

JACOBEAN AGE

(5)

Jacobean drama (i.e. the drama of the age of James-I <1603-1625>) was a dark form of the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

The Elizabethan age was the golden age of English drama. But with the turn of the century, the drama in English also took a turn. It does not mean that there were no dramatists left. There were certainly a large number of them, but none of them could come near Shakespeare.

“It was inevitable that the drama should decline after Shakespeare for the simple reason that there was no other great enough to fill his space.” - (Long)

Decline of Jacobean Drama

After the turn of 16th century and the passing away of Elizabeth, the theatre continued to command popularity, although the Puritan opposition was stiffening. But the taste was changing: the audiences for a stronger fare.

The playwrights attempted to fulfil the desire of the audience, but it lacked organic unity which a supreme art must possess. In the Jacobean period, there was a steep decline in drama. Following are the main reasons behind the decline of drama in this age:

Change of Patrons

In the Elizabethan period, the drama was patronized by the feudal lords, but from the time of the accession of James-I, dramatists depended on the king, the queen and the royal domination. The dramatists wholly depended on the royal favour. In this way, the theatre was cut off from common life and no longer remained a national institution as it was in the time of Shakespeare.

The dramatists cared less for men in the street and women in the kitchen. They delighted the court. While Beaumont and Fletcher were writing, the theatre was gradually losing its hold on the middle and lower classes. It marked the decline of drama.

Lack of Genius

After Shakespeare, there was no other dramatist who could fill his space which naturally marked the decline of Drama

Poor Characterisation

Lack of creative power in the art of characterization was also one of the major causes. The dramatists repeated such characters as the cheats, bullies, gamblers etc. In the place of Shakespeare's immortal characters like heroes, heroines, villains & clowns (jokers).

Lack of Dramatic Technique

The decline could also be seen in dramatic technique. The dramatists could not maintain the 'mighty line' of Marlowe & their blank verse became weak & rapid.

Art of Plot Construction

In the art of plot-construction, with the exception of Ben Jonson's "Volpone" and "The Alchemist" and "The White Devil" of Webster, we find the signs of decline. Too often, plot-construction shows careless in detail and want of coherence. There are effective episodes but no structural growth.

Imbalance in Drama

The Shakespearian balance between romance and realism is poorly replaced either by narrow social activities or by romantic excess.

Opposition by Puritans

The Puritan opposition to the drama is also responsible for the decline of drama during this age. Ever since the drama became popular in England, the Puritans waged a war against it. They regarded drama and all forms of entertainment as the devil's work, to be avoided by men and women.

Thus after the death of Shakespeare, the drama became to show signs of decline in morals, plot construction, characterization, and technique. The spirit had passed in 1616; the corpse remained to be burnt and it was burnt 1642.

BEN JONSON

He was the most prominent figure in the English drama after Shakespeare. He is known as the "First Great English Neo-Classic".

In the field of drama, he wrote both tragedies and comedies. But his genius was felt in realistic social comedies, known as "Comedy of Manners".

Best known comedies of Ben Jonson are “Every man in his humor”, “Everyman out of his humor”, “The Silent Woman”, “The Alchemist and Bartholomew Fair”. His tragedies: “Sejanus his Fall”, “Catiline: his Conspiracy”.

EVERYMAN IN HIS HUMOR –

In the play, every major character is defined by an over-riding obsession, known as a humour. Humours were four bodily fluids—black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood—which formed the basis of early systems of medicine. Each of these four fluids were associated with particular characteristics that were thought to influence a person’s temperament, as well as their health.

In the prologue, the speaker announces that the play was written due to the popularity of the theater. The goal of playwrights is to please their audience. This play, the prologue continues, will not take the audience to a place far away, but will show a current time and place that will make people laugh. The opening scene finds Knowell, an old man, at his house. He tells Brainworm, his servant, to fetch his son, Edward. The father is happy that Edward is a scholar, as he himself once was, but he does not approve of his son’s taste for the “fruitless” arts. Master Stephen, an easily duped countryman, then arrives to visit relatives. Knowell gives him advice on how to be a better man. Shortly thereafter, Stephen departs. A servant then gives Knowell a letter meant for Edward. When he reads it, he realizes it is not for him and takes offense at the impolite, informal tone of the letter. He has the letter given to his son and decides he will encourage him, but not force him, to try to be a good man.

The next scene of Act I finds Edward receiving the letter and learning that his father has read it. Stephen enters and asks about the man who delivered the letter, who is now long gone. Stephen and Edward, who are cousins, talk and then go to the city to meet the man who sent the letter. Scene three introduces the characters Mathew and Cob at the latter’s house. Cob talks about respectable ancestors and Mathew asks about locating a man named Captain Bobadill, whom Cob says is his guest. Mathew does not believe this. Cob tells him the man slept on his bench the previous night. Cob ends the scene with a monologue that tells of the drama in his house and of Bobadill owing him money. Scene four, the final scene of Act I, unfolds in Cob’s house, where Bobadill lies on the bench. Mathew and Bobadill talk and Mathew agrees not to mention that Bobadill spent the night there. Mathew shares a new play, which they discuss before leaving for a tavern.

Act II opens in another part of the city. Kitley, a merchant, enters, along with his cashier, Cash, and Kitley’s brother-in-law, Downright, who is a squire. Kitley tells the squire that Wellbred, his brother, has been disrespectful. Wellbred is angered. Bobadill and Mathew

look for, but do not find Wellbred. Next, in the moorfields of London, Brainworm is disguised as a soldier. He wants to stop Knowell's pursuit of his son. Stephen and Knowell enter. Stephen has lost a purse containing a ring from his mistress. As the act continues, Knowell delivers a monologue about his youth and the way parents often influence their children in negative ways. He is happy that he has not been a bad influence on his son, although he believes his son has gone down the wrong path.

In Act III Mathew, Bobadill, and Wellbred are in a tavern. While Mathew and Bobadill talk of disliking Wellbred's brother, Downright, Edward and Stephen arrive. Wellbred, it turns out, is the one who wrote the letter to Edward. They go on to discuss Stephen and Bobadill's military experiences. Cash and Kately are engaged in a shady exchange of money. Kately sends Cash on another job and asks to be informed if Wellbred or anyone else comes to his house. An upset Cob enters and Cash tells him it is his "humour" that is making him feel distressed. The next scene is at Justice Clement's house. Cob tells Kately that some men have arrived at his house and Kately worries about his wife and sister giving in to their desires. Cob attempts to put his mind at ease. Cob also wants revenge, as Bobadill has used his wife. Justice Clement and Roger his clerk arrive. Cob asks the Justice to punish Bobadill, but the Justice orders Cob jailed for his character and previous actions.

