



ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

Introduction to Literature
(Autumn 2019)

Birth of Drama in Europe



Ancient Greece (6th cent. BC)

Greek Drama

Tragedy

– Aeschilus, Sophocles, Euripides

Comedy

– Aristophanes

Satyrical play

– Sophocles, Euripides

Aristotle's *Poetics* (Περὶ ποιητικῆς, 335 BC)

– first treatise on dramatic (and literary) theory

Roman Drama (3rd cent. BC)

Tragedy

- Seneca
(4 BC-AD 65)

Comedy

- Plautus
(254-184 BC)



Mediaeval Drama (9th cent. AD)

- Celebration of principal Christian feasts
- Biblical material – re-enacting popular stories of Christian myth



Mediaeval Drama



Innocent III (1198–1216)



A mystery play from the York cycle (mid-14th century, reconstruction)



Village Fair by Pieter Breughel the Younger (1632)

Early-modern English Drama



Henry VIII (1509–1547)

Elizabethan Drama



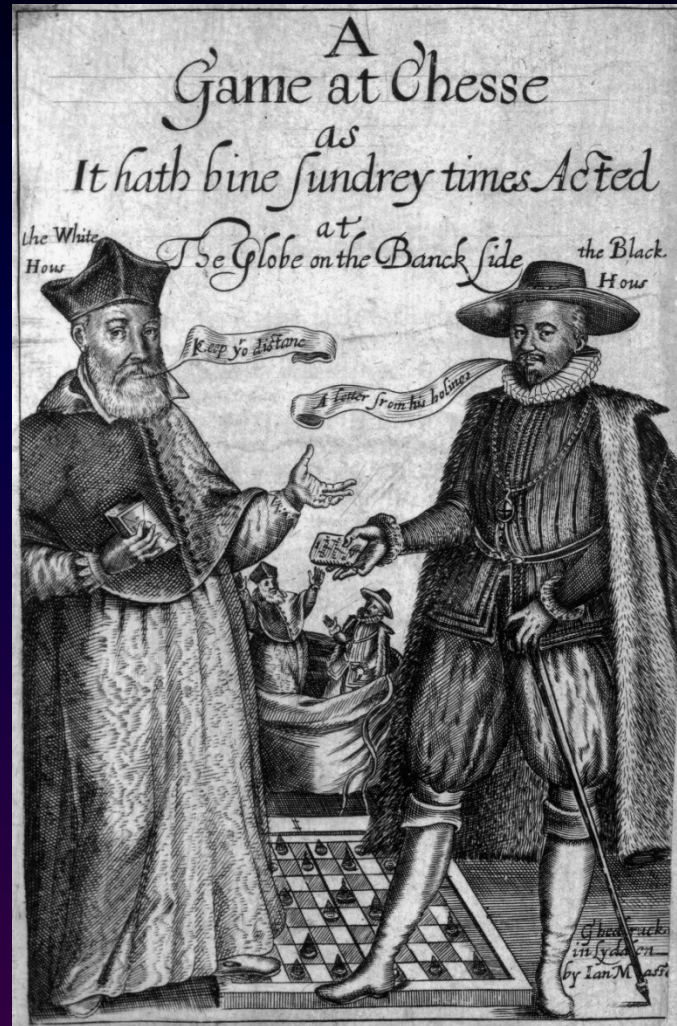
Elizabeth I (1558–1603)

Elizabethan Drama

The Vagabonds Act of 1572:

...all fencers, bear-wards, common players of interludes, and minstrels wandering abroad (other than players of interludes belonging to any baron of this realm, or any other honourable personage of greater degree to be authorised to play, under the hand or seal of arms of such baron or personage) shall be taken, adjudged, and deemed as rogues-vagabonds...

Elizabethan Drama



Thomas Middleton: *A Game at Chess* (1624)

Elizabethan Drama

From the letter of Sir Edward Conway, 12/8/1624:

His Maiestie hath receaved information from the Spanish Ambassador of a very scandalous Comedie acted publikly by the Kings Players, Wherein they take the boldnes, and presumption in a rude, and dishonorable fashion to represent on the Stage the persons of his Maiestie, the Kinge of Spaine, the Conde de Gondomar, the Bishop of Spalato, &c. His Maiestie remembers well there was a commaundment and restraint giuen against the representinge of anie moderne Christian kings in those Stage-playes, and wonders much both at the boldnes nowe taken by that Companie, and alsoe that it hath ben permitted to bee soe acted, and that the first notice thereof should bee brought to him, by a forraine Ambassador, while soe manie Ministers of his owne are thereaboutes and cannot but haue heard of it.¹⁵

Elizabethan Drama

1576–77:

The *Theatre* was built – the first permanent theatre house built in England for the sole purpose of theatrical productions.

