the players moved to the nearby Curtain playhouse
- On the night of 28 December 1597, when the landlord was out of town, Burbage and his friends dismantled The Theatre timber by timber
- The wood was used to build The Globe on the Bankside, where the Rose playhouse was already achieving great success
- The first recorded performance at the Globe was of Julius Caesar on 21 September 1599



In the early 17th century

- Wrote most of the Great Tragedies, Dark Comedies and Romances
- Recognized as a genius in his own time
- Queen Elizabeth dies in 1603
- King James's accession to the throne
- 1610 retired from theatre
- 1613 Globe theatre burns down
- Dies on April 23, 1616 at age 52



GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DICG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE.
BLESE BE Y^E MAN Y^T SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST BE HE Y^T MOVES MY BONES.

THE GRAVE OF
ANNE
THE WIFE OF
WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE
1570-1625

THE GRAVE OF
THOMAS NASH
FIRST HUSBAND OF
ELIZABETH, GRANDDAUGHTER
OF THE POET
1595-1647

THE GRAVE
OF THE POET
WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE
1564-1616



Shakespeare's Works

Classification of Plays

- First Period — Apprenticeship (Age 26-30)
- Second Period — Mastered his art!
 - Favourite “Romantic Comedy”
- Third Period — Problem of Evil in the World
- Fourth Period — Creates a new drama form
 - “Tragicomedy” or the dramatic romance

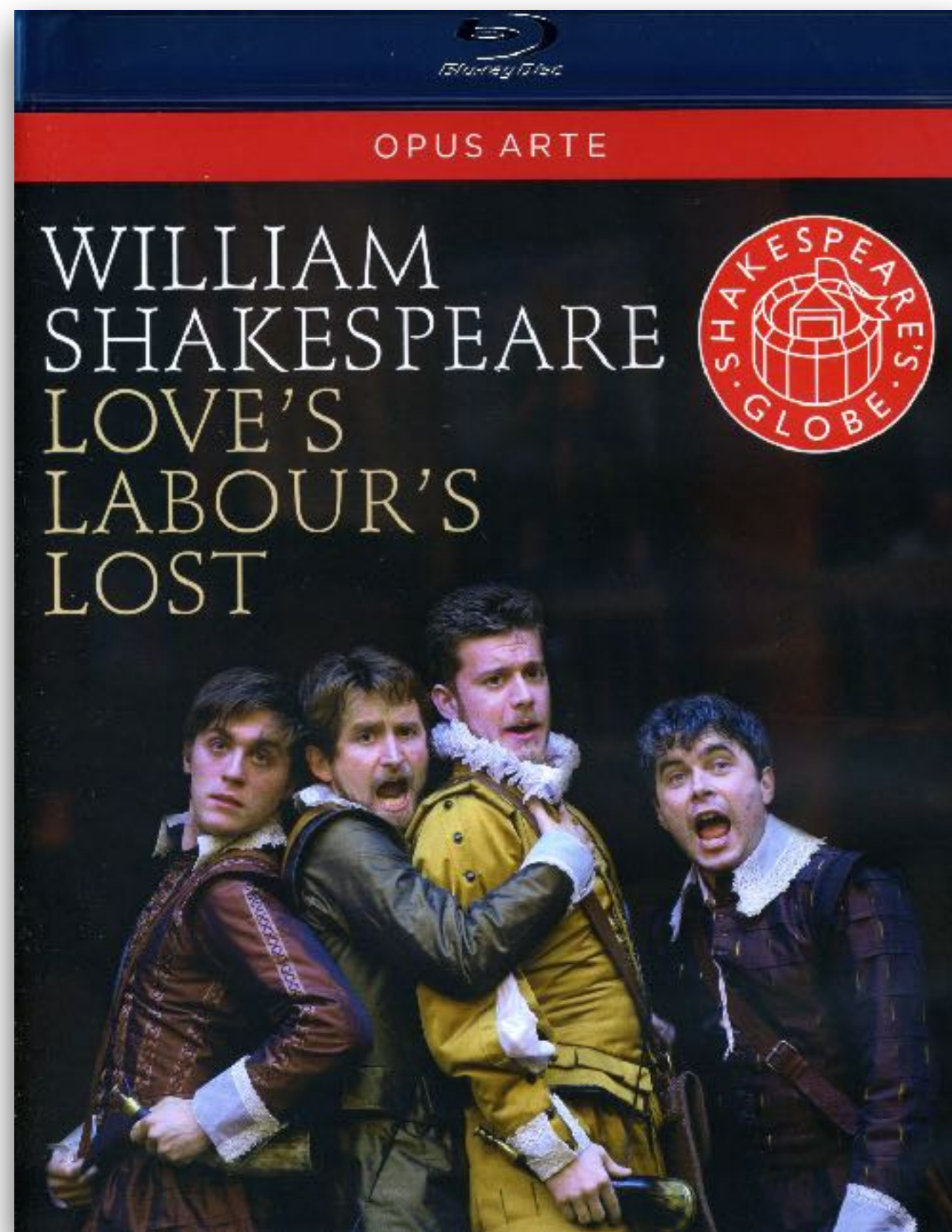


Early Comedies

- Love's Labour's Lost, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Comedy of Errors
- Plots less original
- Characters less finished
- Set in exotic locations
- Emphasis is on situation rather than character
- Strong heroines; clever servants
- Multiple plots
- Amorous love & friendship, mistaken identity, disguise
- Women steadfast in love; men are fickle
- Wit and word play, quibbling, slapstick