Further complications and interactions continue to drive the story until the final act, which takes place at the home of Justice Clement. Clement, Knowell, Kately, Dame Kately, Cash, Cob, and some servants enter. They are trying to sift through the sequence of false messages they have received. Bobadill and Mathew join the group and announce they have a warrant for Downright. Stephen, Downright, and Brainworm, who is in disguise, also arrive. Clement wants Brainworm jailed for not serving warrants in the right way. Brainworm reveals himself and his deceitful actions are exposed. In attempting to bring closure to everything, Justice Clement instructs every person to rid themselves of the emotions that are weighing them down and they start to celebrate.

EPICENE –

The play is staged in London, the play encompasses the story in which a wealthy old man Morose, wants to disinherit his nephew Dauphine. Morose, has a natural hatred for noise. He thinks that he will marry with Epicene and then disinherit Dauphine.

But Dauphine, has other plans in his mind, in fact he himself has arranged the match for him, for his own purpose. Morose thinks that Epicene is a quite woman. As the plans of marriage are carried out, True-wit the friend of Dauphine makes interference, he is not happy with the marriage; however his interference does not prove fruitful the couple is finally married.

Morose soon regrets his wedding day, as his house is invaded by a noisy celebration that comprises Dauphine, True-wit, and Clerimont; a bear warden named Otter and his wife; two stupid knights, La Foole and Daw; and an assortment of "collegiate's," vain and scheming women with intellectual pretensions. Worst for Morose, Epicene quickly reveals herself as a loud, nagging mate. Epicene is in complete contrast to what Morose thought her to be. Now Morose wants to give divorce to the Epicene. He hires two Lawyers, but they are the men of Dauphine. A trial is carried out in which no substantial proofs are found on the divorce can be given. The situation becomes tense for the Morose. Finally it is, Dauphine, who comes to the rescue of Morose and says that he will provide the reasons for divorce. But Dauphine will do all this on a financial deal with Morose. Since Morose can no more bear his wife Epicene, he agrees with what Dauphine says. After the agreement is made Dauphine strips off the costume of Epicene, and it is revealed that Epicene was none but a boy in costume.

Morose is dismissed harshly, and the other ludicrous characters are discomfited by this revelation; Daw and Foole, for instance, had claimed to have slept with Epicene.

Points to remember

Morose wants to disinherit his Nephew, Dauphine

He marries to Epicene

The drama is staged by Dauphine, but Morose does not know

Epicene is not a woman but a boy in costume

Dauphine reveals it, on a financial agreement with Morose.

Key Facts

FULL TITLE EPICENE THE SILENT WOMEN

It was staged in 1609

It was the first play to be staged after reopening of the theatre in

England after Restoration in 1660

This play is mentioned in the dairy of Samuel Pepys

THE ALCHEMIST –

Lovewit handed over his house to his butler, Jeremy, while leaving for his hop-yard in London. Jeremy is known by the name of Face in this play. He lives with subtle, a supposed alchemist, and a prostitute named Dol Common in Lovewit's house. They run a major fraud business in the house.

When the play opens there is an argument between Face and subtle that continues throughout the play. The argument is based on who is of chief importance for the business they run, each talking about his supremacy. Don come in between and resolves their conflict and compel both to shake their hands. Meanwhile, there is knock on the door the first gull of the day, a legal clerk, enters. Subtle takes the role of the "Doctor" while Face plays the role of "Captain Face"

Dapper, a legal clerk, desires for a spirit that can help him win the game at gambling. Subtle tells him that he is connected to the queen of fairies and promises him to get one for him. He asks Dapper to come back after washing himself and bring a clean shirt with him. As soon as Dapper left, another client, known as Drugger, enters. He is a tobacconist who comes to know how he should place his shop. Subtle asks him to return back with tobacco and a damask. The argument between Face and Subtle resume, however, Dol interferences and warns them about the visit of Sir Epicure Mammon.

Subtle has promised Sir Epicure Mammon that he will make him a Philosopher's stone for which Mammon is extremely happy and is fantasizing about it. Now, Sir Mammon and Sir Pertinax, his cynical assistance are standing next to the door. Face now plays the role of "Lungs", a doctor's laboratory assistance while the two comen astonish Mammon and irritate Surly with their twisted scientific language. Face told Surly that he will meet him at temple church at half an hour, meanwhile, Dol enters that provokes Sir Mammon and he starts pleading Face to arrange a meeting with Dol.

Another client Ananias, an Anabaptist, comes and meets with Subtle with anger. He wants Subtle to give him the Philosopher's stone so that he can earn much money to convert people to his religion. He returns with Tribulation, his priest. As he leaves, another client Kastril is brought by Drugger. Kastril comes to know how to fight and to case the joint in order to see if this man is suitable for his rich, widowed sister, Dame Pliant, or not. Kastril is immediately impressed by Face.

Subtle and Face robbed Dapper by engaging him in a fairy rite. When Mammon comes he is engaged by Dol in the outhouse while Face pretending that Subtle is unaware of Mammon's attraction towards Dol.

Another entry happens when a widow comes. Face meets a Spanish Don, who is in fact Surly in disguise. Face and Subtle are now having a conversation that who is going to marry the widow and mocks the Spaniard by speaking loudly that they will deceive him. As Dol is busy with Mammon, they trick the Spaniard and made him agree to marry the widow.

Dol, in the meantime, has gone extra comfortable with Mammon. They are caught by a furious "father" (Subtle). He tells them, as they were involved with illegal actions, all the furnace and Alchemist apparatus has been destroyed by an explosion. Mammon immediately pushed himself at the door, having entirely destroyed by the loss of his investment.

Everything is getting out of control and all the clients are gathered at the door without warning. Later, all the clients are present in the room, including Surly while Face manages himself to get out of the spot. However, Dol informed them that Lovewit has just reached, Face changes his masks once again and become "Jeremy the Butler".

