



PNU University

Drama

(17th-20th C.)

(English Language and Literature)

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امروزه کتاب‌خوانی و علم‌آموزی، نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتاب‌خوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه‌ی فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه‌ی الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پربار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه‌ی مطالعه‌ی هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد و رهبر معظم انقلاب اسلامی نیز از این وضعیت بارها اظهار گله و ناخشنودی نموده‌اند.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره‌ی دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه‌ی دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه‌ی بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاوردهای انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین

سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده‌ی عظیم‌الشان خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد شده‌است: «إِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه‌ی انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده‌اند.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور با گستره‌ی جغرافیایی ایران‌شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه‌جا و همه‌وقت، به‌عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب‌محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه‌سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره‌گیری از تجربه‌های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب‌نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب‌ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام‌نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به‌طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب‌نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی مهم و خطیر یاری‌رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی خطیر یاری می‌رسانند، سپاسگزاری می‌نماییم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام‌نور را منزلگاه اندیشه‌سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده‌اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش‌پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور

Table of Contents

Preface	VII
Chapter 1: The Restoration and 18th C. Drama and Theater	1
Chapter 2: Richard Brinsley Sheridan's <i>The School for Scandal</i>	25
Chapter 3: Romanticism	39
Chapter 4: Victorian Theater and Drama	73
Chapter 5: Modernism	89
Chapter 6: George Bernard Shaw's <i>Saint Joan</i>	103
Chapter 7: T.S. Eliot's <i>Murder in the Cathedral</i>	133
Chapter 8: The Theater of the Absurd and Postmodernism	153
Chapter 9: Samuel Beckett's <i>Waiting for Godot</i>	175
Chapter 10: John Osborne's <i>Look Back in Anger</i>	201
Chapter 11: Caryl Churchill's <i>Top Girls</i>	251
Bibliography	279
Appendix: The Answer Keys	283

Preface

To the Student

The present textbook is intended for the undergraduate students studying English literature at Payame Noor University. We have done our best to provide the students with a book that is supposed to be both useful and interesting. It should help you in understanding a wide range of periods in English Drama and Theater as well as major authors of each era. We are of course sure of one thing and it is these investigations and surveys might not comprehensively cover any era or playwright but it might shed light on the way of those who are interested to pursue their studies in this genre.

The book is composed of eleven chapters, each of which deals with a separate topic. Some are dealing with the characteristics of drama at a special period and some are presenting a specific drama of a specific period. At the end of each section there are two types of questions: multiple choice items whose keys you can find at the end of the book and essay type questions which are mostly based on the texts previously presented.

Of course studying the chapters in order is more advisable; however, if one is interested in a specific period or play, one can focus on it.

To the Instructor

Inasmuch as the book is a self-study textbook and the shortage of time to teach the course in Payame Noor University is crystal-clear, we've made the book contain necessary information for such an end but still there is the need to the teacher as a torch or guide to help the students get a fairly full grasp of what is going on in here.

In order to finish the materials on time, it is advisable to ask the students to read each chapter, in advance, individually and to share, contrast and argue over their own viewpoints in the classroom. The teacher is required to extend the materials, and sometimes to refer the students to the full texts of the plays as there was no more room for us to do so. The instructors' viewpoints and further information in the classroom are highly valuable and respected.

We hope this book will aid you more in helping the students who are interested in pursuing their zest in plays. We are certain that there are numerous points and valuable information that should have been included here they weren't; this is truly due to our lack of knowledge; thus, we welcome any invaluable comments and criticism that you make. Feel free to contact us, we'll be pleased, if you may.