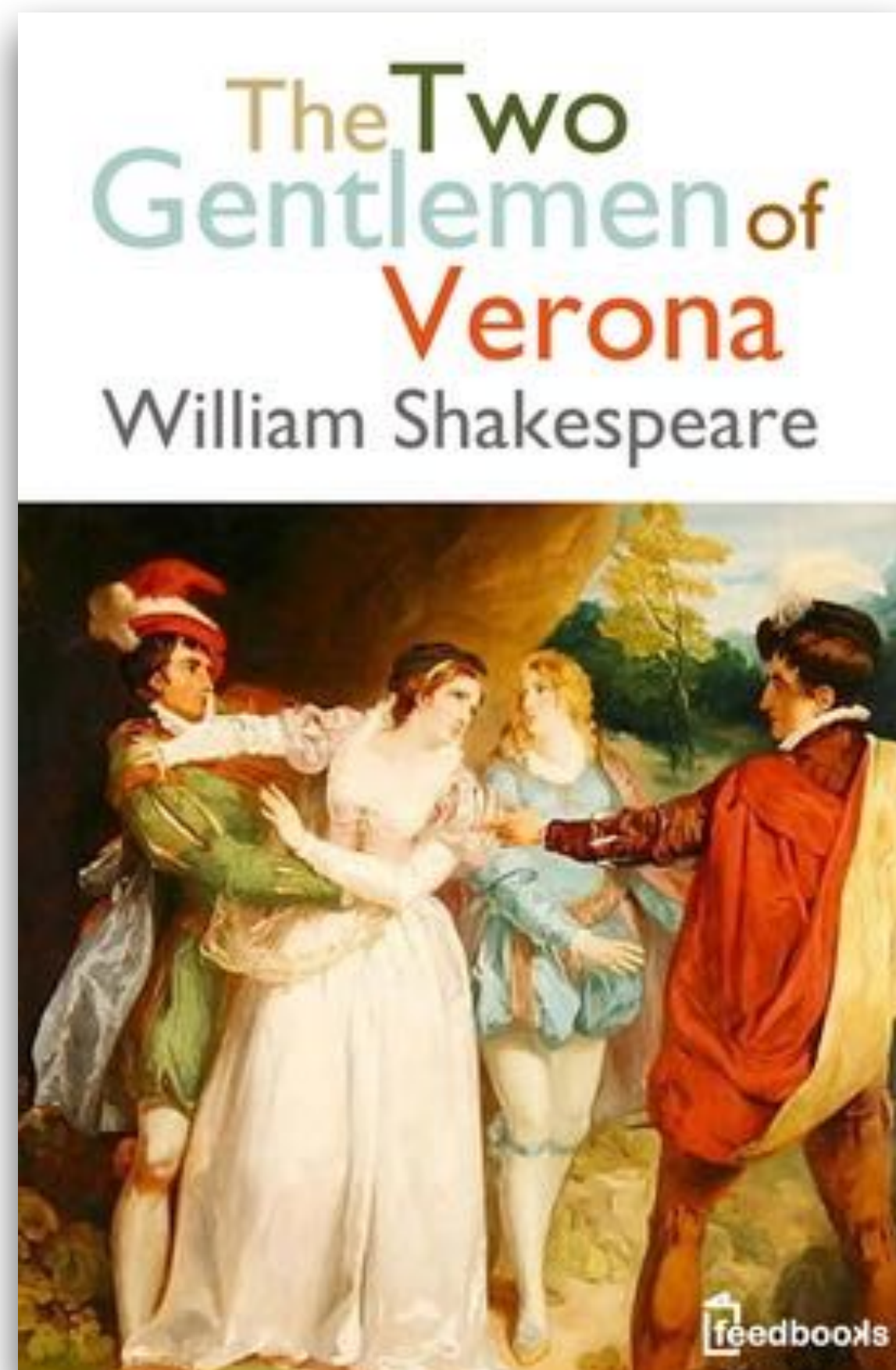


Love's Labour's Lost



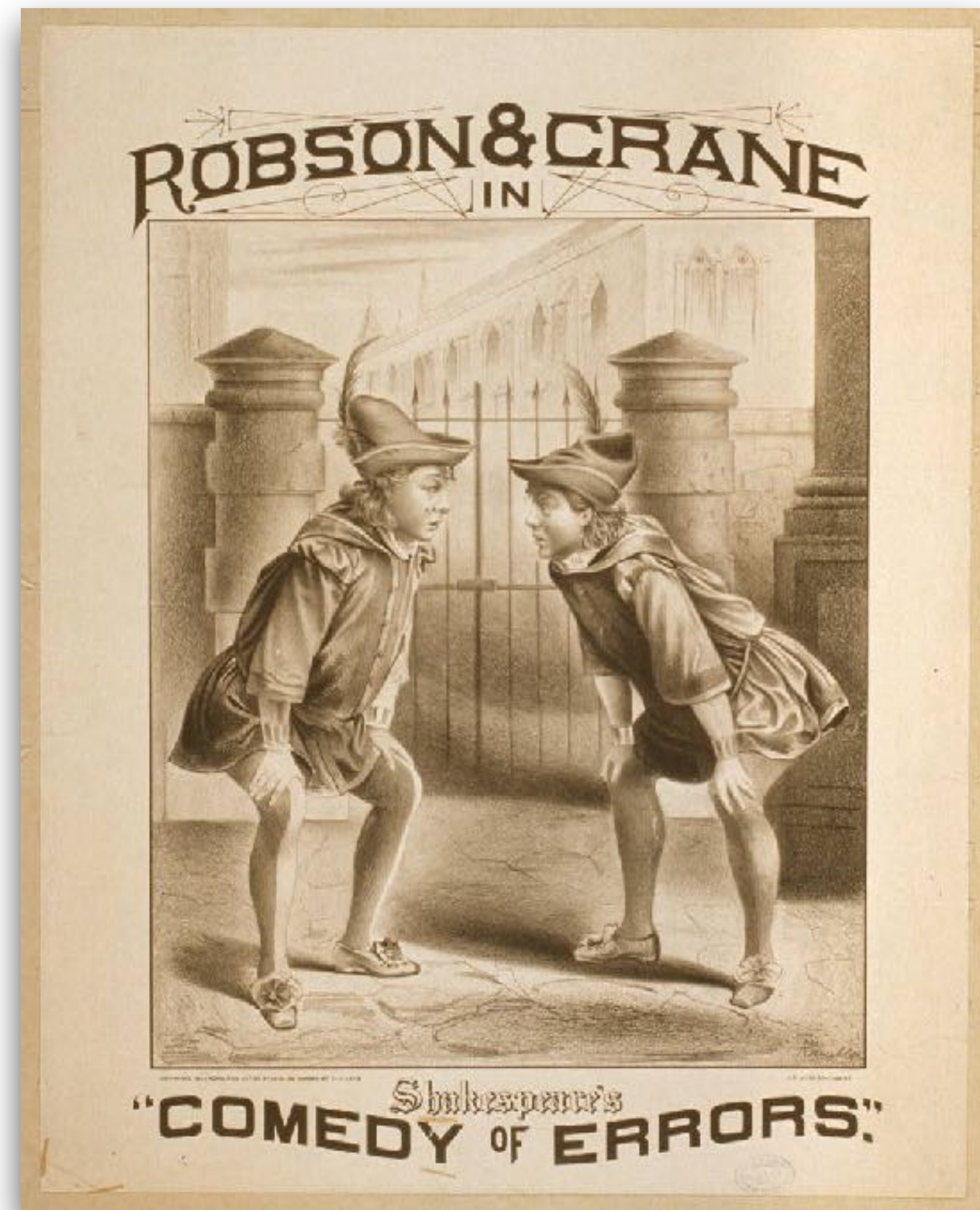
- The King of Navarre and his three lords have sworn celibacy for 3 years
- They fall in love with the princess of France and her attendant ladies

The Two Gentlemen of Verona



- Valentine and Proteus are friends
- Proteus loves Julia
- Valentine goes to Milan and falls in love with Silvia
- Proteus also sets off on his travels and in Milan is captivated by Silvia
- Julia comes to Milan in disguise
- The betrayer Proteus finally repents

Comedy of Errors



- The places Syracuse and Ephesus are enemies
- Egeon, an old Syracusan merchant, is arrested in Ephesus
- One of his twin sons (both named Antipholus, attended by twin slaves named Dromio) is separated and lives in Ephesus
- So does his wife Emilia, who is now an Abbess
- After much comedy resulting from mistaken identity, the family is re-united.

Early Tragedies

- First attempt at the genre of tragedy was Titus Andronicus
 - Set in mythical Rome
 - Themes of pride, family honour, violent revenge
 - Extravagant rhetorical reflections
 - Heavy influence of Seneca
- Most famous in this group: Romeo and Juliet
- The historical tragedy Richard III was written in the same period



Romeo and Juliet



- The Montagues and the Capulets are warring families in Verona.
- Capulet plans a masked ball to announce the marriage of his daughter Juliet with Count Paris.
- Romeo, the son of Montague, attends the ball, meets Juliet and the two immediately fall in love.
- Romeo marries Juliet secretly, but has to leave for Mantua when he fights Juliet's cousin Tybalt and kills him.
- To escape from marrying Paris, Juliet drinks a potion.
- Thinking Juliet to be dead, Romeo kills himself. Juliet wakes up and stabs herself to death.

English Histories

- Shaped the genre of the history play that hitherto did not exist
- 10 plays:
 - Minor Tetralogy
 - Henry VI 3 Parts and Richard III
 - Major Tetralogy
 - Richard II, Henry IV 2 Parts and Henry V
 - King John
 - Henry VIII



Mature Comedies

- Full-fledged romantic comedies; less classical influence
- Multiple plots
- Profound and complicated treatment of the theme of love; battle of the sexes; focus on psychological motives; and on marriage
- More developed characters full of vitality, warmth, humanity
- Powerful heroines
- Sophisticated wit, jovial good humour coupled with lighter clowning
- Continued use of disguise
- Excellent prose



A Midsummer Night's Dream



- Four main plots
- Egeus wants his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius, but she is in love with Lysander, and Hermia's friend Helena loves Demetrius
- Duke Theseus is about to marry the Amazon queen Hippolyta
- Six artisans, including the weaver Bottom, the carpenter Quince, the joiner Snug, the bellows-mender Flute, the tinker Snout and the tailor Starveling are rehearsing the play "Pyramus and Thisbe" in the forest to be enacted at the duke's wedding
- The fairy-king Oberon is quarrelling with his queen Titania over the possession of an Indian "changeling" page, with the help of Puck (Robin Goodfellow)

Much Ado About Nothing



- Claudio falls in love with Hero, daughter of Leonato, Governor of Messina
- Don Pedro's discontented brother Don John determines to destroy the match
- He convinces Claudio that Hero is unfaithful and Claudio rejects his bride at the marriage altar
- Hero faints & is announced her dead
- Sub-plot of Beatrice & Benedick, the battling lovers
- The trick is discovered
- Claudio is remorseful
- Hero returns to life

Twelfth Night



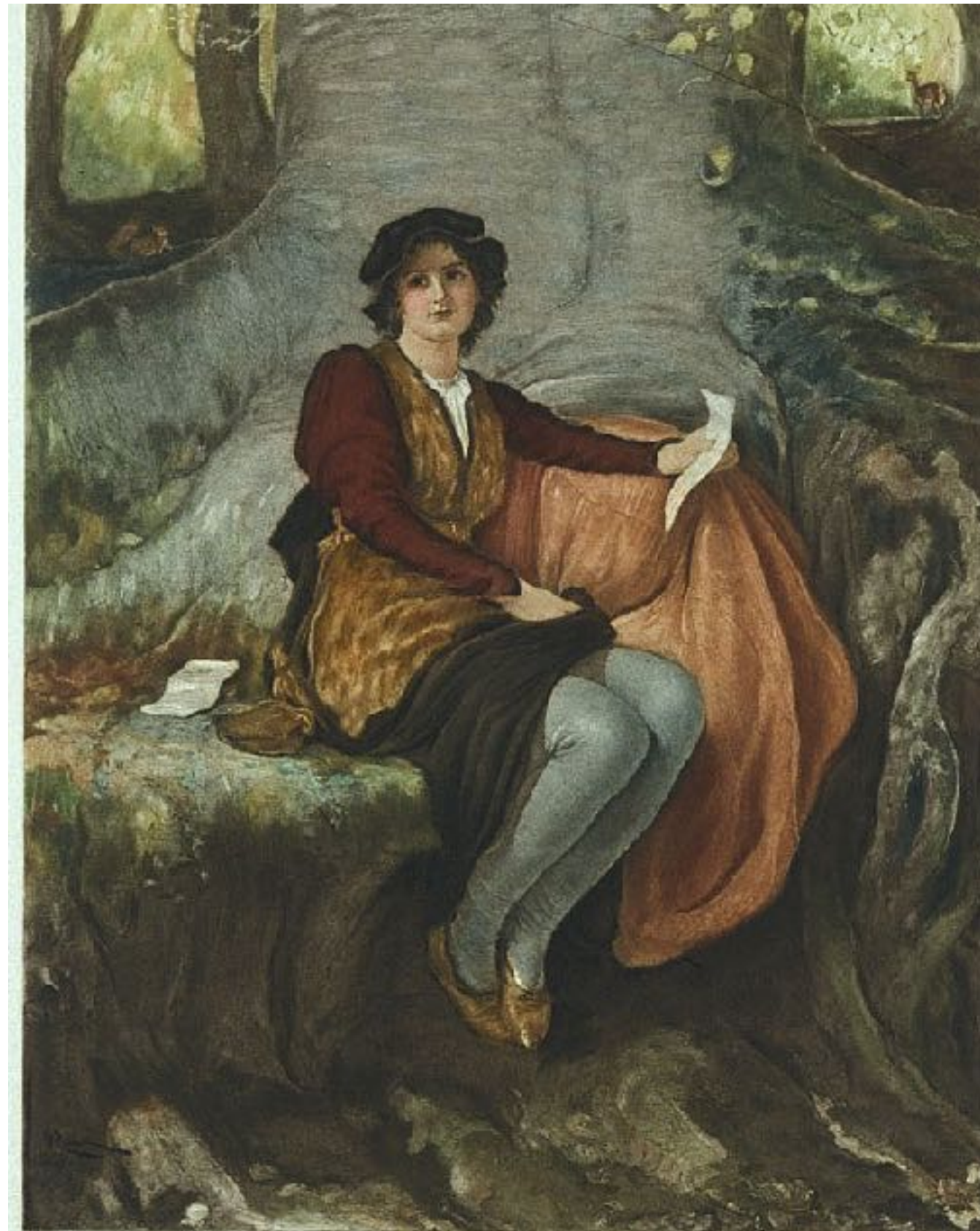
- Viola is separated from her identical twin brother Sebastian in a shipwreck on the coast of Illyria
- Disguised as Cesario, she enters service in the court of Duke Orsino
- Orsino is hopelessly in love with the noble woman Olivia, who rejects him because she is mourning her dead brother
- Cesario takes Orsino's love messages to Olivia; Olivia is attracted to Cesario (Viola), who falls secretly in love with Orsino
- Sebastian arrives in Illyria creating identity confusion
- Resolution leads to gender ambiguities
- The Puritan Malvolio is taught a lesson by Sir Toby Belch, Maria and Andrew Aguecheek

The Merchant of Venice



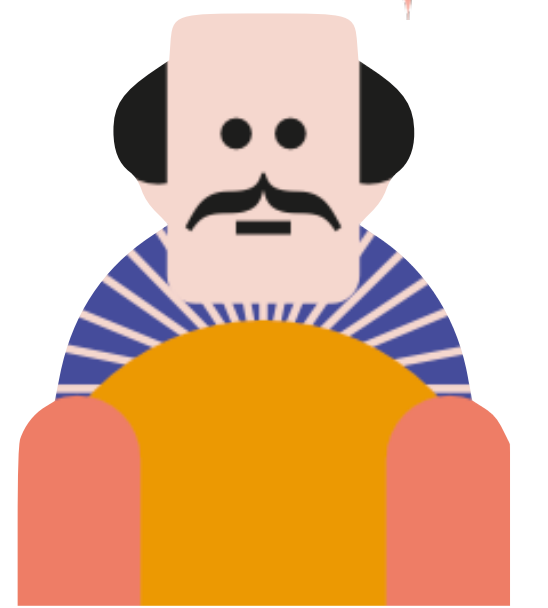
- For his friend Bassanio, Antonio borrows money from Shylock, a pound of his flesh being the bond for failure to repay
- Shylock's daughter Jessica runs away with Christian Lorenzo
- Bassanio wins Portia by choosing the right casket
- Antonio's ships are lost at sea
- Shylock demands his bond
- Portia appears as Balthazar and saves Antonio