When love reaches his home, he is surrounded by the neighbors and the clients on the door. Face is forced to admit everything by the Dapper when his voice emerges from the privy that nothing happens at it is shown to us. Face puts every blame on the Dol and subtle, however, they manage to escape penniless from the back wall and the clients come back with police and a search warrant. The clients search every corner of the house but can't find anything for themselves and are forced to leave with nothing. Kastil, Lovewit and his new wife leave the stage. Face is rewarded financially and delivers an epilogue.

BARTHOLOMEW FAIR –

The story takes place at Bartholomew Fair, a four-day popular summer retreat for Londoners that ran from the 12th to the 19th century. Along with getting the best meat in town, one could also watch a public execution. It is a very rich setting for a story as Bartholomew Fair attracted everyone in London, from members of the House of Lords to prostitutes.

The preamble begins with Johnson saying he hopes to give people their money's worth through this play. Then the stage manager (stage-keeper) comes out, bemoaning the fact that there isn't a great romance in the play he's about to stage. An accountant (book-keeper) then informs the audience that they can only criticize the play in direct proportion to how much they spent on a ticket.

The play opens in the house of Mr. John Littlewit, a would-be playwright and notary. Littlewit and his friends, Quarlous and Winwife, talk about how they can incur the favor of Dame Purecraft, the mother of Mrs. Littlewit, a Puritan and wealthy widow. Sadly, she's currently in romantic talks with Zeal-of-the-Land Busy.

As they scheme for ways to break up Mr. Busy and Dame Purecraft, several people enter Littlewit's house seeking a marriage certificate. Littlewit signs off on their pledges without much thought. Littlewit and his friends intend to visit Bartholomew Fair to watch a puppet show that Littlewit produced. Littlewit convinces Dame Purecraft to join them by telling his wife to say she has a great urge to eat pig. Initially, Dame Purecraft says that pigs are unclean animals, but she's persuaded to dine on ham after the others claim that by eating pig she will declare how much she dislikes Jews.

The second act opens to Adam Overdo, a police officer, strolling through the somewhat amoral happenings of Bartholomew Fair and talking to himself about the decline of civilization. He plans to right these many wrongs by disguising himself as a prince. But after he tries to stop a pickpocket (aka a "cut-purse") he is accused of stealing and condemned to the stocks. Meanwhile, Winwife (true to name, he's looking for a wife) decides to no longer pursue Dame Purecraft, but the younger and more beautiful Grace Welborn. But as luck would have it, Quarlous, his supposed friend, also wants to marry Grace. The two fight over her.

The wives of Mr. Littlewit and Mr. Overdo, now unsupervised, fall under the amoral character of the fair and are registered as sex workers by a pimp. Elsewhere at the fair, one woman, Ursula, has a pot of hot sausage water burn her leg because of the careless swag of Mr. Littlewit. When a man named Costard drops a basket of pears, others take advantage of his vulnerable position to steal his purse and sword.

Someone complains that Mr. Busy is preaching in the streets without a license. He's thrown in the stocks, thus joining Mr. Overdo in public confinement. Fortunately (for some), everyone escapes jail when Trouble-All, a massive madman, exclaims a fierce love for Dame Purecraft. He fights with the guards over her, giving everyone the opportunity to escape.

Finally, the puppet show begins. The show is led by Lant Leatherhead, aka "the Hobbi-horse seller"). Mrs. Overdo and Mrs. Littlewit appear on stage playing prostitutes. It's clear that Madam Overdo has overdone it with the Schnapps. Between acts, Quarlous somehow managed to dress up as Trouble-All. He scared certain people into giving him the marriage license of Mr. and Mrs. Littlefit; he has crossed out names accordingly to make it appear that he is married to Dame Purecraft.

The puppet show begins but is soon interrupted when Mr. Overdo (now dressed up as a doorman) stands up to declaim that the play is immoral: the puppets are not wearing gender appropriate clothes. In response, the puppets lift up their dresses or bring down their pants to reveal that they don't have genitals.

At this point, Mr. Overdo reveals his true identity: a police officer. He then recites all of the crimes (or near crimes) he has witnessed at the fair. While he is discussing each of their punishments, Mrs. Overdo vomits on his chest. Embarrassed by the spectacle and eager to get away, Mr. Overdo declares that the sins of the Bartholomew Fair will be forgiven.

Winwife ends up marrying Grace, and Dame Purecraft has little choice but to be married to Quarlous, who has acquired a forged wedding certification. "Bartholomew Fair" concludes with the characters venturing to Mr. Overdo's place for dinner.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT AND JOHN FLETCHER

The two dramatists met under the leadership of Ben Jonson and soon became inseparable friends. They produced 52 plays. Their most important plays are "The Knight of the Burning Pestle", "Philaster", "The Maid's Tragedy", "A King and No King".

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY –

Evadne, a lady of the court of Rhodes, is the secret mistress of its king. To hide his guilt the monarch commands a young courtier, Amintor, to wed Evadne. Although Amintor is already plighted to another lady, Aspatia, whom he loves, he conceives it his duty to obey; moreover he is dazzled by Evadne's beauty. In the first act the wedding is being concluded by a masque, and amid many compliments the bride is escorted to the nuptial chamber. Bride and bridegroom are left alone; and then gradually, with a cold, contemptuous delight in the torture she is inflicting, Evadne reveals to Amintor that she is the king's mistress and that the marriage is to be a marriage in name only. Amintor submits to the principle of unswerving loyalty to the king; and in the morning they accept the railing congratulations of their friends as if they were an ordinary happy married couple. But Melantius, Evadne's brother, and Amintor's dearest friend, suspects from his bearing that something is wrong and gets the secret out of him. Being of a more resolute character he decides at once on vengeance. First he summons his relatives and friends for an attack on the king and makes arrangements to seize the fortifications. Then he goes to his sister, forces her to confess, and stirs her not only to repentance but to undertake in her own person to kill the king. After an affecting scene of contrition with her husband she goes off to perform this task.