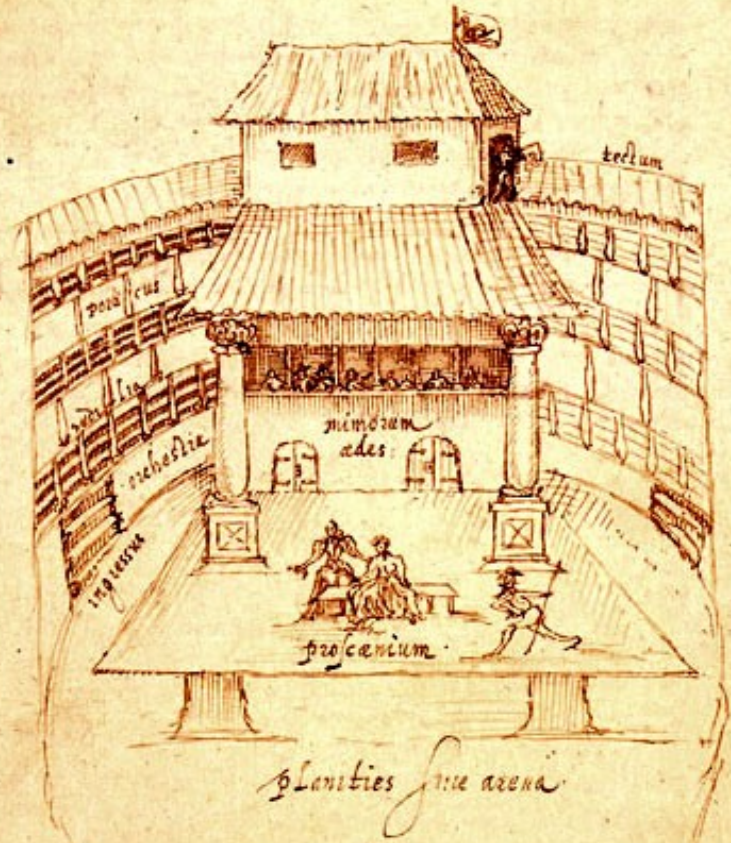
Later followed by the *Curtain* (1577), the *Newington Butts* (1577), the *Rose* (1587), the *Swan* (1596), the *Fortune* (1600), the *Hope* (1614), and others.

Elizabethan Drama

1598–99:

The first *Globe* theatre was built – the first early-modern English theatre co-owned by an acting company.

The original share-holders were: Richard Burbage (25%), Cuthbert Burbage (25%), William Shakespeare (12.5%), John Heminges (12.5%), Augustine Philips (12.5%), and Thomas Pope (12.5%).



quantum ad spectum et structure, hanc theatrum romanum
 omni destinatum, in quo multi vixi, Tauri, et stupida
 magnitudinis raris, de fructibus caute et fortis duntaxat, qui
 ad

Johannes de Witt: The Swan Theatre

Elizabethan Drama

From A Midsummer Night's Dream:

Quince. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.

(Act 3, Scene 1)



The Globe Theatre (1599): A Reconstruction



Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London (1997)



The Globe Theatre, Prague (1999-2005)



ArchitectureWeek.com

The Blackfriars Theatre (1608): A Reconstruction



Titus Andronicus in the Longleat MS (c. 1594)

Elizabethan Drama

1603:

Queen Elizabeth dies. The *Elizabethan* period becomes *Jacobean* (after King James I) until 1625 and, later on, *Caroline* (after King Charles I) until 1642.

2 September 1642:

The play-houses in London are closed, marking the end of the *Elizabethan* drama. Since 1660, we speak of the *Restoration* drama.

Elizabethan Drama

Number of plays staged between the 1560s and 1642:

Circa 3,000.

Number of surviving plays of the period:

Circa 230 (=7.5%).

Elizabethan Drama

From *Hamlet*:

Polonius. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

(Act 2, Scene 2)

From *Palladis Tamia* (by Francis Meres, 1598):

As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines: so *Shakespeare* among y^e English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for Comedy, witnes his *Gētlemē of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Loue labors lost*, his *Loue labours wonne*, his *Midsommers night dreame*, & his *Merchant of Venice*; for Tragedy his *Richard the 2.* *Richard the 3.* *Henry the 4.* *King Iohn*, *Titus Andronicus* and his *Romeo and Iuliet*.