As You Like It



- Oliver attempts to kill his brother Orlando by making him fight the wrestler Charles
- Orlando wins; falls in love with Rosalind, the daughter of the deposed Duke Senior
- Orlando flees to the Forest of Arden
- Rosalind also reaches Arden as Ganymede and cures Orlando of lovesickness
- Ends with the marriages of Celia & Oliver, Silvius & Phebe, Touchstone & Audrey, Orlando & Rosalynde
- The Masque of Hymen at the end symbolizing acceptance and reconciliation

All the world's
a stage



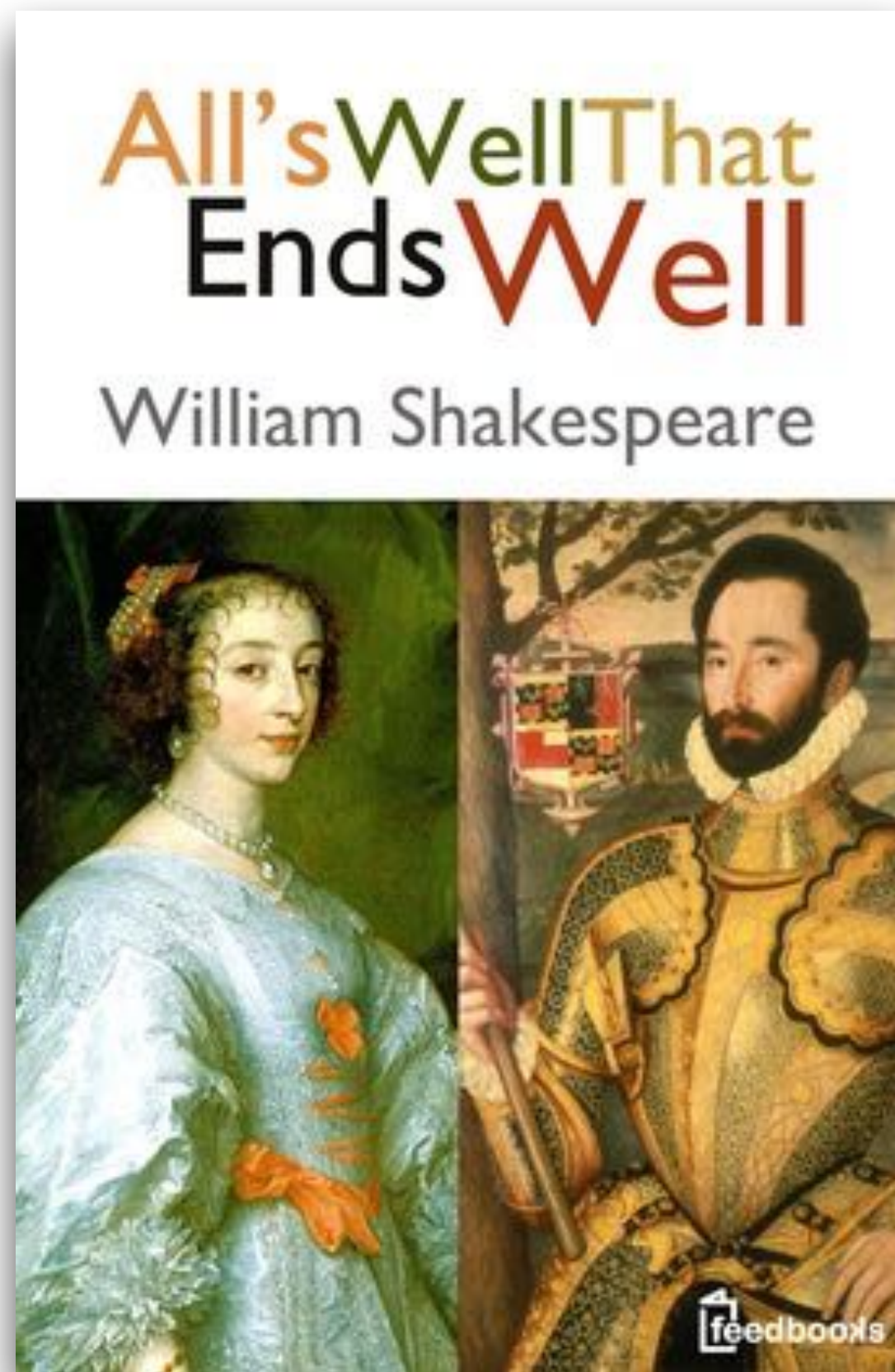
Problem Plays / Dark Comedies

- All's Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure and Troilus and Cressida
- Themes: revenge, sexual jealousy, aging, midlife crisis, death
- The very genre of comedy is problematized
- Elements of tragicomedy: sombre, tragic tone; artificial happy endings
- Unconventional turn of events
- Complex ambiguous tone
- No completely satisfactory resolution of issues
- Dark psychological elements; cynical, disillusioned attitude to life
- Fondness for objectionable characters, incidents
- Expose falsity of romance; reality as sordid
- Resemble the satirical comedies of Ben Jonson

The term “Problem Play”

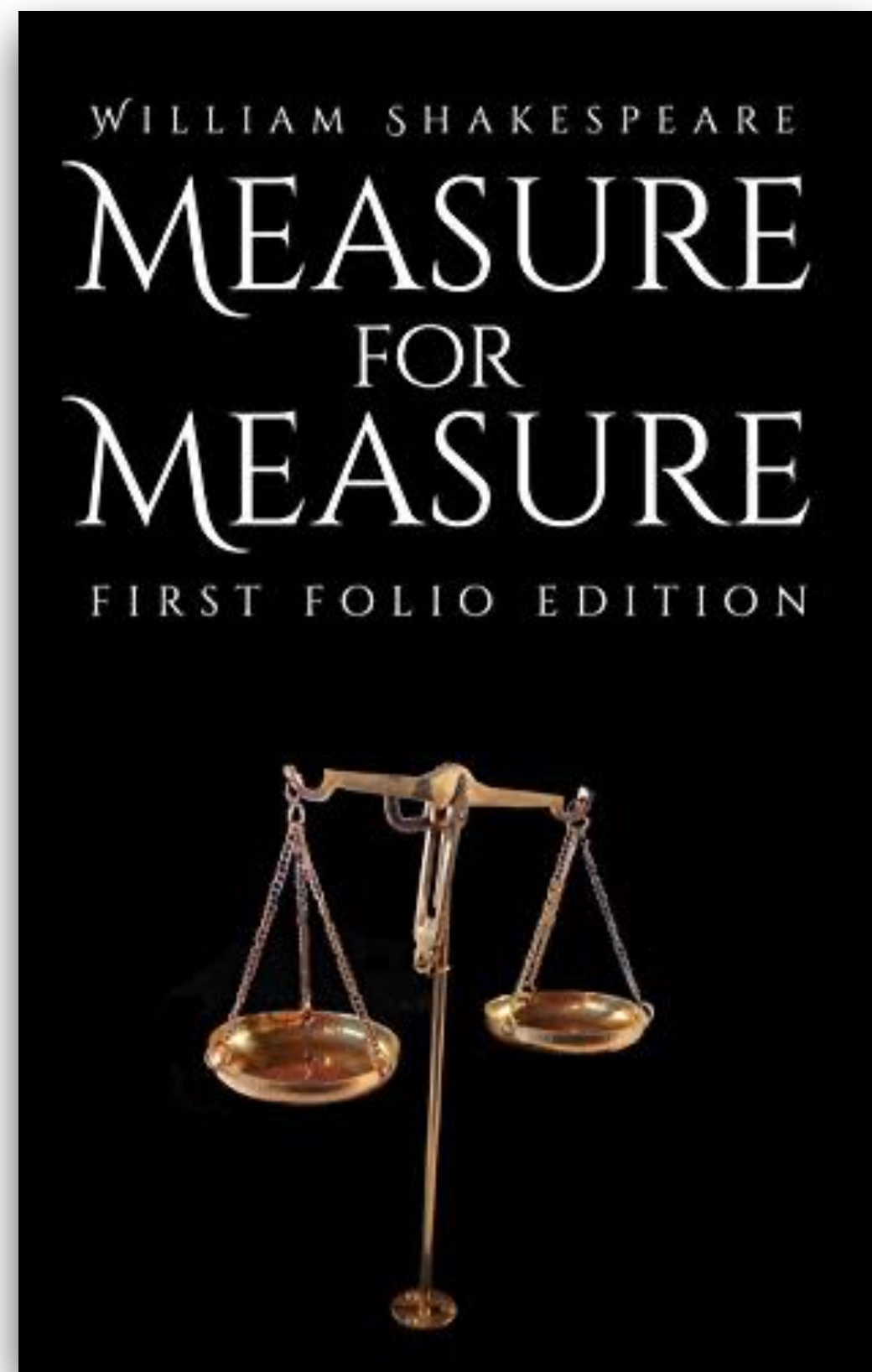
- 19th century term
 - Applied to plays of Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw, Galsworthy, etc.
 - Denotes realistic plays dealing with controversial social problems
- In the Shakespearean context
 - Term applied to Shakespearean plays by F.S. Boas in *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* (1896)
 - Boas referred to three Dark Comedies; says Hamlet connects these to the tragedies (i.e., Hamlet has elements of the problem plays)
 - The term has also been applied later to *The Winter's Tale*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Merchant of Venice*

All's Well That Ends Well (c.1604)



- Helena loves Bertram and gets married to him, but he is unworthy of her love, and leaves her on the grounds of her being non-aristocratic. She pursues him relentlessly and wins him back through the sordid and artificial 'bed trick'
- Customary material of romantic comedy (triumph of love over obstacles) presented in a grotesque light

Measure for Measure (played at court in Dec 1604)



- Claudio is sentenced to death by the moralistic Puritan Angelo, the duke's deputy, for making his lover Juliet pregnant.
- Angelo seeks to extort sex from Claudio's chaste sister Isabella, who is about to enter a nunnery, in return for sparing Claudio, but orders him to be killed anyway.
- Isabella escapes with the help of a friar (the real duke in disguise) by performing the bed trick with Mariana, the abandoned fiancée of Angelo.
- Finally, Angelo is exposed.