She dismisses the king's attendants, finds him sleeping, ties his arms to the bed, and then wakening him denounces his lust and cruelty before stabbing him to death. Meanwhile Melantius has seized the fort and holds it to obtain justification from the new king, Lysippus. At the same time Aspatia, eager for death, disguises herself as a youth and goes to Amintor, declaring herself a young brother of Aspatia who is seeking by single combat to avenge her wrongs. Forced at length to fight, Amintor mortally wounds her. At this moment Evadne enters, fresh from the king's murder, and begs Amintor to receive her as a wife. But he refuses, and Evadne kills herself. The dying Aspatia now reveals her identity and the two lovers are for a moment happily reconciled; but her death speedily follows and Amintor will not survive her. Melantius is prevented from following his example only by force and threatens to die of starvation.

GEORGE CHAPMAN

He was made famous by Keat's Sonnet as the translator of Homer. He was rather a poet than a dramatist, but his dramatist qualities are no less significant.

His best-known works are:- "The Blind Beggar of Alexandria", "The Admiral of France", "All Fools", "The Gentleman Usher" etc.

THE BLIND BEGGAR OF ALEXANDRIA –

Scene 1

Aegiale queen of Egypt, and Ianthe, her maid, come to the cave of Irus the Blind Beggar of Alexandria. There Aegiale begs Irus to see where Duke Cleanthes is. The Duke was banished by Ptolemy, king of Egypt, for attempting to woo Aegiale, who interceded to save him from death. Irus tells the queen that she also did pursue Cleanthes' love. He then tells her to find him she must take his true picture through the land and proclaim a great reward for the person that finds him, and threaten death to any that succor him. Aegiale thanks Irus with a rich jewel, then departs.

Irus then reveals he is in fact Cleanthes in disguise, as well as being the rich usurer Leon and the outlandish Count Hermes. Pego, Irus' servant enters with three lovely maids, Elimine, Samathis and Martia, each who has a servant attending them, Menippus, Pollidor, and Druso. The three maids banter with their servants who have been charged by the parents of each maid to watch over them and not let them fall into wonton talk of dalliance. The maids proclaim they have come to talk to the harmless blind beggar and reluctantly the servants depart. Once the servants depart the maids beg Irus to tell their fortunes.

Irus tells Elimine to wait in her father's tower for a man with a velvet patch over his eye, she is to choose this man for her husband. Samathis next begs her fortune, Irus tells her to set out a banquet and the man who comes and bids her welcome to her own feast will be her husband. He also tells her that after her first husband she will have her choice among mighty kings for her second. Finally he tells Martia to place rosemary and rue in her bosom when she gets up the next morning. A man shall come to her father's door offering kindness and crave the herbs for a favor; he will tread on the bitter rue, but keep the rosemary. The three maids thank Irus and depart. Pego reappears dressed as a burgomaster and Irus remembers that Pego is to seize on the lands of Antisthenes, a man who owes money to Leon. Then the pair exit.

Scene 2

Elimine enters in the tower waiting for her husband to wander by. Count Hermes (Irus) enters and she runs down to greet him. As she enters to the count a Spaniard, Bragadino enters as well. Hermes and Bragadino argue over who is to be Elimine's husband. Eventually they decide to woo the maid. The one that wins shall escort her through the town hand in hand; the one that loses must follow biting his thumbs. They agree and Bragadino attempts to woo Elimine first. Hermes interrupts him, and finally makes his short speech. Elimine, acting upon Irus' advice, chooses Hermes.

Scene 3

Aegiale, Ianthe, a herald, Euribates and Clearchus, two courtiers, enter carrying a picture of Cleanthes. They set the picture on a spring in the center of the town and the herald proclaims that Ptolemy offers a great reward for the person who finds Cleanthes, and death for those that succor him. Aegiale and her attendants exit to call upon the nymphs of Isis and Leon (Irus) enters with a sword. He explains that the sword is Cleanthes' and he will keep the city looking for Cleanthes by pretending to have seen him. He lays the sword next to his picture and calls out as if calling to Cleanthes. Three lords enter, ask which way Cleanthes went and exit in the direction Leon sends them.

Samathis and her maid Jaquine enter with a banquet. Leon advances and eventually invites Samathis to her own banquet. Samathis accepts Leon as her husband, despite his large nose. Samathis and her maids exit, and Leon tells the audience that now that he has won both women, he intends to make further sport by tempting them into affairs with each other's husbands.

Scene 4

Ptolemy, Aegiale, Doricles, Prince of Arcadia, Aspasia, daughter of Ptolemy, Ianthe, Euphrosyne, Clearchus, and Euribates enter. Ptolemy expresses his regret to Doricles that his daughter does not love him, for he wants the pair to be married. Aegiale sends Aspasia

away to play games with Ianthe, then scolds her husband for taking the wrong approach in getting Aspasia to love Doricles. She suggests that he should persuade Aspasia that Doricles does not love her, thereby making her do the work to woo him. Doricles admits he cannot act like he does not love Aspasia, and Aegiale offers to teach him how.

Aegiale and Doricles exit and Antisthenes, Leon and Pego dressed as a Burgomaster enter. The king proceeds to adjudicate the case between Leon and Antisthenes. Antisthenes claims he paid the money owed, 4000£ to Leon at the rock of the Irus. Leon claims that he did not pay, but asked to pay the 4000 three months later, as well as another 1000. Leon states he refused the offer, and that Antisthenes paid him nothing. Euribates claims that he helped to tender the 4000£ on the stone of Irus, and that Leon is lying. Leon offers to produce a noble witness, count Hermes. The King orders him to do so, and Leon explains that he will not return, having been sick lately, and that the Burgomaster can sit for him in the case. After Leon's exit Pego comments on how sick the usurer has been. Count Hermes then enters. He backs up Leon's story. Antisthenes and Euribates ask him where he was that he heard the exchange, as they did not see him. He claims that he was nearby. The Count also states that Irus overheard the exchange and can vouch for Leon. The king orders Irus brought in and the Count states he will summon Irus, but that he must ride to Corrucus, so he will not return. Irus enters and again, backs up Leon's story. Ptolemy, convinced by the two surprise witnesses awards Antisthenes' lands to Leon.

Scene 5

Elimine, Samathis and Martia enter discussing their new husbands. The maids all ridicule each other's husbands, while extolling the virtues of their own. Martia and Samathis exit and Elimine tells the audience how her husband must always ride out of town every other night. Leon enters followed by Druso, Samathis' servant. Leon proceeds to woo Elimine with fair words, and eventually Elimine acquiesces to a secret affair. The pair exit and Samathis enters. Druso (who has exited a some point, but has no stage direction to indicate where) enters and tells Samathis that Leon, her husband, is away having an affair with Elimine.