Early Modern Dramatists



Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593)

Early Modern Dramatists



Dr. Faustus in his study

Early Modern Dramatists



Ben Jonson (1572–1637)

Early Modern Dramatists

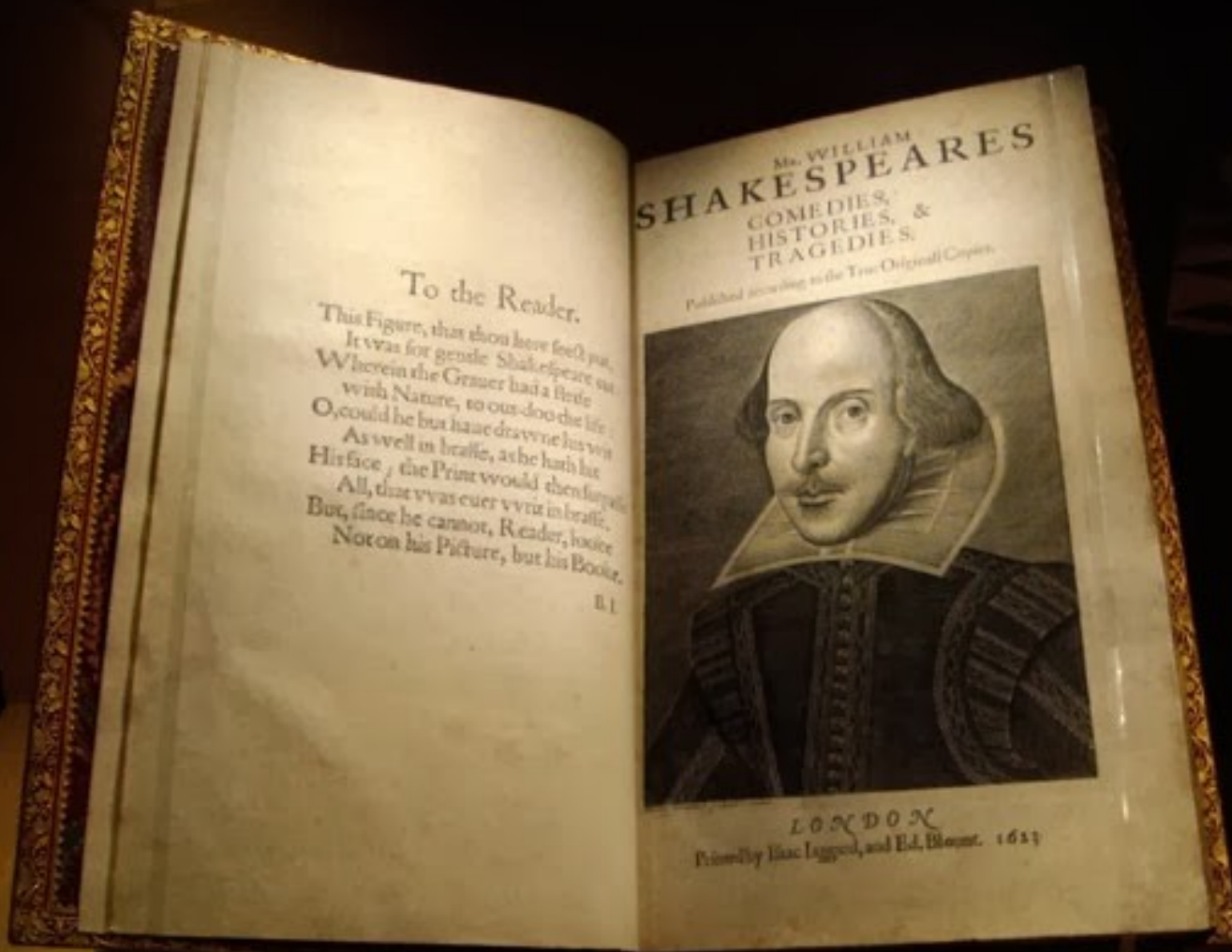


Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare Playing Chess
by Karel van Mander (1604)

A CATALOGUE

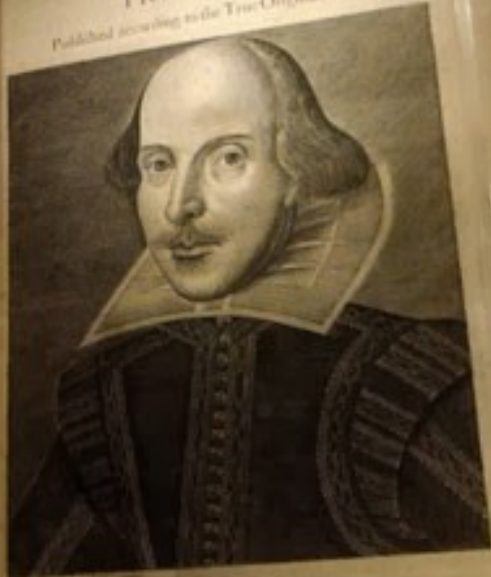
of the feuerall Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies contained in this Volume.