The Plot

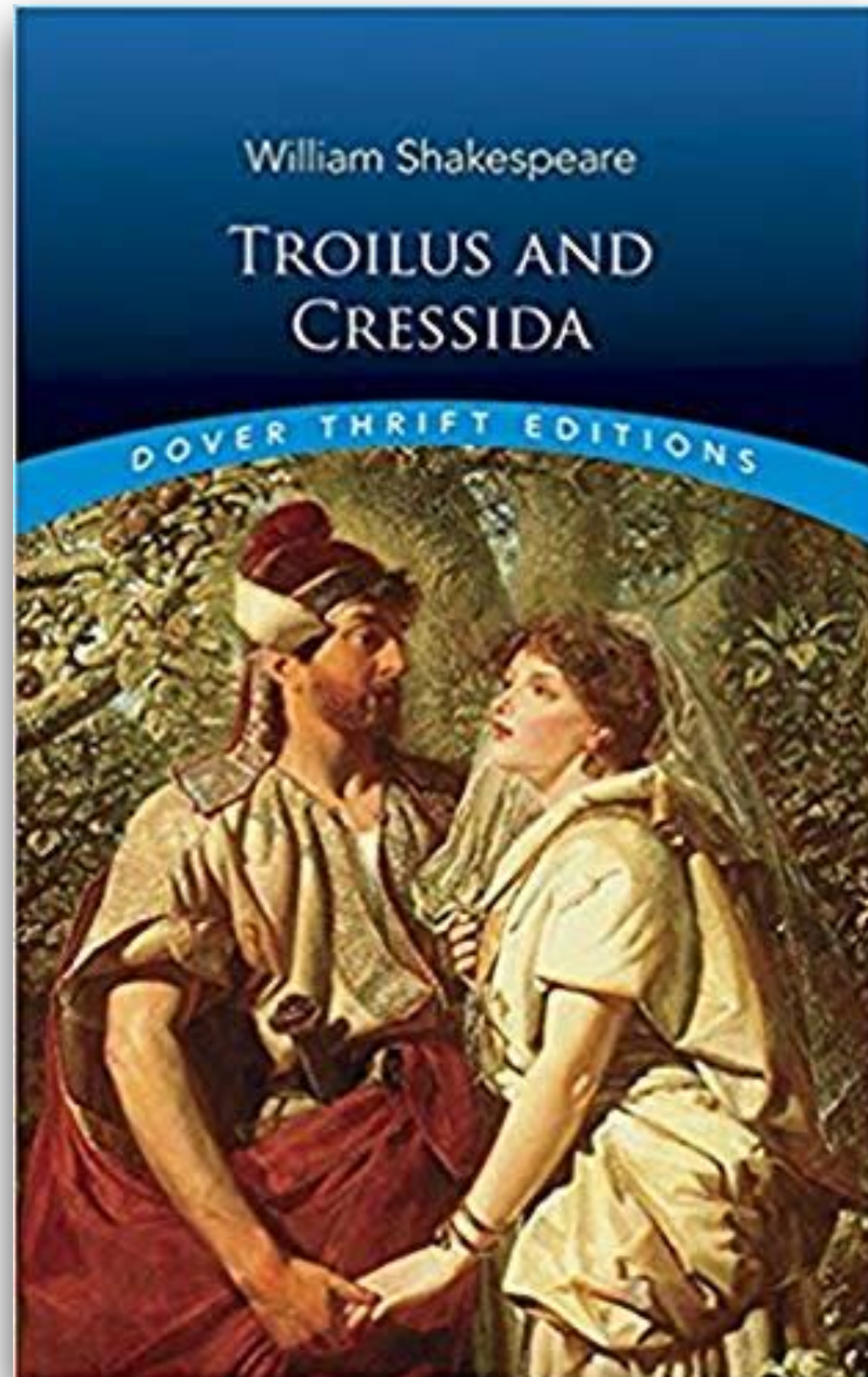
- Themes
 - The duty of a ruler to punish wrongdoers
 - Christian themes, especially of mercy
 - Isabella and the Duke as well as Mariana forgive Angelo at the end
 - Right and wrong
 - While the Duke admits his failings and investigates his own government, Angelo feels a self-righteousness and thinks he cannot go wrong
- A comic sub-plot involving Pompey, Lucio and Mistress Overdone





John Millais's "Mariana", 1851

Troilus and Cressida (written in 1602, printed in 1609)



- Bleak and bloody ending
- Bitter picture of love and power
- Extravagantly corrupt and artificial world
 - a distorted picture of the familiar heroic world
- Use of character types
 - Ajax – dim-witted and proud fool
 - Troilus – the deceived lover
 - Achilles – the cruel and ambitious nobleman
 - Pandarus – the voyeur
 - Thersites – the coward and the abusive critic
- Pandarus speaks in the bawdy epilogue



“Troilus and Cressida”, painting by Edward Henry Corbould, 1873

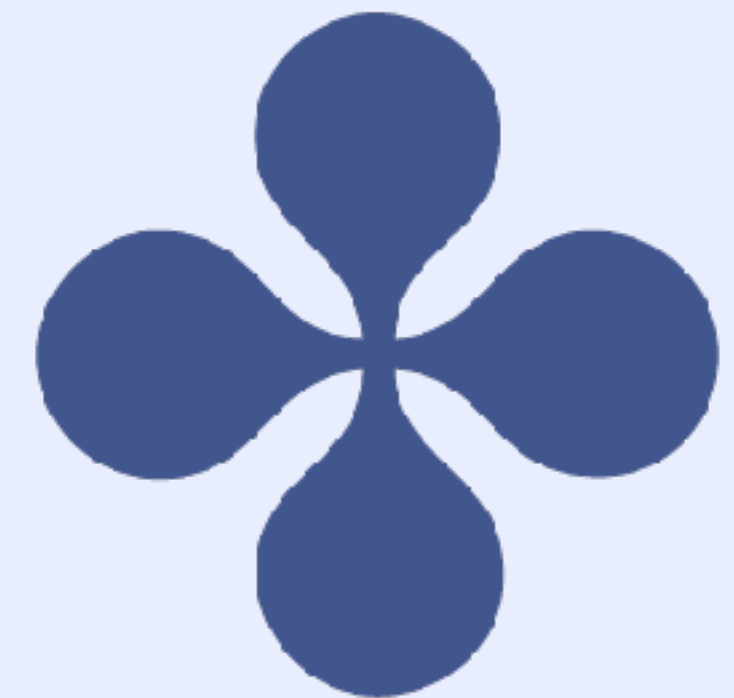
Great Tragedies

- Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth (HOKM)
- Climax of Shakespeare's art
- Shakespeare himself believed to have been greatly burdened in spirit at this time
- Profound psychological insight
- Powerful style
- Shakespeare's tragedies are Romantic tragedies, which do not conform to classical conventions



Romantic Tragedy

- Emphasizes the element of spectacle, which is the least important element according to Aristotle
- Employs elements of comedy within tragedy
- Does not maintain the unities
- No imitation of the classical model
 - The chief conflict of the protagonist is with aspects of the social order (in Greek tragedy, they battle against divine forces)
 - In Shakespearean tragedy, the cause of human suffering is human action, and human beings are free to exercise the Christian concept of “free will”. The limitations of their actions come from within the characters, and there is no divine intrusion of “Fate” as in classical tragedy. This is summed up in the phrase, “Character is destiny.”



Hamlet (1601)

- From the late 18th century, this play has been regarded as the greatest in the Shakespearean canon
- Form is that of Senecan revenge tragedy
- The whole plot turns upon the character of the protagonist, his irresolution
- Shakespeare's longest play
- The play reflects the skeptical humanism of the late Renaissance
- Sources
 - Ur-Hamlet, (c.1588), apparently derived from Belleforest's collection *Histoires Tragiques* (1580)
 - Belleforest's story is retold from Saxo Grammaticus' *Danish History* (1514)



The Plot

- King Hamlet of Denmark has died
- His brother Claudius has come to the throne and has married his widow queen Gertrude
- Denmark is threatened by a Norwegian invasion by Fortinbras
- Informed by his friend Horatio, Prince Hamlet meets his father's ghost who tells him that Claudius poisoned him
- Hamlet swears revenge, but needs to verify Claudius' guilt and his mother's innocence
- Hamlet persuades a company of actors to revive an old play 'The Murder of Gonzago', that parallels the story of Claudius



The Plot

- Hamlet is now behaving strangely; rejects his sweetheart Ophelia; and Ophelia's father (the court chamberlain) Polonius is convinced he is mad.
 - “Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.”
- Claudius' guilt is revealed at the play-within-the-play, which Hamlet calls 'The Mouse Trap'.
- Claudius orders Hamlet to go to England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern where he would be treacherously killed
- Hamlet escapes, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are killed instead.
- Hamlet encounters Gertrude in her chamber, and stabs to death the eavesdropping Polonius.



“What a piece of work is a man!
How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty!
In form and moving how express and admirable!
In action how like an Angel! in apprehension how like a god!
The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!
And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust?
Man delights not me; no, nor Woman neither;
though by your smiling you seem to say so..”



The Plot

- To avenge his father's death, Polonius' son Laertes returns to Denmark, and finds his sister Ophelia mad.
- Claudius plots with Laertes to kill Hamlet in a duel, by means of poison tipped sword.
- Ophelia's death by drowning strengthens Laertes' resolve; the duel takes place, culminating in the death of Gertrude, Laertes, Claudius, and Hamlet.
- Fortinbras of Norway, proclaimed king of Denmark, orders a military funeral for Hamlet.

“Goodnight, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!”



The character of Hamlet

- Confused perception that comes with emotional trauma
- Sees father as ideal man and a great king
- Offended by his mother's hasty and incestuous marriage
 - Considers her evil and is devastated by the idea
- Experiences mental depression
- Longs for death, but rejects suicide
- Disgust with life and sex
- Virtually ignores the political consequences of his father's murder and focuses only on the sexual implications
- Transfers his mother's guilt to Ophelia, rejects her, though in great confusion
- Procrastinates revenge for apparently philosophical reasons







**Laurence Olivier as
Hamlet, 1948**

The character of Hamlet

- “Murder of Gonzago” establishes the king’s guilt
- Hamlet falls victim to a pathological rage
- Demands eternal damnation for the king; not merely murderous revenge
- Kills Polonius in fury, which leads to Ophelia’s insanity and subsequent death
- Hamlet is exiled and escapes death in England
- In the final Act, he is a changed man
 - No longer hesitant
 - Realizes his human failings, and his capacity for evil
 - Calmly accepts destiny
- All major characters are killed; Hamlet himself dies at the hands of Laertes



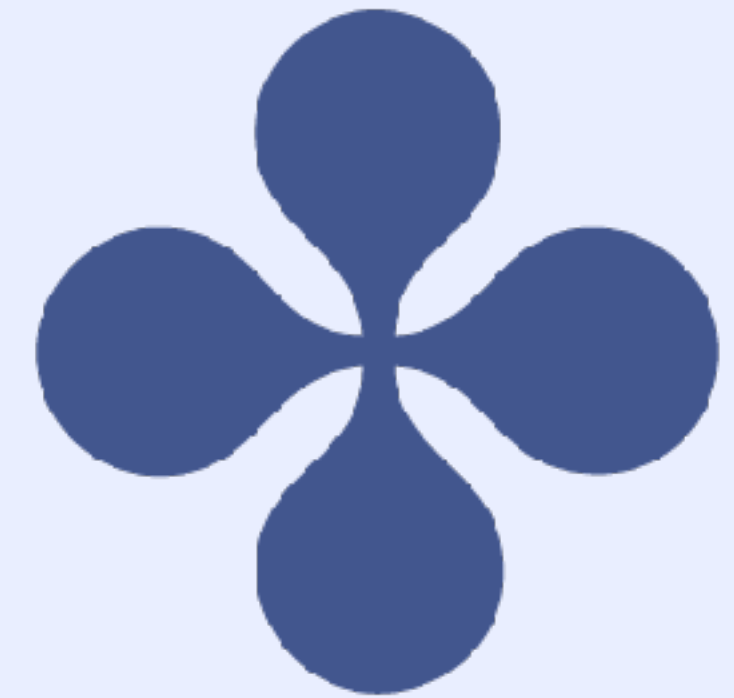
Themes

- Ambiguous treatment of the psychological tensions pertaining to death and sex
- Humanity as essentially flawed
 - Existence of both good and evil in human nature
- Problems in the play
 - Is Hamlet's madness real or feigned?
 - What is the nature of Hamlet's relation to Ophelia?
 - Why does Hamlet procrastinate revenge?