Scene 6

Aegiale enters with the guard and bemoans her life without Cleanthes. Count Hermes then arrives and demands to be let in. He finally breaks in past the guards and declares to Aegiale that he knows what passed between her and Cleanthes the night he was banished. She denies ever saying such things, and the count produces a cutting from a Mandrake tree, the tree is actually Aegiale's son transformed by the evil sorceresses Hella. The sight of the twig touches Aegiale. Hermes tells her to burn the twig in a fire, and the act will send Ptolemy to the grave, then will Cleanthes return to her. He gives her a knife to cut up the

twig and after a little banter with the guards, exits. Aegiale talks to the branch and tells it she will cut it up, and burn it.

Scene 7

Elimine and Samathis enter. Samathis berates Elimine for sleeping with her husband, Leon. Elimine does not understand Samathis veiled words and departs declaring her mad. Count Hermes enters then and woos Samathis, hinting is it but quid pro quo that Samathis sleep with Elimine's husband. The pair exit and Elimine reenters with her servant, Menippus. Menippus tells her that her husband has gone off to have an affair with Samathis. She swears revenge and demands Menippus summon the burgomaster. He cautions her against rash actions, and tells her to simply verbally abuse him. Menippus exits as Count Hermes enters from Samathis' place. Elimine berates him for cheating on her, and he states it was a fair reaction to her affair with Leon. Elimine exits cursing Leon and Hermes declares he will follow and stir up more trouble.

Scene 8

King Porus of Ethiopia, King Rhesus of Arabia, King Bion of Phasiaca, and King Bebritius of Bebritia enter with soldiers. They declare their intention to make war on Egypt and Ptolemy, for a prophesy stated that Doricles should marry the daughter of Ptolemy, and in so doing the four surrounding kingdoms should become subjugated by Egypt. They express relief that Cleanthes has been exiled, for his prowess in battle would have assured certain defeat for the four kings.

Scene 9

Doricles and Aspasia enter as Doricles makes another attempt to woo Aspasia. Count Hermes enters, and rages as Ptolemy has declared Doricles heir to Egypt, he then kills Doricles. Aspasia declares that Egypt will hate him for killing Doricles. Hermes attempts to woo the princess away with him, she refuses. Hermes informs the audience he that his disguise will end, and he will now become Leon. He exits and Aspasia cries murder.

Euribates enters and Aspasia tells him Count Hermes killed Doricles. Ptolemy and several Lords enter and bemoan the death of Doricles. A messenger then enters telling of the four kings massing against Egypt. Clearchus tells the king that the armies massed in Memphis and Caspia combined with the power in Alexandria would be enough to drive back the four kings. Ptolemy agrees and declares they will do just that, he first orders Doricles' body buried, and word of his murder to be hushed up while they search for Count Hermes. Leon enters then and declares a miracle. He states that he saw Hermes running from Alexandria, and just outside the city the earth opened up and swallowed him whole. Ptolemy declares the heavens just, and he and his lords exit. Leon admits he made up the story to keep people from searching for Hermes, and that he is about to make Leon disappear as well.

First he heads to a place where certain debtors of Leon have sworn to send payment. A messenger soon enters with payment from Calatius. A second messenger enters with payment from Druso the Italian. Leon hands them their bills and they depart. Leon then explains that the money will be used to support Cleanthes in the wars. Just then Clearchus enters declaring the war has taken a bad turn, and Acates and Acanthes, friend of Duke Cleanthes have been slaughtered in the battle. Clearchus exits and Leon rages that his friends have been killed, he vows revenge and storms off.

Scene 10

Duke Cleanthes enters with the four kings, Pego, Clearchus, and Euribates. He declares that he is now king of Egypt as Ptolemy fell in battle, and the people have declared him king. He tells the four kings they must now submit to Egypt's rule. The four kings relent and give up their crowns to Egypt. Elimine and Samathis enter with child. They both supplicate Cleanthes asking for help. Elimine tells that she is the widow of Count Hermes, and that Ptolemy seized upon his lands after he killed Doricles. Now she has nothing, and a child to raise. Samathis declares that Leon's debtors have take all his land and property and turned her out. Cleanthes turns to Pego to confirm this. Pego does, and states that he saw Leon throw himself off the tower of Alexandria. Cleanthes in an aside tells the audience that he told Pego to tell of Leon's suicide to keep people from searching for him. He then declares he will act as father to both the children and support the young widows. He then asks if their husbands were such bad men. They both admit that their husbands cheated on them, and it comes out that they in fact had affairs with each other's husbands. Cleanthes tells Pego to restore the lands of the dead husbands to the widows.

Martia then enters with child. She wails that Pego will go to war and make a widow of her. Pego jests with her and asks Cleanthes for a boon, to be the child's godfather. Cleanthes accepts. The kings enter into the discussion and declare Martia should have a better husband than a burgomaster, but she declares she loves Pego. The four kings then declare how beautiful Elimine and Samathis are, Porus pines for Elimine, Bion and Rhesus pine for Samathis, and Bebritius yearns for them both. They argue and try to convince Cleanthes to give them the women as wives. Cleanthes notes to the audience that he did declare the women would have their choice of kings as second husbands, and Samathis openly blesses Irus for the prediction. Cleanthes lets the women decide, Elimine chooses Porus, and Samathis chooses Bion. Rhesus and Bebritius bemoan their fate, but Cleanthes declares they shall also have Egyptian wives to seal their loyalty to Egypt. Cleanthes then invites the assembled to a celebration with Greek wine and dancing.