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Chapter 1

The Restoration and 18th C. Drama and Theater

1. Historical Background

The Restoration period and the 18th C. in English history are regarded as times of great changes. In 1707, the Act of Union joined Scotland to England and Wales and they were called Great Britain. Not only England was a world power in these periods but it also changed from an agriculture-based country to an industrial commonwealth. Along with a rapid growth in population, the literacy was expanded. England experienced a long period of turmoil disrupted by a 20 years of civil wars; people observed beheading of their king, Charles I, and experienced the tyrannical rules of Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth. This period (1642-1660) is also known as Interregnum for it separates the continuity of the monarchic rule over Britain. With the abdication of Cromwell, the nation longed for the return of monarchy which was supposed to bring with him order and peace. But this goal seemed impossible to reach as there were still a lot of religious issues that were unsolved. However, Charles wanted to be lenient towards those who did not believe in the Anglican Church but the parliament re-imposed the Book of Common Prayer and accordingly many Nonconformists and Protestant dissenters as well as Roman Catholics were put in jail. Later, as a result of the Popish Plot, the parliament wanted to pass a bill called

2 Drama (17th-20th C.)

Exclusion Bill whereby to prevent James, Charles II's Catholic brother from the throne of England as Charles had no legitimate son to inherit the throne. Charles II dissolved the parliament but this led to the emergence of the two political parties known as Whig and Tory. The party that supported the king and the court was the Tory and the one that stood against the king was called the Whig. But with the accession of James II to the throne, the two parties were no longer extant. But the prospect of a Catholic dynasty paved the way for the Bloodless/ Glorious Revolution of Dutchman William of Orange and his wife Mary in 1688. During Anne's reign (1702-1714), England engaged in different wars for example with France and Spain. After Anne's period, three Georges ruled the country for almost the rest of the century: George I (1714-1727), George II (1727-1760) and George III (1760-1820). During these eras the ministerial system of government developed and England came to be known as a great colonial power.

2. Drama and Theater

Laura Rosenthal (1996: 6) observes that "no genre illustrates the significance of literary property as a cultural category quite so much as drama, which by the late seventeenth century had long been recognized as both an elite and a popular art". Thus drama incorporates a lot about the time and the era in which they have been produced and performed. The roundhead puritans, called so because they used to have their hair cut, were deeply religious and considered dramatic performance belonging to the monarchy; accordingly they banned drama and closed the theater and in this way put an end to the drama and theater, which experienced a glorious and flourishing period in the Elizabethan Age. Some critics attribute the causes of this change to the influence of contemporary French drama, the bulk of Italian and French Neoclassic theories, the popularity of the Spanish Romance, and the historical and social background of the literary scene in the 1660's. The French influence, especially the influence of

the plays of Moliere, was felt on the Restoration drama; however, the satiric comedy, which was the predominant form of Restoration drama, has so long before the publication of *The Misanthrope* in 1666 been established.

The Royalist, who were on exile with the coming to power of Oliver Cromwell, were then living in France; they had enough time to see Corneille's tragedies and appreciated their focus on loyalty to the monarch. The neo-classic French influence was welcomed not only by the expatriates but also by those discontents who were leading their live in England in silence. In addition to these, there were also people who travelled to Paris and Italy; they were affected by their tragedies and operas. Accordingly, as ready-made audience for plays and especially heroic plays, they showed great interest in rhymed verse of tragedy. Theater goers and critics soon realized that they could be far greater than their Elizabethan predecessors if they would follow the refined and correct mode of French presentation of language.

Charles II himself had a taste for theater; this is why he actively supported the heroic plays for their enhancement of the values of a hierarchical society. The heroic plays that are sometimes called "love-and-honour" plays were not wholly new to the court and the courtiers; during Charles I reign heroic plays were acted for Queen Henrietta Marie and her court. This paved the way for the advent of heroic plays on the London stages; two of these patent houses Charles II himself authorized.

Dryden, Howard, Orrery, John Caryl, and Samuel Pordage tried their hand at this genre; *The Indian Queen*, of Sir Robert Howard and John Dryden was the first heroic play the London audience witnessed. The early heroic plays were filled with gross utterances and extravagant actions that are objectionable nowadays even ludicrous. In his *Mimesis*, Erich Auerbach (1953) explains why the courtiers were fascinated with these plays. He believes that these plays presented them with the crisis of the leaders coordinating between their private life demands and their duties as kings. In addition to gross utterances and extravagant actions

4 Drama (17th-20th C.)

the dramatists drew on the Spanish authors' interest in complicated plots which led to the advent of to a sub-genre in England which Allardyce (1970) termed "intrigue plays." The characters that were borrowed from Spain were mainly types: the Spanish fathers were irritable and bad-tempered, the young males were proud and arrogant and the heroines were high-spirited, virtuous and talkative. The fathers used to arrange the marriage of their daughters against their will and the daughters disagreed to comply; their disagreement is conducted audaciously through their wit and wisdom which never turned into impoliteness; they are never shown to be meek and submissively. This is best exemplified in the famous encounter between Dorimant and Harriet in Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676).