Critics on Hamlet

- ST Coleridge considered Hamlet to be an intellectual who thinks too much
- AC Bradley explained Hamlet's delay as the result of a deep melancholy which grew out of his disappointment in his mother
- TS Eliot calls Hamlet "an artistic failure" for the lack of an objective correlative, and said it is the Mona Lisa of literature (both are enigmatic)
- Sigmund Freud explained Hamlet's procrastination in terms of the Oedipal Complex, view endorsed by Ernest Jones
- New Historicists read Hamlet in the context of Elizabethan society and politics



Othello (1602-1604)

- Subtitled 'The Moor of Venice'
- Tragedy of passion
- More intimate in scale than the other tragedies
 - No supernatural terror as in Hamlet or Macbeth
 - No psychological derangement as in King Lear
 - No kingdoms are at stake
 - Political consequences of the action not emphasized
- For the first time in Shakespeare, hero is a colossal figure, towering over all other characters
 - It was not so in the case of Hamlet or Julius Caesar
- Coleridge applied the term "motiveless malignity" to Iago
- Major source Cinthio's Hecatommithi





Kenneth Branagh as Iago in Othello, 1995

The Plot

- Othello, a trusted general of the Venetian army, has secretly married Desdemona, daughter of the Venetian senator Brabantio.
- Othello's ensign Iago, whom Othello believes to be "honest", is scheming against him mainly because Othello chose Cassio as his lieutenant, in preference to Iago.
- At Iago's prompting, Roderigo, Desdemona's foolish suitor, reports the marriage to Brabantio.
- Though Brabantio demands Othello's arrest, he has to accept the wholeheartedness of Desdemona's love, when she appears before the senate.



The Plot

- There is an impending Turkish attack on Cyprus and Othello leaves immediately with Desdemona, Iago, Cassio and Roderigo.
- In Cyprus Iago contrives to discredit Cassio, whom Othello dismisses.
- Iago advises Cassio to appeal to Desdemona and implants in Othello's mind a suspicion regarding Desdemona and Cassio.
- Her support of Cassio, along with Iago's innuendos, deepens Othello's suspicion.
- Desdemona accidentally drops a handkerchief, Othello's first token of love, which Iago brings into Cassio's hand.
- Cassio gives the handkerchief to his mistress Bianca.



“O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth mock
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss,
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger:
But O, what damnèd minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!”



The Plot

- Bianca's possession of the handkerchief convinces Othello of Desdemona's infidelity.
- He humiliates Desdemona in public to the dismay of Iago's wife Emilia.
- Iago urges Roderigo to kill Cassio but Roderigo manages only to wound him.
- Iago kills Roderigo to ensure silence and Othello kills Desdemona in her bed chamber.
- In the presence of Venetian representatives, Emilia reveals Iago's guilt.
- Iago kills her, is wounded by Othello, and tries to escape.
- The remorseful Othello stabs himself
- Iago is captured and condemned to torture and prison.
- Cassio takes command in Cyprus.



“I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this,
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.”





**“Othello Recounting His Adventures to Desdemona”
by Robert Alexander Hillingford, 1869**

Themes

- Major theme: Jealous mistrust
- Central concern of the play is Othello's change in attitude towards Desdemona
- Othello's loss of trust in Desdemona, reducing Othello to a bestial frenzy
- His trust in Iago never flags
- He begins to see love through Iago's eyes than Desdemona's



Iago and Desdemona

- Desdemona and Iago thus represent two internalized features of the hero: his loving and generous self, and his darkly passionate self-centred ego
- Iago and Desdemona also present two sides of trust and love: Iago cannot trust or love; Desdemona offers an ideal, unconditional love and trust
- Iago is associated with the devil several times in the play, while Desdemona is a symbol of Christian love and resignation to the will of God



Other Themes

- The mercantile society of Venice (as well as England) as dominated by inhuman commercial values
 - Such a society is parochial, greedy and racist, and cannot appreciate Othello's virtues
- However, such a society is united by trust and cooperation
 - The Venetians, including Brabantio, accept Othello as their general to ward off the Turkish threat
 - Venice is not a suitable milieu for Iago's plot, so the scene is moved to isolated Cyprus



King Lear

(dating from 1604-5, performed at court 1606)

- Central unresolvable question
 - How can we reconcile human dignity with human failure in the face of life's demands?
- Play is filled with various manifestations of human cruelty, desire for power and agonizing disasters
- Themes: insignificance of human life; whether there is justice in this world; pride; betrayal
- Powerful conclusion emphasizing a morbid response to life, and the finality of death
- Underlying theme of disease and sex as perverse
- Nahum Tate famously produced the play with a happy ending, putting Edgar in the place of the King of France as Cordelia's lover



The Plot

- The aged British King Lear decides to share his kingdom between his three daughters and spend his remaining years at their courts.
- His youngest and favourite daughter Cordelia refuses to earn her share by joining Goneril and Regan in exaggerated declaration of love for their father.
- The angry king divides the kingdom between his two eldest daughters and Cordelia is married without dowry by the king of France.
- The king meets with hostility at his eldest daughter's courts.
- He rants against them and rages out into a storm, accompanied by his fool, and the loyal Duke of Kent.
- Tried beyond his strength, he goes mad.



The Plot

- Goneril, Regan, and Regan's husband the Duke of Cornwall hear that the French army has landed at Dover, and Lear would meet Cordelia there.
- The Duke of Gloucester, who assisted Lear by keeping the French invasion secret, is blinded and tortured by Cornwall, with the help of Gloucester's illegitimate son Edmund, who is also the lover of the villainous sisters.
- Mad Lear and blind Gloucester meet near Dover.
- The French army is defeated in Dover and Lear and Cordelia are arrested.



The Plot

- Edmund gives orders that she should be put to death but is himself killed by his legitimate brother Edgar who had been wrongly exiled by Gloucester and had cared for Lear and saved Gloucester from accidental death in the heath disguised as the lunatic Tom o' Bedlam.
- Edmund makes a dying confession but Cordelia has already been hanged by then.
- Lear brings his daughter's corpse at the stage and dies asserting that she is still alive.





King Lear

- Sources
 - Various versions of chronicle material
 - An earlier anonymous play King Leir (c.1590)
 - Holinshed's Chronicles
 - Version of a tale from Mirror for Magistrates
 - Sub-plot is from Sidney's Arcadia



Religious undertones

- Cordelia
 - Christ-like figure
 - Her death symbolizes Christ's crucifixion
- Tragedy as a manifestation of God's will
 - The sufferings of Lear and Gloucester which they have brought upon themselves, is punishment for their sins by God
 - Their forgiveness is accompanied by death, a symbol of eternal mercy



Political Themes

- Reflects the then-prevalent belief of an approaching apocalypse (total collapse of social structures; end of the world)
- Fear of impending Civil War
- The play supports civil authority expected from King James I, as against the catastrophe of Lear's reign
- The sovereign (king) as responsible for his subjects
 - As Lear realizes during the storm scenes
- Conflict between the rising bourgeoisie and the old aristocracy of Shakespeare's day reflected here



Sub-Plot

- Gloucester's blinding
- Edgar's exile as mad Tom
- Regan's and Goneril's sexual rivalry
- Sub-plot is more complex and well-defined than main plot



Comedy in King Lear

- Main sources of comedy
 - Kent's accusation of Oswald (Goneril's steward who humiliates Lear)
 - Edgar's remarks as Tom O'Bedlam
 - Fool's remarks
- Complicate our responses to the play and increase its emotional power
- Comedic techniques employed
 - Double-plot
 - Use of a jester to comment on the action
 - Use of disguise
 - Progression of action from the royal court to the country and back to court
 - Juxtaposition of youth and old age



Macbeth (1606)

- Last of the tragedies; style is completely formed
- Source: Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland; George Buchanan's Latin history of Scotland; Reginald Scott's Discovery of Witchcraft; King James I's Daemonologie
- Thomas Middleton is believed to have adapted and abridged the original play written by Shakespeare
- Performed before James I, who was believed to have been a descendent of Banquo; the play shows Shakespeare's close relationship with the king



The Plot

- Scotland is stormed by rebellion, which is effectively resisted by the generals Macbeth and Banquo.
- On their way back to King Duncan's court, the generals meet three witches who prophesy that Macbeth will become Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland and that Banquo's sons will be kings.
- Almost at once Macbeth learns that he has been proclaimed Thane of Cawdor, which makes him believe in the witches' prophecy.
- King Duncan intends to visit Macbeth's castle at Inverness and Lady Macbeth overrides her husband's hesitation and makes him kill the King.



The Plot

- Suspicion falls on Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, who flee from Scotland.
- Macbeth is now king but feels insecure.
- Macbeth sends murderers to kill Banquo and his sons, but the sons escape.
- Macbeth is weighed down by guilt and sleeplessness but the witches assure him that he will not be defeated until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinain castle and that no man born of woman can harm him.
- Macduff, the powerful Thane of Fife, joins Malcolm in England against Macbeth, and Macbeth slaughters Macduff's family.



The Plot

- A distraught Lady Macbeth walks and talks in her sleep, betraying the secret of Duncan's murder.
- Malcolm's soldiers cut branches from Birnam Wood to camouflage their attack.
- Macbeth also gets word that Lady Macbeth is dead.
- Macbeth is killed by Macduff who was not "born" but "untimely ripped" from his mother's womb.
- Malcolm is now king of Scotland.



