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British Drama

Subject: BRITISH DRAMA

Credits: 4

SYLLABUS

Novels of George Bernard Shaw

T. S. Eliot: Murder In Cathedral

John Osborne: Look In Anger

Samuel Beckett: Waiting For Godot

Shakespeare and Others

Suggested Readings:

1. An Historical Survey from the Beginnings to the Present Time: Allardyce Nicoll

2. Contemporary British Drama: David lane

3. Modern British Drama: The Twentieth Century by C. D. Innes

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Chapter 1

G.B Shaw

G. B Shaw's Arms and the Man

Arms and the Man is a comedy by George Bernard Shaw, whose title comes from the opening words of Virgil's Aeneid in Latin: *Arma virumque cano* ("Arms and the man I sing").

The play was first produced on April 21, 1894 at the Avenue Theatre, and published in 1898 as part of Shaw's Plays Pleasant volume, which also included *Candida*, *You Never Can Tell*, and *The Man of Destiny*. The play was one of Shaw's first commercial successes. He was called onto stage after the curtain, where he received enthusiastic applause. However, amidst the cheers, one audience member booed. Shaw replied, in characteristic fashion, "My dear fellow, I quite agree with you, but what are we two against so many?"

Arms and the Man is a humorous play which shows the futility of war and deals with the hypocrisies of human nature in a comedic fashion.

Plot summary

The play takes place during the 1885 Serbo-Bulgarian War. Its heroine, Raina (rah-EE-na) Petkoff, is a young Bulgarian woman engaged to Sergius Saranoff, one of the heroes of that war, whom she idolizes. One night, a Swiss mercenary soldier in the Serbian army, Captain Bluntschli, bursts through her bedroom window and firstly threatens Raina, then begs her to hide him, so that he is not killed. Raina complies, though she thinks the man a coward, especially when he tells her that he does not carry pistol cartridges, but chocolates. When the battle dies down, Raina and her mother, Catherine, sneak Bluntschli out of the house, disguised in an old housecoat.

The war ends and Sergius returns to Raina, but also flirts with her insolent servant girl Louka (a soubrette role). Raina begins to find Sergius both foolhardy and tiresome, but she hides it. Bluntschli unexpectedly returns so that he can give back the old housecoat, but also so that he can see her. Raina and her mother are shocked, especially when her father and Sergius reveal that they have met Bluntschli before, and invite him to stay for lunch and to help them with troop movements.

Afterwards, left alone with Bluntschli, Raina realizes that he sees through her romantic posturing, but that he respects her as a woman, as Sergius does not. She tells him that she had left a portrait of herself in the pocket of the coat, inscribed "To my chocolate-cream soldier", but Bluntschli says that he didn't find it and that it must still be in the coat pocket. Bluntschli gets a note informing him of his father's death and revealing to him his now enormous wealth. Louka then tells Sergius that Bluntschli is the man whom Raina protected, and that Raina is really in love with him. So Sergius challenges him to a duel, but the man avoids fighting and Sergius and Raina break off their engagement (with some relief on both sides). Raina's father, Paul, discovers the portrait in the pocket of his housecoat, but Raina and Bluntschli trick him by taking out the portrait before he

finds it again, only tell him that his mind is playing tricks on him. After Bluntschli reveals the whole story to Major Petkoff, Sergius proposes marriage to Louka (to Mrs. Petkoff's horror). Nicola quietly and gallantly lets Sergius have her, and Bluntschli, recognising Nicola's dedication and ability, determines to offer him a job as a hotel manager.

Raina, having realized the hollowness of her romantic ideals and her fiancé's values, protests that she would prefer her poor "chocolate-cream soldier" to this wealthy businessman. Bluntschli says that he is still the same person, and the play ends with Raina proclaiming her love for him and Bluntschli, with Swiss precision, both clearing up the major's troop movement problems and informing everyone that he will return to be married to Raina exactly two weeks from Tuesday

Critical acclaim

George Orwell said that *Arms and the Man* was written when Shaw was at the height of his powers as a dramatist. "It is probably the wittiest play he ever wrote, the most flawless technically, and in spite of being a very light comedy, the most telling." Orwell says that *Arms and the Man* wears well—he was writing 50 years later—because its moral—that war is not a wonderful, romantic adventure—still needs to be told. His other plays of the period, equally well written, are about issues no longer controversial. For example, the theme of *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, which so shocked audiences at the time, was that the causes of prostitution are mainly economic, hardly big news today, and the play *Widowers' Houses* was an attack on slum landlords, which are now held in such low esteem that the matter is hardly controversial.