The Restoration dramatists broke with the Elizabethan tragedy completely but in comedy this is not so clear-cut for various aspects of the Elizabethan comedies continued in the Restoration comedies. Ben Jonson was appreciated almost by everyone but the Londoners preferred to watch Shakespeare's plays. Scouten (1980: 3) draws a comparison between Ben Jonson's comedies and most Restoration comedies and concludes that "both share the same pessimistic view of the nature of man and his hostility toward his fellow man; both demonstrate an unceasing animosity between the different social classes; and both sets of comedies modulate toward being open-ended." In Ben Jonson as well as in Restoration drama there is a sense of lack of closure, disharmony and stalemate in the end of the plays. For example in Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*, the rascal escapes without being punished to pursue his deeds. *The Country Wife* (1675) ends with Mrs. Pinchwife's corruption and her continued hatred and hostility toward Horner. *The Man of Mode* concludes with Dorimant's agreement to pay visit to Harriet's country home, but the play presents no resolution. Restoration drama inherited this open-endedness from Ben Jonson.

Of the two licensed companies that Charles II authorized, only one (The Duke's Company) could survive to the last years of his reign

and the other (The King's company) came to its end; accordingly, its players and actors were absorbed by the Duke's. During the last years of Charles II era and with the closure of one of the two acting companies, the number of the theater goers dwindled to a great extent and it was only the members of the court, the business men and the upper middle class people who were still eager to see plays. As a result, the authors who used to write for a heterogeneous audience were then writing for smaller groups; thus they wrote topical plays some of which are hereby discussed:

Restoration **Comedy of Manners** was not something wholly new; it had its origin in "the New Comedy of the Greek Menander, ... developed by the Roman dramatists, Plautus and Terence, ... and exemplified by Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Much Ado about Nothing*" (Abrams, 1999: 39). Abrams further contends that the Restoration comedy of manners "deals with the relations and intrigues of men and women living in a sophisticated upper-class society, and relies for comic effect in large part on the wit and sparkle of the dialogue - often in the form of *repartee*, a witty conversational give-and-take which constitutes a kind of verbal fencing match-and to a lesser degree, on the violations of social standards and decorum by would be wits, jealous husbands, conniving rivals, and foppish dandies" (Ibid.). Dryden's *The Wild Gallant* (1663) and *Secret Love* (1667), James Howard's *The English Monsieur* and *All Mistaken*, George Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* (1664) and *She Wou'd If She Cou'd* (1668) are some examples of comedy of manners. The best examples of this type of comedy were "William Congreve's *The Way of the World* and William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (Ibid.).

William Wycherley started to introduce satire in to his plays and thus started **satiric comedy**. His *The Plain-Dealer* (1676) is an example and Etherege's masterpiece, *The Man of Mode* is still another example. Aphra Behn ventured upon **sex-comedy** the language of which was almost bawdy, indecent and offensive. Dryden's *Mr.*

6 Drama (17th-20th C.)

Limberham (1678) is included in this group. Such degeneration in comedy paved the way for its downfall by the end of Charles's reign.