Features of the Play

- Compared to the other tragedies, action progresses at a fast pace, parallel to which is shown the agony of a soul rushing towards its doom
- In its language and action, the play is full of violence and storm
- Darkness broods over this tragedy: The Witches, the vision of the dagger, the murder of Duncan, the murder of Banquo, the sleep-walking of Lady Macbeth, all come in night-scenes
- Darkness is relieved by occasional flashes of colour and light: lightning, flames beneath the cauldron, glitter of the dagger, torches, taper, and above all the colour of blood



Depiction of Evil

- Study of the human potential for evil
- Presents in a secular context the Judeo-Christian concept of the Fall and humanity's loss of God's grace
- The triumph of evil in a man of many good qualities, due to
 - Political ambition
 - Influence of Lady Macbeth
 - Instigation of supernatural powers (the witches)
- Depiction of evil in the play has two aspects
 - Natural / human (Macbeth, the man himself)
 - Supernatural (the witches, omens)



The character of Macbeth

- Three major attributes
 - Bravery
 - Ambition
 - Self-doubt
 - The weakness of self-doubt is what prevents Macbeth from becoming a villain like Iago or Edmund
 - Before he kills Duncan, Macbeth is plagued by worry
 - After the murder, he is increasingly alone
 - Fluctuates between fits of feverish action (plots a series of murders) and moments of terrible guilt (as when Banquo's ghost appears) and pessimism (after his wife's death)
 - Macbeth is revolted by himself and his self-awareness makes his descent even more appalling



The character of Lady Macbeth

- One of Shakespeare's most frightening female characters
 - Stronger, ruthless and more ambitious than her husband
 - Relates power, ambition and violence to masculinity
 - Uses the "female" method of manipulation to achieve power
- Lady Macbeth presents the weakness of humanity in the face of evil
 - Avoids mentioning the murder too explicitly
 - Cannot do the deed herself
 - Falls into an anguished madness and disrupted sleep
 - Commits suicide



The role of the three Witches

- Supernatural beings called “weird sisters”
- In 1.1, they appear in the thunder and lightning of the storm and say they will meet again to encounter Macbeth
- In 1.3, they boast of their evil deeds and greets Macbeth with titles he yet not possesses, and assures Banquo that his descendants will be kings
- Their prophecy sparks Macbeth’s ambition
 - Leads him to kill King Duncan and Banquo as well as others
- In 3.5, the Witches appear with the more powerful spirit Hecate



The role of the three Witches

- In 4.1, the Witches concoct a magical brew in a cauldron and meet Macbeth who wishes to learn how to assure his safety now that he is a king
- The Witches contribute greatly to the pervasive tone of mysterious evil
- Offer an important theme of the play: psychology of evil
- Represent the irrational and supernatural, which is terrifying because it is beyond human control
- Therefore, they are symbolic of the unpredictable force of human motivation & of moral disruption





“Three Witches” painting by Johann Heinrich Fuseli, 1783


Shakespeare's Roman Plays

- Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus
- No significant plays were written on Roman history before the time of Shakespeare
- All are tragedies; hence placed along with the tragedies in the First Folio
- Based on Thomas North's English translation (1579) from Amyot's French translation (1559) of Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans, written in the first century AD
- Written at wide intervals
- Tragedies of politics
- Share some features with the English histories and tragedies
- Titus Andronicus is set in mythical Rome, so not included in this group

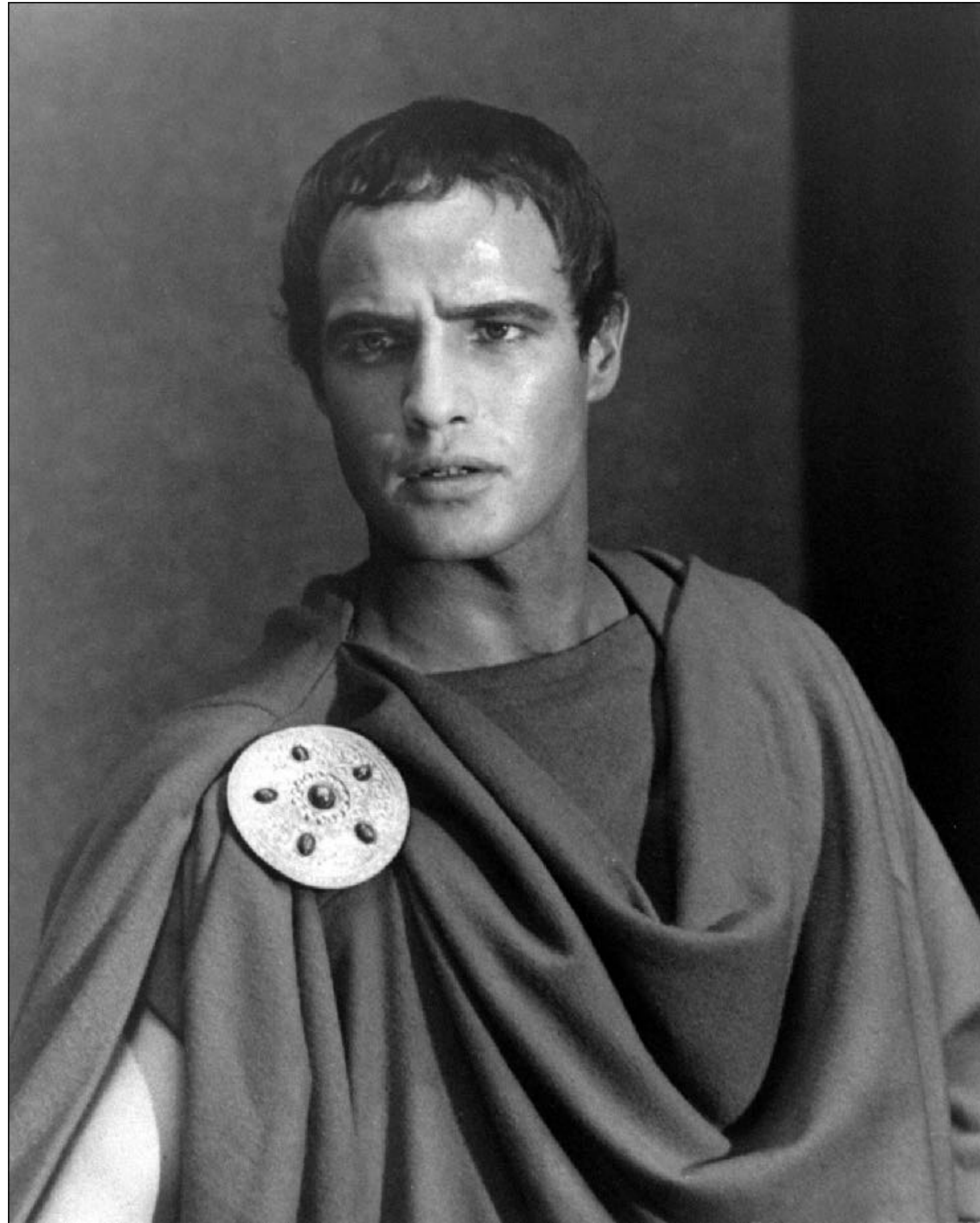


Julius Caesar

- Julius Caesar defeats Pompey; represents a new spirit of prosperity to the Roman people
- A group of patricians led by Cassius distrust him
- Cassius instigates the respected republican Brutus to turn against Caesar
- Ignoring warnings, Caesar goes to the Capitol and is assassinated
- Brutus convinces the crowd about the reasons for the murder
- Mark Antony's skilful rhetoric however turns the people against the conspirators
- Civil War begins; Brutus and Cassius collect their forces
- Antony, Octavius and Lepidus form a triumvirate
- Brutus's wife Portia commits suicide
- Brutus and Cassius have to kill themselves



Friends, Romans,
countrymen, lend me
your ears.



Marlon Brando as Julius Caesar in the 1953 film

The character of Brutus

- Protagonist and tragic hero of the play
- Ambivalent figure, both good and evil
 - An honourable man dedicated to the good of his country but also the destroyer of its peace
- Orchestrates the play's central action – the murder of Caesar
 - Reflects the tension between Brutus's idealistic rejection of a dominating leader and the reality that the Roman society requires the discipline that Caesar imposes



Antony and Cleopatra

- Basic conflict of the play established in the opening scenes
 - Soldierly duty as opposed to sexual involvement
- At first Antony refuses to acknowledge the call of duty represented by messages from Rome, but when he learns about Pompey's revolt and of the death of his wife Fulvia, he leaves Cleopatra with difficulty along with his loyal general Enobarbus



The Plot

- The uneasy triumvirate of the scheming Octavius, the foolish Lepidus and the hedonistic Antony is patched up, and even Pompey agrees to peace
- Antony marries Octavia, discovers that Octavius has ridiculed him by sending an army against Pompey, and returns to Egypt and Cleopatra
- Octavius is provoked, and attacks Egypt
- Against Enobarbus's advice, Antony joins forces with Cleopatra to fight Octavius at sea (Battle of Actium)
- The Egyptian army retracts, leading Antony to defeat
- A fearful Cleopatra hides, and sends Antony a message that she is dead
- Defeated and despairing, Antony falls on his sword, and dies in Cleopatra's arms
- Octavius offers mercy to Cleopatra, but secretly intends to put her to shame
- Cleopatra achieves a new dignity, dresses herself in her finest robes, and holds deadly asps (snakes) to her body, thus depriving Octavius of his triumph
- Even as love triumphs, the final victory of Rome is affirmed in Caesar's closing speech



Coriolanus

- Like the other Roman plays, “individual versus history” theme
- Coriolanus is the title taken by Caius Martius, a famed Roman warrior, whose excessive pride leads him to dishonour and death.
- He is politically unsophisticated, emotionally immature, a creation entirely of his mother Volumnia on whom he is psychologically dependent



Romances

- Cymbeline, Pericles, The Winter's Tale, The Tempest
- More serious and less sunny than the romantic comedies
 - Still concern with love intrigues and have a happy ending
 - But acknowledge evil and human suffering
 - Unlike in tragedies, characters get second chances, and can start afresh; there is no beginning and end
- Perfection of the art of tragic-comedy (simultaneously developed by Beaumont and Fletcher in *Philaster*; "tragicomedy" is a term coined by Fletcher in the preface to his play *The Faithful Shepherdess*)
- Mellowed maturity; powerful creative touch
- Style easy and subdued



Romances

- Wandering and separation of family members, followed by redemption, forgiveness & reconciliation
- Sea and maritime activity
- Magic, supernaturalism and other fantastic elements; hence unrealistic
- Henry VIII, written at this time, shows the characteristics of the romances
- Appearances of pagan figures similar to those in masques (Jupiter in Cymbeline, and Iris, Ceres and Juno in The Tempest)
- Pastoral coupled with aristocratic, most prominently in The Winter's Tale



Romances

- Influence of the genre of masque pioneered by Ben Jonson and the stage designer Inigo Jones.
- The term romance was first used for these plays by Edward Dowden
- The Two Noble Kinsmen (the last romance written in collaboration with John Fletcher)
 - The Prologue states that the theme is taken from Chaucer (Knight's Tale)
- The Tempest (1611) in 1613 it was included in the wedding celebrations for the princess Elizabeth & the elector Palatine



Cymbeline

- Set in mythical Britain
- Cymbeline listed as a tragedy in the First Folio
- The plot of Cymbeline is partly from Boccaccio's Decameron, and partly from Raphael Holinshed's Chronicles



The Plot

- Imogen, the daughter of British king Cymbeline, marries Posthumus Leonatus, for which the latter is banished.
- In Rome the banished Posthumus makes a bet on Imogen's virtue against Iachimo's boasts that he will seduce her.
- Imogen is indeed virtuous, but Iachimo hides in a trunk in her bedroom, observes a mole on the breast of the sleeping Imogen, steals a bracelet and presents these as proof of her infidelity.
- Posthumus swears vengeance. Meanwhile Cymbeline's second wife wants Posthumus dead, so that her oafish son Cloten can marry Imogen.
- Imogen, disguised as a boy Fidele, travels to Milford Haven, meets with the exiled general Belarius and his two sons, who are actually Imogen's lost brothers, one of whom kills Cloten.
- All necessary reconciliations are achieved in the end.