Subsequent productions

- The first Broadway production opened on September 17, 1894 at New York City's Herald Square Theatre. Since then there have been six Broadway revivals, two of which are listed below.
- The most prestigious London revival was directed by John Burrell for The Old Vic Company at the New Theatre, which opened on 5 September 1944, starring Ralph Richardson (Bluntschli), Margaret Leighton (Raina Petkoff), Joyce Redman (Louka), and Laurence Olivier (Major Sergius Saranoff). "Olivier thought Sergius a humbug, a buffoon, a blackguard, a coward, 'a bloody awful part' until Tyrone Guthrie said he would never succeed in the role until he learned to love Sergius. Olivier, spurred and moustachioed, was high camp": Robert Tanitch.
- A revival production ran at New York City's Arena Theatre from October 19, 1950 to January 21, 1951, for a total of 108 performances. The cast included Lee Grant as Raina, Francis Lederer as Bluntschli and Sam Wanamaker as Sergius.
- Marlon Brando's final stage appearance was in *Arms and the Man* in 1953. He gathered friends who were fellow actors into a company for a summer stock production. He chose to play Sergius while William Redfield starred as Bluntschli.
- The play has been produced 5 times at the Shaw Festival, in 1967, 1976, 1984, 1996, and 2006.

- The play was produced in 1982 at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, with Brian Bedford as Bluntschli and Len Cariou as Sergius.
- In 1985 John Malkovich directed a revival production at New York City's Circle in the Square Theatre starring Kevin Kline as Bluntschli (later replaced by Malkovich after Kline's departure), Glenna Headly as Raina and Raúl Juliá as Sergius. The production ran from May 30 to September 1, 1985, for a total of 109 performances.
- The BBC produced a made-for-TV version in 1989, directed by James Cellan Jones, starring Helena Bonham Carter as Raina, Pip Torrens as Bluntschli, Patrick Ryecart as Sergius and Patsy Kensit as Louka.
- In 2011 the play was presented by the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota, The Seattle Public Theater in Seattle, Washington state, and the Constellation Theatre Company in Washington DC.
- In 2013 Odyssey Theatre in Ottawa, ON, Canada is putting on a masked performance of this play.

Adaptations

When Shaw gave Leopold Jacobson the rights to adapt the play into what became the 1908 operetta *The Chocolate Soldier* with music by Oscar Straus, he provided three conditions: none of Shaw's dialogue, nor any of his character's names, could be used; the libretto must be advertised as being a parody of Shaw's work; and Shaw would accept no monetary compensation. In spite of this, Shaw's original plot, and with it the central message of the play, remained more or less untouched. Shaw despised the result, calling it "a putrid opera bouffe in the worst taste of 1860", but grew to regret not accepting payment when, despite his opinion of the work, it became a lucrative international success. When Shaw heard, in 1921, that Franz Lehár wanted to set his play *Pygmalion* to music, he sent word to Vienna that Lehár be instructed that he could not touch *Pygmalion* without infringing Shaw's copyright and that Shaw had "no intention of allowing the history of *The Chocolate Soldier* to be repeated" (only after Shaw's death was *Pygmalion* eventually adapted by Lerner and Loewe as *My Fair Lady*).

A British film adaptation was directed in 1932 by Cecil Lewis. It starred Barry Jones as Bluntschli and Anne Grey as Raina. A filmed version of *Arms and the Man* in German entitled *Helden (Heroes)* starring O. W. Fischer and Liselotte Pulver was runner up for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1958.

An audio version was produced by the BBC starring Ralph Richardson as Captain Bluntschli and John Gielgud as Major Sergius Saranoff. A second BBC audio version was produced in 1984 and broadcast on BBC Radio 7 in February 2009 starring Andrew Sachs as Captain Bluntschli and Gary Bonds as Major Saranoff. A third version was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on March 21, 2010 starring Rory Kinnear as Captain Bluntschli, Lydia Leonardas Raina and Tom Mison as Major Saranoff. This production was produced by Nicolas Soames and directed by David Timson.