Tragedy suffered at the hands of the Restoration dramatists due to the artificiality of the language of their heroic drama; however, the old revenge plays were occasionally written. Thomas Otway and Nathaniel Lee tried their hands at writing revenge tragedies but alas none was entirely successful. Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682), Lee's *The Rival Queens* (1677), Dryden's *All for Love* (1677) and *Don Sebastian* (1689) are examples of tragedy in this period. What was so amazing about this period is that a playwright named John Banks got rid of the tragic hero; in his *The Unhappy Favourite* (1681) and *Anna Bullen* (1682) he did away with the tragic hero and substituted women in its stead. Critics called these types of play "**she-tragedies**". Later, the dramatists turned to tragedies casting a tender woman in distress but this was not satisfactory for the audience; accordingly tragedy was about to lose its importance; so the people were inclined towards **Burlesque** and **Farce**. Burlesque is "an incongruous imitation; that is, it imitates the manner (the form and style) or else the subject matter of a serious literary work or a literary *genre*, in verse or in prose, but makes the imitation amusing by a ridiculous disparity between the manner and the matter." (Abrams, 1999: 26). It may poke fun at a work or its subject or both together; the burlesque is high "if the form and style are high and dignified but the subject is low or trivial" and it is low "if the subject is high in status and dignity but the style and manner of treatment are low and undignified" (Ibid.). Farce aimed at "simple, hearty laughter" among the audience; "highly exaggerated or caricatured types of characters put into improbable and ludicrous situations, free use of sexual mix-ups, broad verbal humor, and physical bustle and horseplay" were among its characteristics. Elizabethan drama was full of farcical episodes and in the Restoration period authors composed five act farces. Ravenscroft's *Mamamouchi* (1672), *The London Cuckolds* (1681) and Nahum Tate's were two examples of Restoration farces.

With the ascension of James II, Charles II's brother, drama was not out of favor; however, after the Glorious Revolution and coming to power of William and Mary it was for they were not devotees of the theater. In contrast to her lack of interest in theater, Queen Anne would protect the players as it was a traditional Stuart custom to support the stage. Plays such as Southerne's *The Wives Excuse* (1691), Congreve's *The Way of the World*, William Burnaby's *The Reformed Wife* (1700), Sir Richard Steele's *The Lying Lover* (1703), Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703), Colley Cibber's comedy *She Would and She Would Not* (1702) failed to catch the attention of the audience.

In the Age of Enlightenment, reform and solution of social ills and problems were highly valued. Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian* (1771), Known as the prototype of the late eighteenth-century comedy, opens with a rake and a girl-chaser, Belcor, as the protagonist but later on he is shown to be a useful member of society. In the end of the play, Stockwell comments on the protagonist as this: "Yes, Belcour, I have watched you with a patient, but enquiring eye, and I have discovered through the veil of some irregularities, a heart beaming with benevolence, an animated nature, fallible indeed, but not incorrigible; and your election of this excellent young lady makes me glory in acknowledging you to be my son." Looking at the 18th C. five relatively distinct types of drama is distinguishable: genteel comedy, humanitarian drama, musical comedy, farce, and tragedy.

Genteel Comedy dealt with upper-middle-class society and the term is regarded to be more useful than the so-called sentimental comedy. The comic dramatists of this era should be studied in the context of literature and society of the Georgian period. Sheridan's *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*, Colman's *The Clandestine Marriage* as well as Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* are the best known examples of this type.

Humanitarian drama is entirely a new type of drama that emerged in the end of the century; its chief practitioners were Thomas

8 Drama (17th-20th C.)

Holcroft, Richard Cumberland and Elizabeth Inchbald. They were adherents of the doctrines of the equality of mankind and the brotherhood of man. Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin* (1792), *Love's Frailties* (1794) and Inchbald *Such Things Are* (1787), are the best example of this type of drama. These plays held no literary or dramatic merit for, according to Allardyce Nicoll, they rest heavily upon stock characters and the playwrights were unable to escape from this dominant theatrical convention. Accordingly, humanitarian drama could not generate dramatic conflict and the use of stereotyped characters makes the message ludicrous.

Ballad opera flourished in the 1740's and 1750's. They were presented as the afterpiece to some longer works. The most well-known practitioner of this type was Isaac Bickerstaff; he found out that English lyrics could be wed to music; in this he imitated the Italian model. Bickerstaff's *Love in a Village* (1762) was the first full-length comedy of this type and the most popular musical comedy was Sheridan's *The Duenna* (1775).

Farces with their sharp ridicule reappeared in the last half of the eighteenth. Samuel Foote is regarded as the practitioner of this type of drama. Most farces were topical and directed at specific individuals. The best example of this type was *Piety in Pattens* (1773). In the 1760's, Arthur Murphy brought the satiric faces to the attentions with *The Apprentice* (1756) and *The Upholsterer* (1758).

Tragedy was the weakest dramatic form. Though the Augustan age did not lack a concept of tragedy, but they did not produce a famous and long-lasting work. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is an Augustan tragedy in verse in several volumes. The audience preferred revised versions of Shakespeare's tragedies, such as Nahum Tate's softened version of *King Lear*.