Pericles

- Probably written with George Wilkins & printed in a debased text in 1609
- Subtitled “The Prince of Tyre”
- Set in Greece
- The play is introduced by the ghost of John Gower as the enactment of an ancient tale
- Through no fault of his own, Pericles is driven into exile and becomes separated from both his wife Thaisa and daughter Marina
- Finally reunited with them at the play’s close
- The major theme of the play is that we cannot control our destiny, and the acceptance of suffering is humanity’s only choice



The Winter's Tale

- The first half of the play centres on King Leontes of Sicilia
 - Like Othello, he is jealous of his wife Hermione (having spent time with King Polixenes of Bohemia)
 - This leads to her apparent death
- Hermione, however, is not dead, and poses as her own statue (as per Paulina's plans), seeing which Leontes repents
- 'Resurrection' is a common motif in the romances (people believed to be dead reappear)
 - This points to their similarity to the ancient festivals celebrating the rebirth of spring each year



The Winter's Tale

- The second half of the play is a romantic comedy
 - The love between Perdita
 - The lost daughter of Leontes and Hermione, whom the father had ordered to be killed
 - and Florizel
 - Son of Polixenes
- This play is closely modelled on Robert Greene's Pandosto



The Tempest

- A stunning theatrical entertainment of great beauty and emotional power
- Offers a masque-like spectacle
- The vision of virtues and vices is as complex as human nature itself
- Very little actual plot
- The lack of suspense is complicated with bold theatrical effects
- Role of providence in human affairs (an idea emphasized throughout the romances)



The role of magic

- Central aspect of the play
- Represented variously throughout the play
- Prospero's books
 - Represent his vulnerability in Milan, leading to Antonio's usurpation
 - Also represents his power
 - Gonzalo preserves his wand and books to protect his power
 - Symbol of Prospero's power on the island
 - Caliban tells Stephano that without his books, Prospero is nothing, and encourages him to burn them
 - When Prospero returns to Milan as duke, he must relinquish his magic



The role of magic

- The good magic of Prospero and Ariel is in contrast with the black magic of Caliban's mother Sycorax
- Three main spectacles created by magic
 - The tempest
 - The banquet
 - The wedding masque
- Magic in the play is related to the theme of Reality vs Illusion



Reality vs Illusion

- The shipwrecked sailors are unable to distinguish between their hallucinations and reality
- The island represents a temporary illusion while Milan represents reality, to which the characters must return
- When Prospero leaves the island, he is also leaving behind the world of illusion
- At the close of the play, the audience realizes that just as Prospero created an illusion on the island, Shakespeare created the illusion of the play for them
- Thus, the art of Prospero is analogous to the art of Shakespeare



The metaphor of theatre

- Prospero's creative art of magic is a parallel for Shakespeare's art of drama
- Prospero is a representative of the playwright
- His magic creates a drama on the island
- Everyone else is a character in Prospero's drama
- Prospero's bidding farewell to magic is analogous to Shakespeare's farewell to the stage
- Indeed, *The Tempest* is probably the last play Shakespeare wrote single-handedly
- However, later, he collaborated with Fletcher in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII*



The role of music

- The most musical of Shakespeare's plays along with As You Like It
- Ever-pervasive presence of music, affecting and shaping the lives of the characters
- A powerful symbol of Prospero's magic
- Related to the Renaissance idea of divine harmony
- Contrasts between the songs of Ariel and Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo
- Incorporates dance numbers



Conspiracies

- Antonio stole Prospero's dukedom
- This crime is re-enacted on the island when
 - Antonio offers Sebastian a kingdom if he murders Alonso
 - Caliban recruits Stephano against Prospero
- Both these conspiracies are defused by Prospero, and order is restored



Contrast between Art and nature

- Prospero rules through his magical Art
- Image of magician as philosopher
- Prospero is Art; Caliban is nature (lack of self-restraint)
- Prospero gains control over “nature” through Art



The theme of change

- Most characters change by the end of the play
- Even Prospero, the agent of transformation in others, is not immune to change
 - From a student of magic, he becomes a seeker of revenge and finally attains a transcendence of it
- Strikingly, the villain Antonio is not completely transfigured
 - He largely maintains an ambiguous silence
 - As in other plays, Shakespeare seems to acknowledge that evil once committed can never be completely compensated for



Caliban and Ariel

- Contrasts between these two supernatural characters is developed throughout the play
- Ariel is airy, beautiful, pleasant and allied with good
- Caliban is dank, ugly, sullen, inclined to evil
- Ariel is a spiritual being; Caliban is utterly material (confined to the earth; greedy for material possessions)
- When Prospero arrives on the island, it is in a state of disorder – Ariel is imprisoned; Caliban is free
- Towards the end of the play, order is restored when Caliban restores to bondage and Ariel is to be set free
- Ariel is Prospero's analogue (like him, isolated and creative)
- Ariel's (and Prospero's) good-intentional magic is against the black magic of Caliban's mother Sycorax



Caliban

- All evil elements in the play can be measured against Caliban
 - Caliban's conspiracy against Prospero parallels Antonio's
 - Caliban's inability to learn no more than curses contrasts with Miranda's high moral sensibility (both were educated together)
 - Caliban's response to Miranda's beauty contrasts with that of Ferdinand
 - Caliban is the "natural man", pointedly associated with the inhabitants of the New World
 - Shakespeare rejects the views of contemporaries like Montaigne (essay "Of Cannibals") that "natural man" is a healthy counter to the ills of civilization
 - The Montaigne-connection is evident in the name "Caliban", an anagram of "cannibal"