COMEDIES.			
<i>The Tempest.</i>	Folio 1.	<i>The First part of King Henry the fourth.</i>	46
<i>The two Gentlemen of Verona.</i>	20	<i>The Second part of K. Henry the fourth.</i>	74
<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor.</i>	38	<i>The Life of King Henry the Fifth.</i>	69
<i>Measure for Measure.</i>	61	<i>The First part of King Henry the Sixth.</i>	96
<i>The Comedy of Errours.</i>	85	<i>The Second part of King Hen. the Sixth.</i>	120
<i>Much ado about Nothing.</i>	101	<i>The Third part of King Henry the Sixth.</i>	147
<i>Loues Labour lost.</i>	122	<i>The Life & Death of Richard the Third.</i>	173
<i>Midfommer Nights Dreame.</i>	145	<i>The Life of King Henry the Eighth.</i>	205
<i>The Merchant of Venice.</i>	163	TRAGEDIES.	
<i>As you Like it.</i>	185	<i>The Tragedy of Coriolanus.</i>	Fol. 1.
<i>The Taming of the Shrece.</i>	208	<i>Titus Andronicus.</i>	31
<i>All is well, that Ends well.</i>	230	<i>Romeo and Juliet.</i>	53
<i>Twelve-Night, or what you will.</i>	255	<i>Timon of Athens.</i>	80
<i>The Winters Tale.</i>	304	<i>The Life and death of Julius Cæsar.</i>	109
HISTORIES.		<i>The Tragedy of Macbeth.</i>	131
<i>The Life and Death of King John.</i>	Fol. 1.	<i>The Tragedy of Hamlet.</i>	152
<i>The Life & death of Richard the second.</i>	23	<i>King Lear.</i>	283
		<i>Othello, the Moore of Venice.</i>	310
		<i>Anthony and Cleopater.</i>	346
		<i>Cymbeline King of Britaine.</i>	369



Mr. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES
COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.



LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623

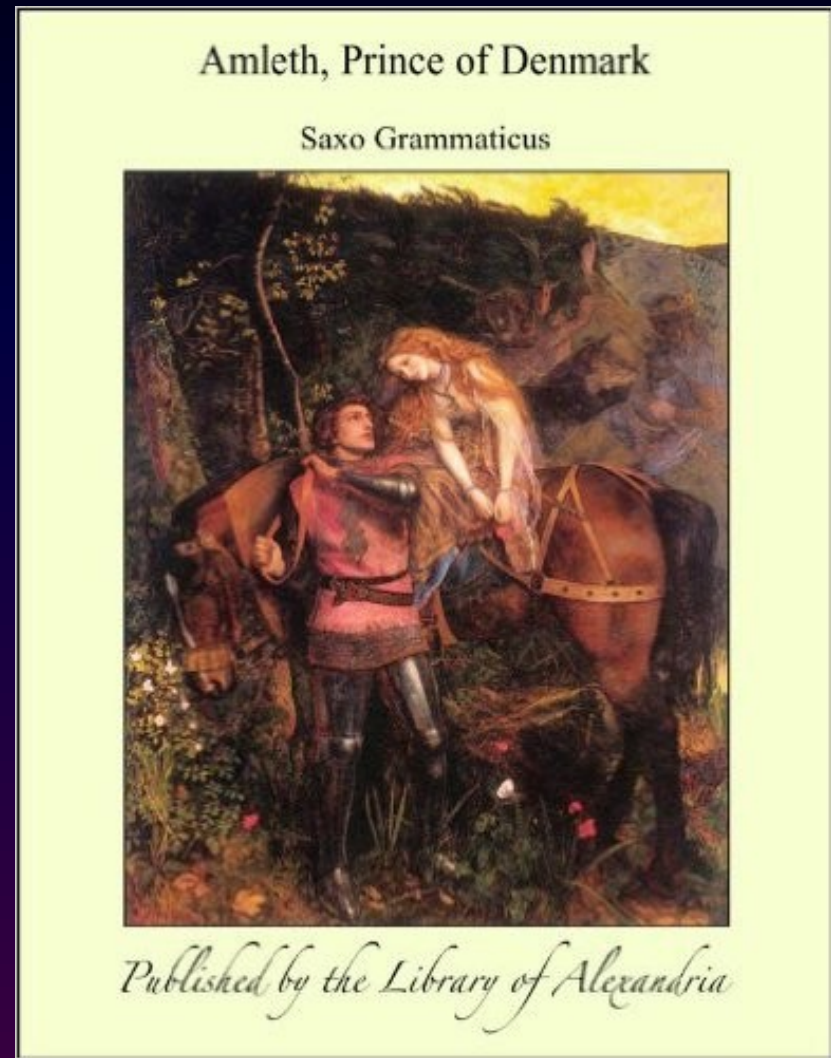
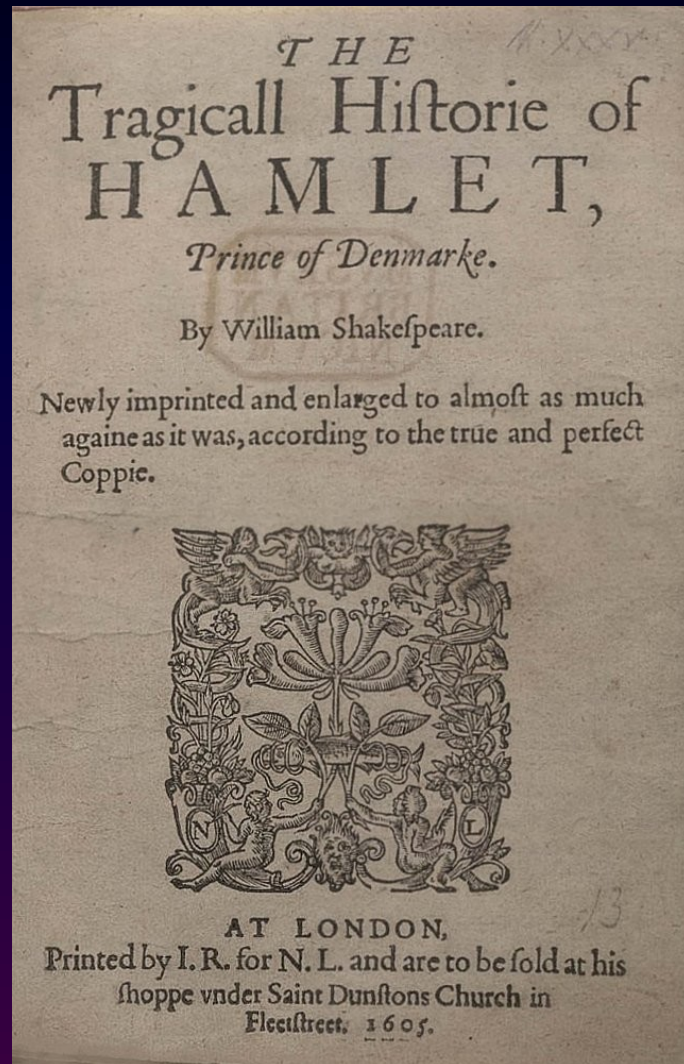
To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here see'st put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut,
Wherein the Grauer had a Heate
With Nature, to our doo the life
O, could he but haue drawne his wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face, the Print would then surpass
All, that vvas euer vvit in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke.