The Restoration dramatists created a type of drama that was in fact an amalgamation of the rule-governed French drama and the bold and often violent English Renaissance drama. French drama, which had a great influence on Restoration drama, is called rule-governed for

it followed some sets of rules such as the so called three unities (unity of action, time and place), decorum which prohibited violence on the stage and restraint; in French drama characters spoke and behaved in accordance with their social class and rank. Rapin ordered “to exhibit every person in his proper character. A slave with base thoughts, and servile inclinations. A prince, with a liberal heart and air of majesty. A soldier, fierce, insolent, surly, inconstant, and so on” (Rapin, 1674: 36). But the English playwrights, who were fed in the English Renaissance taste for bloodshed and presenting lively and spectacular scenes, found French plays faulty and therefore were not such a meek follower of the French rules in drama, rather they had their own ways in imitating them. They created plays that were abiding by the three unities most of the times but at the same time sought to retain the variety of action and character that exemplified English drama. Richard Flecknoe contended that many English plays were faulty but he attributed lack of these faults in the French drama to their confinement to “narrower limits” and this in turn makes them “have less liberty to err” (Flecknoe, 1664).

Even though the Restoration period brought with it greater freedom for the London theaters compared to the Interregnum, still the stage was not absolutely free. There were striking ranges of regulatory pressures on the theaters. The royalty asserted its control in the form of censorship and strict limits on theatrical outlets; this is why only two theaters were licensed. Canfield pointed out that “the romance of empire” is “a major subtext of Restoration tragedy... a subtext that moves into main-text after the Revolution of 1688” (Canfield, 2000: 5). This was not welcomed by the critics and some called the Restoration theater “ultra-monarchist” (Nicoll, 1923), “essentially a Court theater” (Boswell, 1966) or a “court toy managed by courtiers” (Jones, 1996); however, some critics admire the plays for they strained to be both instructive and entertaining. Eugene Waith (1971) describes the plays of these years as “representing an admiration of greatness, greatness of character, of action, of ideals”.

10 Drama (17th-20th C.)

Drama and Theater

According to Dryden a “heroic Play ought to be an imitation, in little of an Heroic Poem” and that its main subjects should be “Love and Valor” (1668:11). The sources of the heroic plays according to Owen (2008: 211) are:

1. epic
2. the French prose
3. romance
4. the idealistic drama of Platonic love current in Charles I's reign
5. the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher

The heroic plays which were considered tragedies by their authors have some characteristics which are listed below:

1. They are serious drama on a grand scale.
2. They are set in exotic locales such as India, the Aztec empire or Moorish Spain.
3. They feature larger-than-life characters with larger-than-life emotions.
4. The characters are presented in an impassioned and epic struggle between the abstract forces of love and of honor.
5. The language of the plays, like their actions, is elevated and even epic.
6. They are written in heroic couplets. (Owen, 2008: 245-246).

For Dryden considered rhyme as elevated and suited to the elevated ideas of heroic drama; he further believed that it was “nearest the nature of a serious Play” because “tis Nature wrought up to an higher pitch” and everything in serious drama should be elevated above “common converse” (Dryden, 1971: 74).

The relationship between Restoration drama and politics was a fruitful one. The Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis led to the political engagement in drama (Owen, 1996; Kenyon, 1974). Tragedy as a lofty genre which involved thematically in the misfortunes of the tragic heroes largely drawn from noble men with its emphasis on