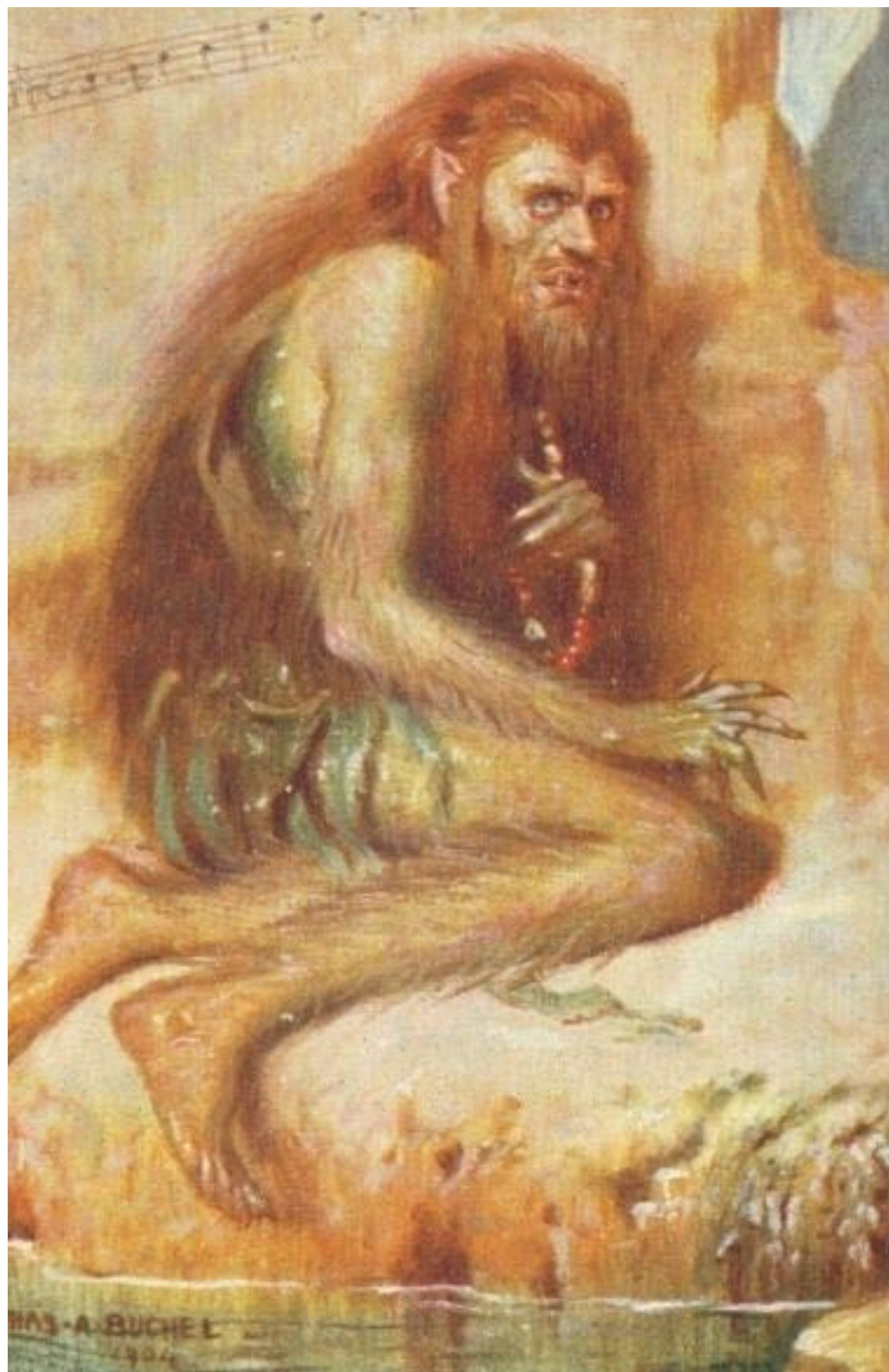
Postcolonial Study of The Tempest

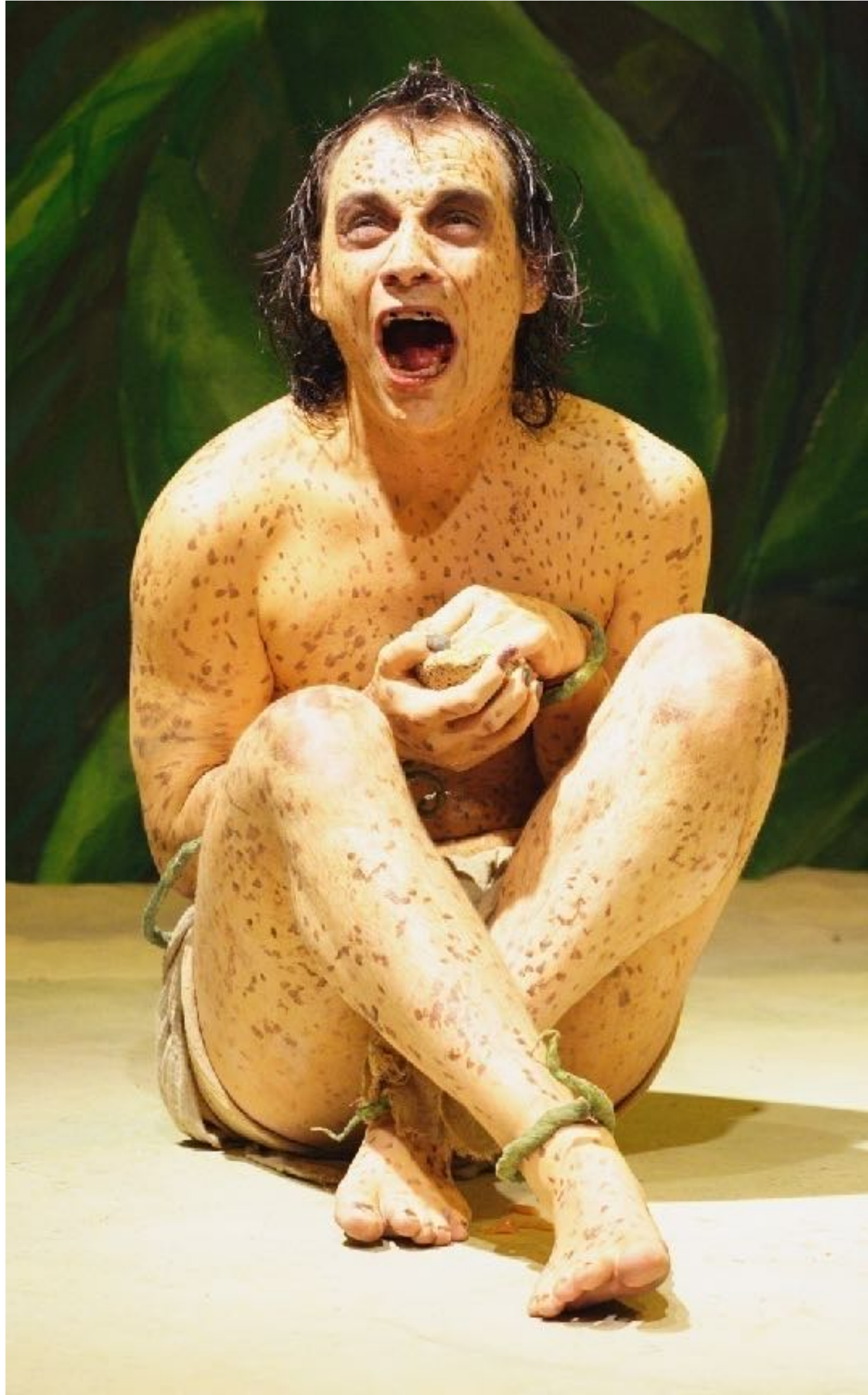
- Beginning in about 1950 with the publication of the book *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* by French psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni, the play was viewed through the lens of postcolonial theory.
- Aimé Césaire, Kamau Brathwaite, George Lamming and other postcolonial writers have written about this
- Prospero as a colonizer and Caliban a colonized subject
- Caliban—Orientalist image of the native: bizarre in appearance, objectified and dehumanized, and one with nature



Caliban: Representations in Theatre and Painting

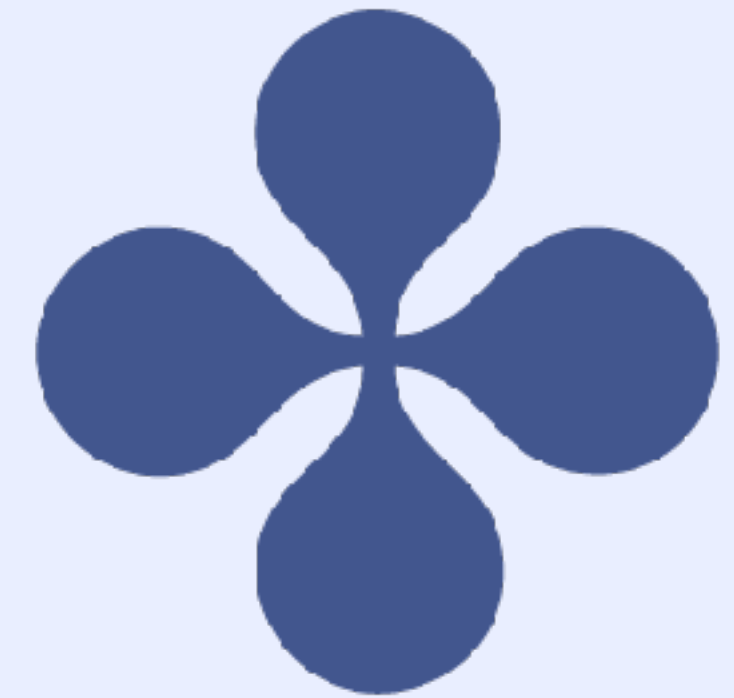






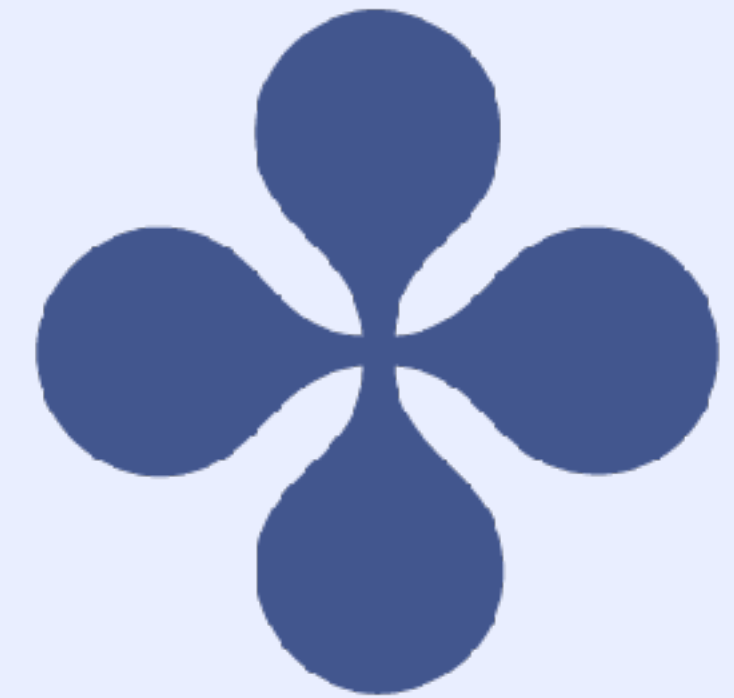
Important Scenes in the Tragedies

- Nunnery Scene (Hamlet, 3.1)
- Flower Scene (Hamlet, 4.5)
- Gravediggers' Scene (Hamlet, 5.1)
- Porter's Scene (Macbeth, 2.3)
- Sleepwalking Scene (Macbeth, 5.1)
- Temptation Scene (Othello, 3.3)
- Handkerchief Scene (Othello, 3.4)
- Willow Scene (Othello, 4.3)
- Storm Scene (King Lear, 3.2)
- Trial Scene (King Lear, 3.6)



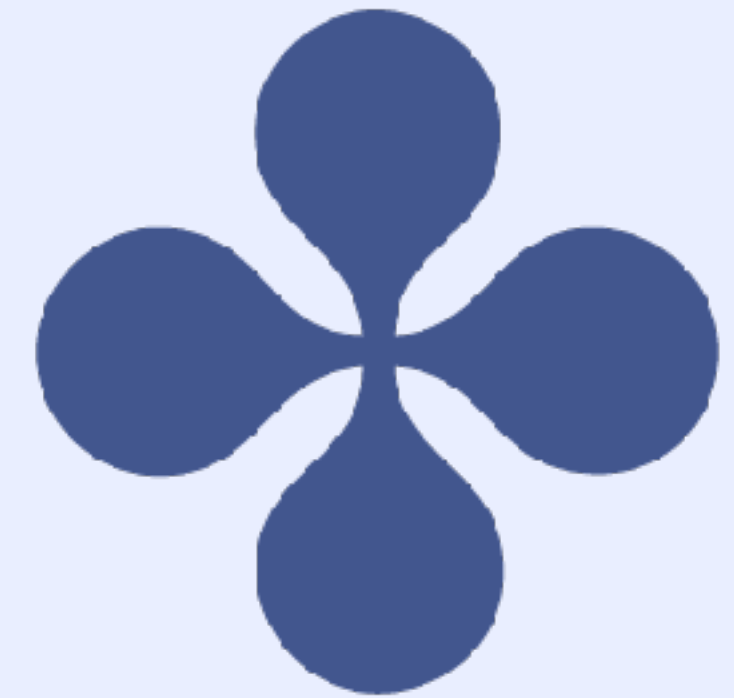
Plays with Prologues

- Henry VIII – Chorus
- Troilus and Cressida – Chorus
- Romeo and Juliet – Chorus
- Henry V – Chorus
- Pericles – Chorus
- Macbeth – Witches
- Richard III – Richard, Duke of Gloucester
- Henry IV Part 2 – Rumour



Plays with Epilogues

- Pericles – Gower
- Henry VIII – Chorus
- Henry IV Part 2 – Dancer (in the Chorus)
- Henry V – Chorus
- The Tempest – Prospero
- A Midsummer Night's Dream – Puck
- As You Like It – Rosalind
- All's Well That Ends Well – King
- Twelfth Night – Feste (song)
- Troilus and Cressida – Pandarus



Sonnets

- 154 Sonnets, mostly written during 1592-98
- 1st published by Thomas Thorpe in quarto form (1609)
- Addressees
 - First 126 sonnets
 - Addressed to a fair youth, probably W.H. (Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton or William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke)
 - Depicting a kind of spiritual love
 - Next 26 sonnets
 - Addressed to Dark Lady (Mary Fitton or Emilia Lanier or Lucy Morgan)
 - Depicting overtly erotic and physical love
 - Last two about Cupid



Sonnets: Themes

- Love
 - a source of great joy as well as great worry for the speaker
- Broken trust of friend
 - the young man and the dark lady fall in love with each other
- Loss of love
 - young man's rejection of her and the dark lady's multiple sexual partners
- Forgiveness
- Another character: rival poet (probably George Chapman)
- Sonnet sequences in the 16th c. were not confessional narratives



Anti-Petrarchan Elements

- The sonnets depart from Petrarchan conventions in the following ways:
 - Subvert conventional gender roles
 - Not idealized, but a complex and troubled view of love
 - Makes fun of love, beauty and Petrarchan conventions
 - Speaks on themes other than love
- Style
 - Three quatrains and a couplet
 - Rhyme scheme abab cdcd efef gg