ALL FOOLS –

All Fools, by George Chapman. 'All Fools,' the original name of which was 'The World Runs on Wheels,' was completed at least as early as 1599, though not printed until 1605. The later title suggests the nature of the plot, which plays off one set of characters against another. Fortunio, elder son of Marc Antonio, "an honest knight, but much too much indulgent to his presuming children" loves Bellonora, daughter of Gostanzo, "the wretched Machiavellian, the covetous knight," whose son Valerio has secretly married Gratiana. Gostanzo thinks that Valerio is "the most tame and thrifty groom in Europe," though he is really devoted to dice, cards, tennis, and even more questionable activities. Rinaldo, a younger son of Marc Antonio, a woman hater who is by way of being a scholar, persuades Gostanzo that Fortunio and Gratiana are secretly wedded. Gostanzo informs Marc Antonio, at the same time offering to take them to his house that Fortunio may be reformed by his precepts and by the example of the chaste Valerio. During their stay at his house Gostanzo seeing the intimacy between Valerio and Gratiana resolves to send her away, but is persuaded by the scheming Rinaldo to send her to Marc Antonio, on the plea that she is wife of Valerio, married without his knowledge. In the end Rinaldo himself, whose "fortune is to win renown by gulling" the others, is "gulled" by his own greed.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

He wrote maximum plays at his age. He worked in a variety of dramatic genres-historical, romantic, comedy of manners etc. But in the case of domestic drama, he is unique. He wrote about 228 plays.

Lamb called him, "the prose Shakespeare". His best plays are:- "A Woman Killed with Kindness", "The English Traveler", "Fair and of West" etc.

A WOMAN KILLED WITH KINDNESS –

Play begins as John and Anne Frankford celebrate their wedding in the company of friends and family. Everyone remarks on how beautiful Anne is and how she dutifully submits to her husband. At the wedding celebration, Sir Francis Acton and Sir Charles Mountford arrange a bet on the next day's Falconry competition. At the next morning's competition, Acton and Mountford go into the field to loose their falcons. Acton loses the bet, but accuses Mountford of breaking the rules. An argument erupts, which soon breaks into a fight. Mountford kills two of Acton's men. Susan, Mountford's sister, advises him to flee before Acton can take revenge, but he refuses to leave her and is soon arrested by the Sheriff. Frankford, meanwhile, is enjoying his new life as a married man and reflecting on

how blessed he is by the presence of his young, virtuous wife. This is when Wendoll, a member of the hunting party, arrives at the manor to report the fatal fight. Frankford, impressed with Wendoll's maturity, invites the shell-shocked young man to stay as a guest in his house. Nicholas, Frankford's loyal servant, thinks to himself that there's something untrustworthy about Wendoll, but neither he nor Frankford's other servants say this out loud.

Mountford spends almost his entire fortune to gain release from jail, and needs to borrow money from the loan shark, Shafton. Unbeknownst to him, Shafton plans to use this debt to gain Mountford's ancestral house and also win the hand of Susan. In Mountford's house, Wendoll becomes infatuated with Anne. Although his conscience eats at him, he finds himself constantly distracted by her beauty. When Frankford leaves on a business trip, Anne tells Wendoll that Frankford wished Wendoll would fulfill his role in the household in his absence. Wendoll is overcome and tells Anne how much he loves her. Anne resists at first, but is overcome by his insistence that she can love both him and Frankford. Unbeknownst to both of them, Nicholas overhears their tryst and vows to bring the affair to Frankford's attention. As Mountford's debt to Shafton comes due, Shafton tries to buy his house and has Mountford arrested when he refuses to sell. Acton, hearing of Mountford's misfortune, decides to seduce Susan as his revenge on Mountford. However, when he sees her, he genuinely falls in love with Susan. Frankford returns and learns from Nicholas what went on in his absence. Determined to uncover the truth, he observes his wife and friend closely during a card game with a guest, Cranwell. It soon becomes clear to him that Nicholas was telling the truth.

When Susan is unable to get help for her brother from her uncle or other wealthy associates, she is approached by Acton with an offer to clear her brother's debt. She refuses, but Acton acts anyway, and clears Mountford's debt anonymously. Mountford is enraged when he learns that Acton was responsible, and Susan confesses that she believes he did it because of his infatuation with her. Feeling ashamed of his debt to Acton, Mountford feels that the only thing he can do is pay his debt by marrying off Susan to his enemy. At the Frankfords, Nicholas presents a false letter, arranged by Frankford, that will take him away on another business trip. Wendoll, happy to have his romantic rival gone, wastes no time in seducing Anne again, but Anne's conscience bothers her greatly. She is consumed with guilt after her affair with Wendoll, and doesn't know that Frankford has actually been watching the two of them the whole time. He breaks into the house, attacks Wendoll with a sword, and is stopped by one of his servants from murdering him. Anne, ashamed, asks him to kill her, but he says that death is too good for her. He banishes her to a small house on the estate, where she is to live in seclusion and never see him again.

Mountford suggests to Susan that she give herself to Acton in exchange for the clearing of his debt. Susan objects on the grounds of her virtue, and Mountford says that his soul will

be unable to rest until Acton is repaid. She reluctantly relents, and when Acton arrives at their house, Mountford resentfully offers his sister as payment. Acton is overcome by this gesture. A rich man, he never would have dreamed of marrying a woman from a lesser class, but he states he'll proudly take her as his wife. Meanwhile, Anne is sent into exile with her servants. Nicholas gives her her lute before she goes, but she can only think of the marriage she is leaving behind. Wendoll, who has also realized the error of his ways, meets her on the road and tries to express his regret. However, fearing that she will be tempted again, Anne orders the coachman to drive away from him and take her to the house where she will live out her life alone. A short while later, Frankford learns that Anne is near-death, having never recovered from her grief and regret. He goes to her while she still lingers and tells her he forgives her sins, allowing her to die with a clear conscience. After she dies, he asks for her epitaph to describe her as a woman killed by her husband's kindness.

THOMAS DEKKER

He was a lovable personality and possessed real qualities of a dramatist. He is called "The Dickens of the Elizabethan stage". His best plays are "Old Fortunatus", "The Shoemaker's Holiday", "The Honest Whore" etc.

THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY –

Rose Oatley (daughter of Sir Roger Oatley, the lord mayor of London) and Roland Lacy (nephew of Sir Hugh Lacy, the earl of Lincoln) are deeply in love. However, acutely aware of class differences between the two young people, Sir Hugh vows to stop the wedding. To avoid any possible courtship, the elder Lacy has his nephew given a command in the army of King Henry V, who is preparing to invade France.