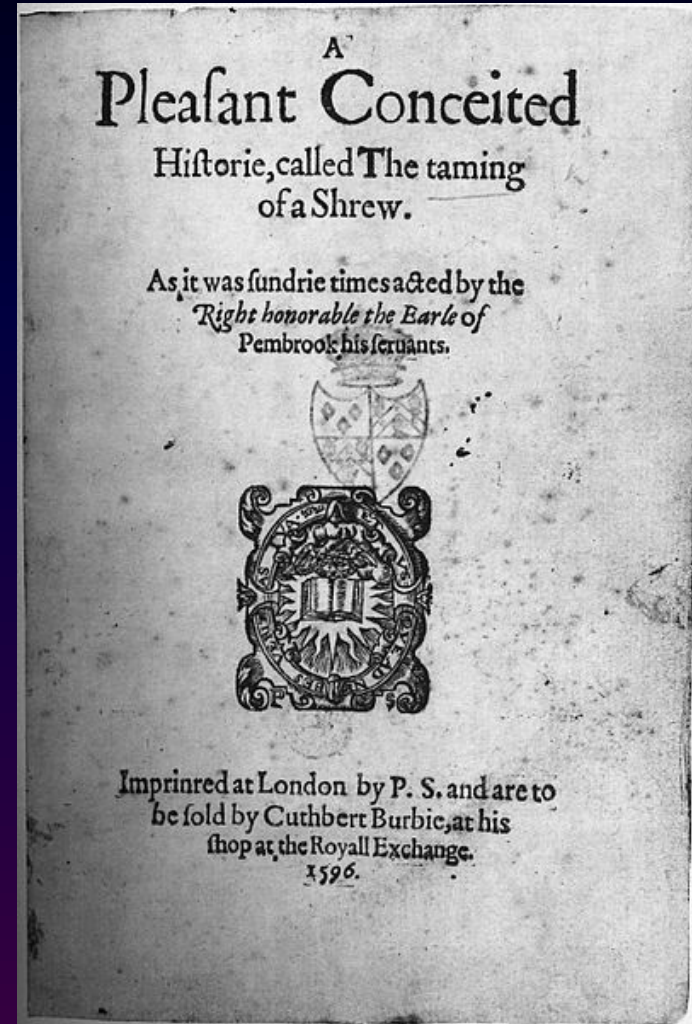
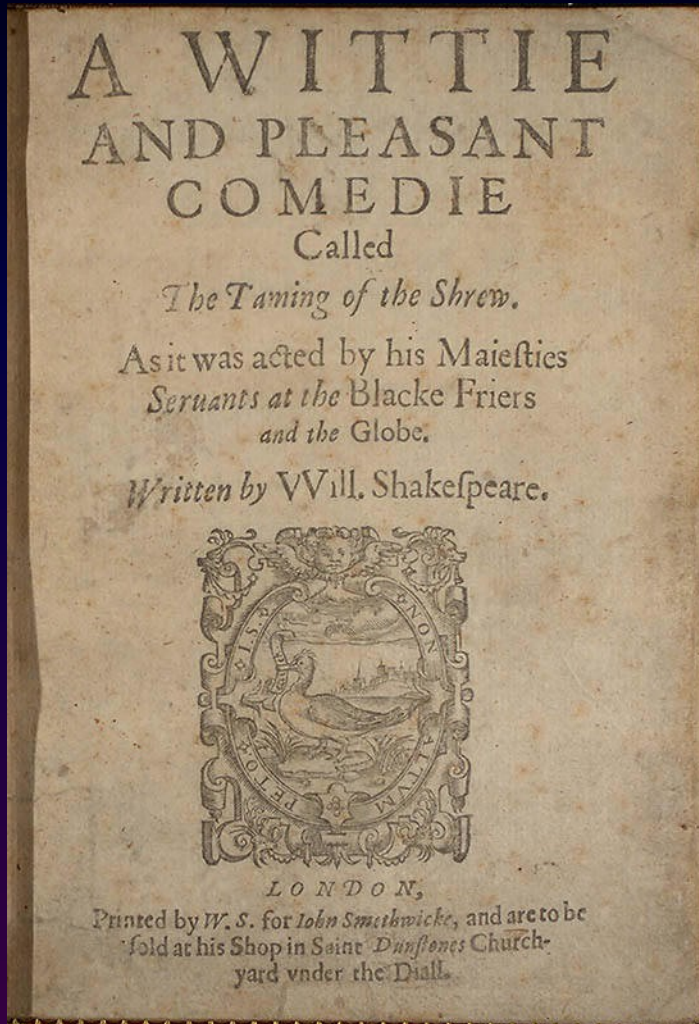
B. 1.