siphoning the emotions of pity and fear was almost absent in the Restoration. The grand and major type of tragedy common in the Renaissance drama which was characterized for its fusion of historical engagement and transcendent humanism was left to oblivion after 1660. In this period, Shakespeare's tragedies and history plays were adapted for political goals. Dryden's *All for Love* is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. The Whig tragedies of this period were also attacking the anti-Catholics whereby they attributed arrogance, hypocrisy, lying, plotting, and atheism and ... to the Tories and their supporters. Thomas Shipman's *Henry III of France* (1672) is an example of this type. The Exclusion Crisis aroused sentimentalism and this is because Tory and Whig playwrights use "sentimentalized, suffering characters to dramatize the horrors of rebellion and republicanism, and tyranny and popery, respectively" (Owen, 2008, 138). By 1676, heroic play came to its end new forms of tragedy emerged. In serious drama, i.e. tragedy, rhyme gave way to blank verse. From 1670s onward, tragedies still were making use of the grand settings and spectacles of the heroic plays, but they focused on heroes who had flaws and weaknesses; in this way they were made more human than exaggerated figures such as Almanzor of Dryden's *The Conquest of Granada*. Later in 1675, darker moods dominated serious drama and in the majority of the plays heroism was almost absent and playwrights adopted psychological approaches to characterization. In Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens* (1676) and Dryden's *All for Love* (1677), the heroes struggle with their own flaws and weaknesses not their heroic qualities. Dryden's *All for Love* portrays a different Antony from that of Shakespeare in that this one is entrapped between his mistress Cleopatra (representing love) and his wife Octavia (representing duty); while a hero like Almanzor struggles to satisfy both love and honor.

By 1680, a sense of disillusionment was rife after the Restoration passed its promising period. The tragedy of the 1680s emphasized

12 Drama (17th-20th C.)

pathos and emphasis shifted from the hero to heroine; the heroine was a virtuous or innocent woman who is sorrowful for a misdeed, often sexual. These tragedies were often called she-tragedies; the term was used for the first time by the term was coined by Nicholas Rowe. Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703), Thomas Otway's *The Orphan* (1680) and John Bank's *Virtue Betrayed* (1682) are among examples of she-tragedy.

In the Restoration, tragicomedy, a type of drama that was heroic in nature and had split or double plots to include both serious and comic elements, became prevalent. Tragicomedy "represented a serious action which threatened a tragic disaster to the protagonist, yet, by an abrupt reversal of circumstance, turned out happily" (Abrams, 1999: 325); this was the spirit of the age after the Restoration. Maguire (1992: 3) argues that "the affective mixture of sadness and mirth in tragicomedy is exactly suited to a period of royalist resurgence that mourns the martyrdom of Charles I while rejoicing in his son's return to the throne."

The Restoration drama was mainly royalist and supported the Tory ideals. Satirical Tory comedies, such as John Tatham's *The Rump* (1660), Abraham Cowley's *The Cutter of Coleman Street* (1661), Robert Howard's *The Committee* (1662) and John Lacy's *The Old Troop* (1664), present the events of the Interregnum from a royalist point of view. On the other hand the Whigs set their political satirical comedies, such as the anonymous *Cromwell's Conspiracy* (1660) and Robert Howard's *The Usurper* (1664), in the Interregnum and satirized the courtiers and the court. Typically, in satirical plays the main character is a young aristocratic man of fashion and wit who are looking for love and money; the quest would be better if they could get at a heroine of good estate. While comedies usually end in marriages, the characters of the satirical plays seldom show well matched couples; in other words, marriages of true minds are few in the satiric plays of the 1670s; for example have a look at William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*.

John Dryden



John Dryden by James Maubert © National Portrait Gallery

John Dryden is regarded as the greatest literary artist in England between 1660 and 1700; it is a period which is sometimes called “the Age of Dryden.” Dryden’s fame rests on his drama but he was also adept in poetry, translation, and literary criticism. His poetry includes the best poetic satires of his age as well as memorable odes.

Between 1663 and 1694, Dryden wrote or coauthored twenty-eight plays, an output that made him the most prolific dramatist of the period. He tried his hands in heroic plays, political plays, operas, heroic tragedies, comedies, and tragicomedies. Dryden held a minor position in Oliver Cromwell’s government for a short time and produced an elegy on the death of Cromwell. With Charles II’s ascension to power, Dryden dedicated a poem, *Astraea Redux* (1660) to him. It is from the Restoration onward that Dryden focused mainly on drama. Some of his works are *The Wild Gallant* (1669), *The Indian Queen* ((1665) in collaboration with Sir Robert Howard)), *The Rival Ladies* (1664), *The Indian Emperor: Or, The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards* (1667), *Secret Love: Or, The Maiden Queen* (1668), *Sir Martin Mar-All: Or, The Feign’d Innocence* (1668), *The Tempest: Or,*