But Roland has other ideas. Claiming pressing business in London, he turns his command over to his cousin, takes the disguise of a Dutch shoemaker, Hans Meulter, and signs on as an apprentice with Simon Eyre, a London shoemaker who makes shoes for the king and other notable families. Meanwhile, Rose, confined to her father's house in a London suburb is pining for her love.

At the same time Simon is trying, to no avail, to convince officials to allow Ralph Dampont, his journeyman who has also been drafted into the war, to stay home with his new bride, Jane. Ralph, resigned to going, gives Jane a farewell gift of a pair of shoes he had made for her. Some time later, and complicating the love affairs even further, Hammon and Warner while hunting deer in the lord mayor's estate meet Rose and her maid, Sybil. Hammon,

mistakenly believing Ralph has died in the wars, falls immediately in love with Rose (who also fears her husband is dead), and Warner loses his heart to Sybil. When Hammon confesses his love, Jane dismisses him, declaring that she intends to remain single, but if she ever remarries she will accept his proposal.

Back in town, Roland (disguised as Hans) has speculated in an unclaimed ship's valuable cargo, making an enormous profit for his employer, Simon the shoemaker. As a result, Simon is made an alderman; then, affluent and popular, soon advances even further in political rank. However, Sir Hugh has learned from a servant that his nephew Roland is not in France with the army, and he sends the servant to discover his whereabouts, forcing Roland to keep his disguise and try to avoid discovery.

Meanwhile, Ralph, wounded but not dead, returns to London. Seeking his wife, he learns that she left the Eyre household soon after he was forced off to war. Crushed, he at first attempts to find her but eventually assumes she is either dead or has left him.

Rose, learning of Roland's presence in the city, arranges to see him on the pretext of having him fit her for a pair of shoes. They finally meet each other again, although Roland is dressed as a Dutch shoemaker, and they plan their wedding the next day at St. Faith's Church. Upon hearing this, Sir Hugh gloats, thinking that his nephew will never be able to marry this middle-class girl. However, Sir Roger is furious this time, thinking his daughter is now marrying beneath her class, and now it is he who vows to stop the wedding. Stepping up the confusion and the comedy, Sir Hugh later realizes the Dutch cobbler is his nephew and also vows to stop the wedding, hurrying out to St. Faith's Church.

At the shoe shop back in town a servant brings in a pair of shoes and requests that a similar pair be made for another upcoming wedding—this one also in St. Faith's Church and also the next day. The assignment for the wedding shoes falls on Ralph who recognizes the shoes as those he gave Jane when he left for the wars. He also quickly heads for the church, making his own vow to stop this wedding.

At the church, Ralph and his fellow shoemakers, armed with cudgels, confront Hammon and Jane, who had recently accepted her husband's death and decided to remarry. Hammon resents the intrusion of the base craftsmen, but Jane is confused and excited by the sudden realization that her husband is not dead.

Hammon patronizingly offers Ralph twenty pounds to relinquish his wife, but Ralph, insulted, refuses and takes Jane home. Next, Sir Hugh and Sir Roger arrive, hoping to stop the wedding of Rose and Roland. However, the young couple has outfoxed everybody and been married at another church.

In a grand and hilarious finale, Simon Eyre, now the lord mayor of London, gives a breakfast for all London apprentices, and the king pardons Roland and blesses him and Rose, saying that “love respects no blood, / Cares not for difference of birth or state”

JOHN WEBSTER

He wrote highly sensational tragedies. His important plays are:- “The White Devil“, “The Duchess of Malfi” (his Masterpiece) etc. Other playwrights of this age are Middleton, Tourneur etc.

THE WHITE DEVIL –

The play opens as Count Lodovico, a murderous villain who has been banished from Rome for his crimes, talks to his two henchmen, Gasparo and Antonelli. Accepting Lodovico’s money, they promise to get his banishment revoked.

In the next scene, the Duke of Bracciano visits the home of the beautiful Vittoria Corombona and her husband, Camillo. Passionately in love with Vittoria, Bracciano plans to seduce her, even though both are separately married. Flamineo, Bracciano’s cynical, misogynistic secretary and Vittoria’s brother, offers to help the two get together, believing this will further his own career. He and his girlfriend, the Moorish ladies’ maid, Zanche, arrange for Bracciano and Vittoria to meet secretly. The two express their love for each other, and Vittoria shares a recent bad dream in which Camillo and Bracciano’s wife, Isabella, try to bury her alive. Bracciano vows to protect Vittoria by killing their inconvenient spouses. Vittoria’s mother, Cornelia, overhears their discussion, accuses them of adultery, and curses them.

Isabella arrives with her brother, Francisco de Medici, and Cardinal Monticelso. Isabella asks her brother to be kind to Bracciano when the two men upbraid him about his infidelity. After Francisco and Monticelso depart, Bracciano tells Isabella he will never sleep with her again, essentially divorcing her. Flamineo and Bracciano plot to murder both Isabella and Camillo. Bracciano meets with a Conjuror who magically shows Bracciano the two murders as they happen. Before retiring for the evening, Isabella routinely kisses her portrait of Bracciano. This time, however, the unscrupulous Doctor Julio and his assistant have painted poison on the picture’s lips: Isabella kisses it and dies. Meanwhile, Camillo and Flamineo, out drinking with some companions, have a gymnastics competition. When Camillo and Flamineo are alone in the room, Flamineo breaks Camillo’s neck and arranges the body to look as though his death was a vaulting accident.

Cardinal Monticelso and Francisco believe Vittoria killed her husband. Since they don’t have any hard evidence, they plan to get her convicted by assassinating her character. Monticelso acts as prosecutor and judge, defaming Vittoria and calling her a “whore.” Vittoria bravely defends herself, saying “Grant I was tempted, / Temptation to lust proves

not the act.” Vittoria argues that they are condemning her because Bracciano loved her, which she compares to blaming a river for the death of someone who drowned themselves in it. Despite her logical arguments, Monticelso sentences her to prison in a convent for reformed prostitutes. Flamineo feigns insanity to avoid answering questions about his part in the murders.

Now pardoned, Lodovico returns to Rome. He reveals that he loved Isabella and vows to avenge her death. Francisco plots his own revenge, writing an anonymous love letter to Vittoria with the intent of making Bracciano jealous. Francisco’s plan works: Bracciano angrily calls Vittoria a “whore.” Vittoria convinces him that she loves him, and he promises to break her out of prison. Bracciano, Vittoria, Flamineo, and Giovanni take advantage of the confusion in Rome and flee to Padua where they get married and hold court. Monticelso is named the next Pope and promptly excommunicates the lovers. Francisco hires Lodovico to kill them.