The so-called First Folio
of Shakespeare's Works (1623)

Shakespeare's Sources



Shakespeare's Sources



Shakespeare's Sources

M. William Shak-speare: 7

HIS
True Chronicle Historie of the life and
death of King L E A R and his three
Daughters.

*With the vnfortunate life of Edgar, sonne
and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his
fullen and assumed humor of
T O M of Bedlam :*

*As it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon
S. Stephens night in Christmas Hollidayes.*

By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe
on the Bancke-side.



L O N D O N,
Printed for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at his shop in Pauls
Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere
S^t. Austins Gate. 1608.

Eng. Theat. vol. 1/2
3
THE
True Chronicle Hi. 9

story of King L E A R, and his three
daughters, *Gonorill, Regan,*
and Cordella.

Anonimus
As it hath bene diuers and sundry
times lately acted.

Wm. Shakespeares



L O N D O N,
Printed by Simon Stafford for Iohn
Wright, and are to bee sold at his shop at
Christes Church dore, next Newgate-
Market. 1605. 4*

Shakespeare “Upstart Crow”

Robert Greene on William Shakespeare:

[T]rust them not: for there is an vpstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrey.

(*Groats-worth of Wit*, 1592)

Shakespeare “Upstart Crow”



Early-modern English Actors



Edward Alleyn (1566–1626)

Early-modern English Actors



Richard Burbage (1567–1619)

Early-modern English Actors

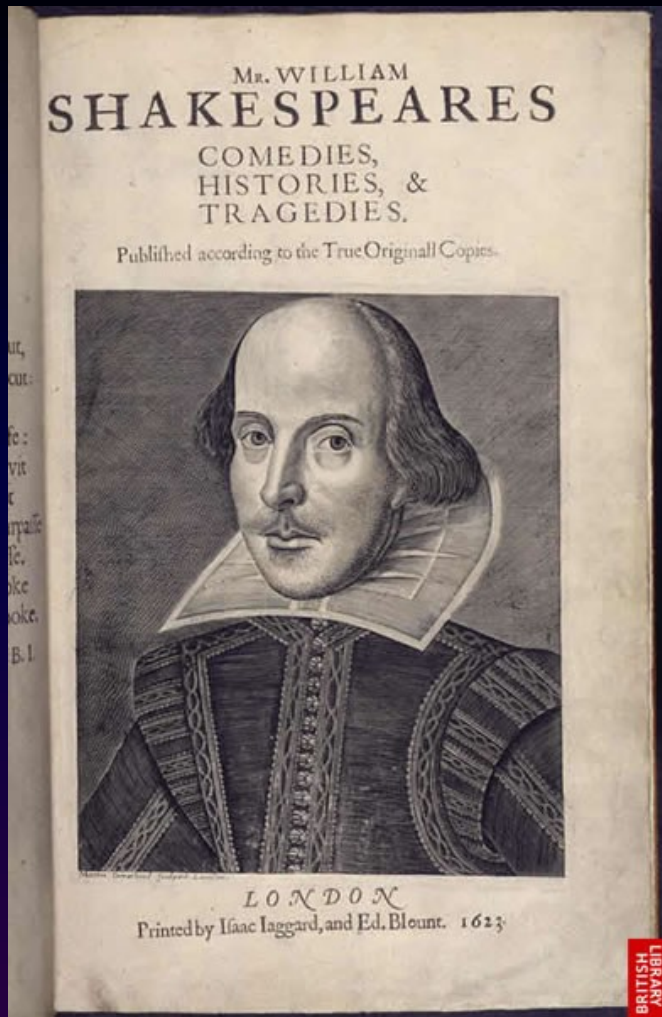


Will Kempe (died 1603)

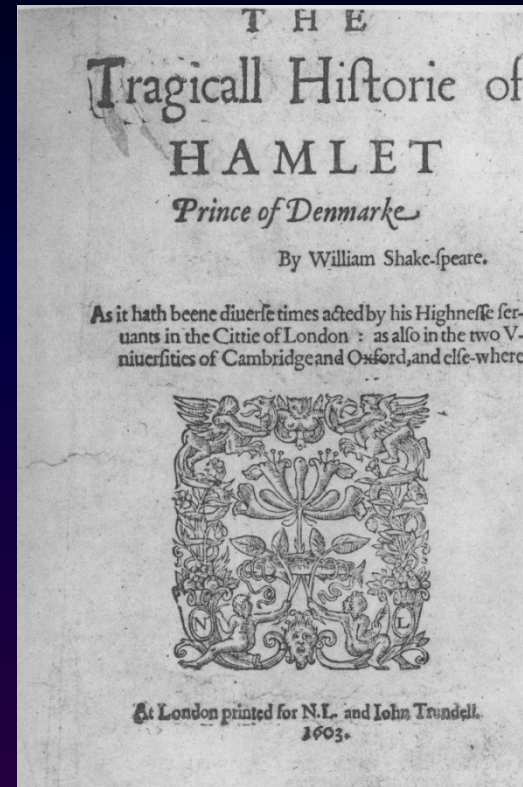
Early-modern English Actors



Robert Armin (c. 1563-1615)



Shakespeare's F1 (c. 30x38 cm)



Q1 of *Hamlet* (c. 24x30 cm)

Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point,
To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all:
No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer returnd,
The vndiscovered country, at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.
But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich curst of the poore?

The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd,
The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,
And thousand more calamities besides,
To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life,
When that he may his full *Quietus* make,
With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,
But for a hope of something after death?
Which puzzles the braine, and doth confound the sence
Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we haue,
Than flie to others that we know not of.
I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,
Lady in thy orizons, be all my finnes remembered.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,
Whether tis nobler in the minde to suffer
The slings and arrowes of outrageous fortune,
Or to take Armes against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing, end them, to die to sleepe
No more, and by a sleepe, to say we end
The hart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks
That flesh is heire to; tis a consumation
Deuoutly to be wisht to die to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to dreame, I there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death what dreames may come
When we haue shuffled off this mortall coyle
Must giue vs pause, there's the respect
That makes calamitie of so long life:
For who would beare the whips and scornes of time,
Th'oppressors wrong, the proude mans contumely;
The pangs of despiz'd loue, the lawes delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurnes
That patient merit of th'vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his *quietus* make
With a bare bodkin; who would fardels beare,
To grunt and sweat vnder a wearie life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscouer'd country, from whose borne
No trauiler returnes, puzzles the will,
And makes vs rather beare those ills we haue,
Then flie to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience dooes make cowardes,
And thus the natiue hiew of resolution
Is sickled ore with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard theyr currents turne awry,
And loose the name of action. Soft you now,
The faire *Ophelia*, Nymph in thy orizons
Be all my finnes remembered.

With turbulent and dangerous Lunacy,

Rosin. He doth confesse he feelles himselfe distracted,
But from what cause he will by no meanes speake.