In disguise and out for vengeance, Francisco, Lodovico, and Gasparo present themselves for work in Bracciano’s court. Francisco takes the identity of a Moor, calling himself Mulinassar. Lodovico and Gaspar pretend to be monks.

Flamineo fights with his younger brother, Marcello, over his relationship with Zanche and stabs him to death. Before a staged fight, Lodovico puts poison on Bracciano’s helmet. As Bracciano dies, Lodovico and Gasparo reveal themselves and strangle him. Meanwhile, Zanche has transferred her affections to Mulinassar, unaware he’s really Francisco. She discloses the truth about Camillo and Isabella’s murders. At Lodovico’s urging, Francisco departs, leaving Lodovico to finish exacting their revenge. Giovanni takes over his father’s title, and as the new Duke, banishes Flamineo. Bracciano’s ghost appears to Flamineo, offering him a bowl filled with lilies and a skull. When the ghost throws dirt on him, Flamineo believes it is an omen of his death.

Flamineo visits Vittoria and Zanche, announcing that he promised Bracciano he would kill Vittoria if Bracciano died. He convinces the two women to participate in a murder/suicide plot, first shooting him, then killing themselves. Vittoria and Zanche shoot Flamineo and rejoice in his death, disclosing that they never intended to go along with his scheme. Flamineo, however, stands up and reveals that the pistols were not loaded. Lodovico, Gasparo, and two of their henchmen, Carlo and Pedro, burst in and stab the three to death. Giovanni enters and captures the avengers. Lodovico admits to the slaughter, saying he was acting under Francisco’s orders and is content now that he has avenged Isabella. Giovanni sends Lodovico off to be tortured, concluding with a warning to evildoers: “Let guilty men remember their blacke deedes, / Do leane on crutches, made of slender reedes.”

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI –

Play is set in Italy, for the most part at the palace of the Duchess in Malfi during the sixteenth century. The young duchess is a widow. Her brothers Ferdinand and the Cardinal are visiting her, and Antonio, who manages the household, has recently returned from France. In order to have a spy in place to report the Duchess's actions to the brothers after they leave, Ferdinand hires Bosola under the guise of having him tend to the Duchess's horses. The reason for putting Bosola in place is to assure that the Duchess remains celibate and does not get remarried. Bosola is not keen on the idea but agrees. Prior to leaving the Duchess to return to Rome the brothers remind her that it would be improper for her to remarry. She says she has no intention of doing so and resents their trying to control her. Secretly, however, she has a plan to marry Antonio. When she and Antonio soon wed, she tells him that she will be able to handle the situation with her brothers.

Nine months after the first act, the Duchess is pregnant. Bosola suspects that she might be and to determine for himself whether she is, he gives her apricots which were thought to be labor inducing. When the Duchess takes them and falls ill, Antonio and Delio, a courtier, confer over how to keep her labor a secret. Bosola, meanwhile, feels he knows the truth and is further convinced when he finds a horoscope Antonio has prepared for the baby. Bosola sends a letter to Ferdinand and the Cardinal telling them what he has learned. Both of the brothers are furious at the news but unlike Ferdinand who is uncontrollably angry, the Cardinal is able to approach it with a calm head. Not knowing that their sister is married, the brothers assume that the baby was born out of wedlock. Ferdinand decides to delay any further action until he learns the identity of the child's father.

Two more years pass as the third act opens. The Duchess and Antonio have had two more children during this time. Ferdinand has returned to the Duchess's palace and Antonio and Delio guess that he somehow knows about the Duchess's children. Ferdinand bursts into the Duchess's bedroom. She informs him that she is married and his response is one of anger. He tells her that she should never let him know who her lover is or they will all be the recipient of his wrath. He then disowns her. In an effort to protect Antonio, she pretends that he has committed a theft; she banishes him from Malfi, sending him to Ancona. After he is gone, Bosola defends him to the Duchess which moves her to the point of sharing with Bosola the truth that they are secretly married. Bosola then pretends to be in support of the Duchess and she gives him money to bring to Antonio. He is to tell him that she will join him soon. The Cardinal finds them in Ancona a few days later and has the Duchess, along with her family, banished.

As they are leaving Ancona, Bosola delivers to the Duchess a letter from Ferdinand, which he presents as one of forgiveness even though it is actually a threat, which she suspects. She has Antonio and their oldest son go on separately. Shortly after they leave, Bosola and

some soldiers take the Duchess and her other two children as prisoners and bring them back to the palace of the Duchess. As act four opens, Ferdinand is angered to find that the Duchess is holding up well in imprisonment. In an attempt to break her, Ferdinand shows her wax corpses of her family members to convince her they are dead. Bosola tries to stop Ferdinand from torturing the Duchess but to no avail. Bosola is sent to her disguised as a tomb-maker to prepare her for death. Like other attempts, this too fails to affect her. She remains calm from the thought that she will now join her family members whom she presumes are dead. The executioners arrive with Bosola strangle her.

The killing of the Duchess is followed by those of her children and Cariola, her trusted lady-in-waiting. Upon seeing the body of his dead sister, Ferdinand is remorseful and blames Bosola for following his orders. Ferdinand begins to display signs of growing insanity. As the Duchess takes her final breath, Bosola tells her that Antonio is still alive. Antonio is unaware of the deaths of his wife and children as act five commences. By this time, Ferdinand suffers from lycanthropy, believing himself to be a wolf. The Cardinal pretends to know nothing about the death of his sister and offers Bosola a reward to kill Antonio. Next, the Cardinal's mistress, Julia, tells Bosola that it is he that she loves and through her Bosola is able to force the Cardinal to admit his role in the murder of the Duchess.

The play ends with a series of events including the Cardinal killing Julia, Bosola accidentally killing Antonio, Ferdinand stabbing the Cardinal and Bosola, and Bosola killing Ferdinand. Just before he and the Cardinal die, Bosola tells the attending courtiers all that has transpired. Delio and the courtiers vow to raise the only surviving member of the family, the eldest son, as a legacy to his parents who met with tragic ends.