Guil. Nor do we finde him forward to be founde'd,
But with a crazy Madnesse keepes aloofe:
When we would bring him on to some Confession
Of his misfortune.

Qu. Did he receive you well?

Rosin. Most like a Gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Rosin. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Qu. Did you assay him to any pastime?

Rosin. Madam, it fell out, that certaine Players
We once wrought on the way: of these we told him,

And there did seeme to him a kinde of toy
To heare of it: They are about the Court,

And (as I thinke) they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:

And he beseech'd me to intreate your Maiesties
To heare, and see the matter.

King. With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To heare him so inclin'd. Good Gentlemen,

Giue him a further edge, and driue his purpose on
To these delights.

Rosin. We shall my Lord.

King. Sweet Gertrude leaue vs too,
For we haue closely sent for Hamlet hither,

That he, as 'twere by accident, may there
Affront Ophelia. Her Father, and my selfe (lawful espials)

Will obserue his selues, that seeing vntoeane
We may of their encounter frankly iudge,

And gather by him, as he is behaued,
If 't be his affliction of his loue, or no.

That thus he suffers for.

Qu. I shall obey you,

And for your part Ophelia, I do wish
That your good Beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlets wildenesse: so shall I hope your Vertues
Will bring him to his wonted way againe,
To both your Honors.

Pol. Madam, I wish it may.

Pol. Ophelia, walke you heere. Gracious so please ye
We will be toow our selues: Reade on this booke,
That few of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft too blame in this,
'Tis too much prou'd, that with Deuotions visage,
And pious Action, we do surcease
The diuells himselfe.

King. Oh 'tis true:

How smart a lash that speech doth giue my Conscience?
The Harlots Cheeke beautied with plastring Art
Is not more vgly to the thing that helps it,
Then is my deede, to my most painted word.
Oh heauie burthen!

Pol. I heare him comming, let's withdraw my Lord.

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That Flesh is beyre to? 'Tis a confirmation
Deuoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; y, there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
When we haue shuffel'd off this mortall coile,
Multiplies pawse: There's the respect
That makes Calamity of long liue:
For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
The pang of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
When he himselfe might his Quittus make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would the Fardles beare
To grunt and iueat vnder a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscover'd Countrey, from whose Borne
No Traveller returns, Puzzles the will,
And makes vs rather beare those ills we haue,
Then flye to others that we know not of.
Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
And thus the Nature hew of Resolution
Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their Curants turne away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The faire Ophelia! Nimph, in thy Orizons
Be all my finnes remembered.

Pol. Good my Lord,

How does your Honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thanke you: well, well, well.

Pol. My Lord, I haue Remembrances of yours,
That I haue longed long to re-delauer.

I pray you now, receiue them.

Ham. No, no, I neuer giue you ought.

Pol. My honor'd Lord, I know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd,
As made the things more rich, then perfume left:
Take these againe, for to the Noble minde
Rich gifts wax poore, when giuers prone vnkinde,
There my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha: Are you honest?

Pol. My Lord,

Ham. Are you faire?

Pol. What meanes your Lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and faire, your Honesty
Should admit no discourse to your Beautie.

Pol. Could Beautie my Lord, haue better Comerce
then your Honestie?

Ham. I trolie: for the power of Beautie, will sooner
transforme Honestie from what it is, to a Bawd, then the
force of Honestie can translate Beautie into his likeness.
This was sometime a Paradoxe, but now the time giues it
prooffe. I did loue you once.

Pol. Indeed my Lord, you made me belecue so.

Ham. You should not haue beleued me. For vertue
cannot so innoculate our old stocke, but we shall tellish
of it. I loued you not.

Pol. I was the more deceiued,

Ham. Get thee to a Nunnerie. Why wouldst thou
be a breeder of Sinners? I am my selfe indifferent honest,
but yet I could accus'se me of such things, that it were better
my Mother had not borne me. I am very prou'd, re-
uengefull, Ambitious, with more offences at my becke,
then I haue thoughts to put them in imagination, to giue
their shape, or time to ake them in. What should such
Fel-

[Q]uestion whether we ought to ouercome our selues and our passions by extream patience or die seeking desperat reuenge.

(The Meisei First Folio)

Hamlet's Skull



1608.

Shakespeare's Language

Words:

Abstemious, antipathy, critical, frugal, dwindle, extract, horrid, vast, hereditary, excellent, eventful, barefaced, assassination, lonely, leapfrog, indistinguishable, well-read, zany...

Phrases:

Vanish into thin air, play fast and loose, the milk of human kindness, remembrance of things past, cold comfort, salad days, flesh and blood, the wish is father to the thought, be cruel to be kind, blinking idiot, it's Greek to me...

Shakespeare on Screen