An audio version was produced in 1999 by the CBC starring Simon Bradbury as Captain Bluntschli, Elizabeth Brown as Raina and Andrew Gillies as Major Saranoff. Another audio version was produced in 2006 by the L.A. Theatre Works starring Jeremy Sisto as Captain Bluntschli, Anne Heche as Raina and Teri Garr as Catherine.

A musical by Udo Jürgens, *Helden, Helden*, also based on Shaw's play, premiered at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna, Austria in 1973.

Pejorative military use of the term "chocolate soldier"

The chocolate-cream soldier of the play has inspired a pejorative military use of the term. In Israel, soldiers use the term "chocolate soldier" (Hayal Shel Shokolad, שוקולד של הייל) to describe a soft soldier who is unable to fight well. Similarly, members of the Australian Citizens Military Force were derided by the regular army as "chokos" or chocolate soldiers, the implication being that they were not real soldiers

G. B Shaw's Man and Superman

Man and Superman is a four-act drama written by George Bernard Shaw in 1903. The series was written in response to calls for Shaw to write a play based on the Don Juan theme. *Man and Superman* opened at The Royal Court Theatre in London on 23 May 1905, but omitted the 3rd Act. A part of the act, *Don Juan in Hell* (Act 3, Scene 2), was performed when the drama was staged on 4 June 1907 at the Royal Court. The play was not performed in its entirety until 1915, when the Travelling Repertory Company played it at the Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh.

Summary

Mr. Whitefield has recently died, and his will indicates that his daughter, Ann should be left in the care of two men, Roebuck Ramsden and Jack Tanner. Ramsden, a venerable old man, distrusts Jack Tanner, an eloquent man with revolutionary ideas. In spite of what Ramsden says, Ann accepts Tanner as a guardian, and she defies Tanner's revolutionary beliefs with her own beliefs. Tanner's dedication to anarchy is unable to disarm Ann's charm, and she ultimately persuades him to marry her. Eventually, Ann chooses Tanner over her more persistent suitor, a young man named Octavius Robinson.

List of characters

- **Hector Malone, Sr.**, an elderly gentleman who has worked hard throughout his life to attain a high social status that he now prides himself on.
- **Ann Whitefield**, a young woman, graceful, somewhat enigmatic. She corresponds to the character Doña Ana in the Don Juan myth (in Act III, Shaw's stage direction refers to Doña Ana de Ulloa as "so handsome that in the radiance into which her dull yellow halo has suddenly lightened one might almost mistake her for Ann Whitefield").
- **Henry Straker**, chauffeur with a cockney accent.

- **John Tanner**, also called "Jack Tanner," a well-educated, well-spoken man who takes everything seriously, including himself; a "political firebrand and confirmed bachelor." Allegedly the descendant of Don Juan, as well as the modern representation of the Don Juan character (In Act III, Shaw notes Don Juan's resemblance to Tanner: "Besides, in the brief lifting of his face, now hidden by his hat brim, there was a curious suggestion of Tanner. A more critical, fastidious, handsome face, paler and colder, without Tanner's impetuous credulity and enthusiasm, and without a touch of his modern plutocratic vulgarity, but still a resemblance, even an identity"). The very name "John Tanner" is obviously an anglicisation of the Spanish name "Juan Tenorio," which is the full name of Don Juan.
- **Violet Robinson**, sister of Octavius Robinson. She has been secretly married to Hector Malone, Jr.
- **Mrs. Whitefield**, mother of Ann, and widow of the late Mr. Whitefield.
- **Susan Ramsden**, the spinster sister of Roebuck Ramsden.
- **Hector Malone, Jr.**, an American gentleman who is secretly married to Violet Robinson.
- **Octavius Robinson**, an amiable young man who is in love with Ann Whitefield. Brother to Violet Robinson. He represents "Don Ottavio" from the Don Juan myth.
- **Roebuck Ramsden**, an aging civil reformer who was friend to the late Mr. Whitefield. He corresponds to the statue in the Don Juan myth, who is in turn the representation of the spirit of Don Gonzalo, the father of Doña Ana (in Act III, Shaw writes of The Statue, "His voice, save for a much more distinguished intonation, is so like the voice of Roebuck Ramsden").
- **Mendoza**, an anarchist who collaborates with Tanner. Mendoza is the "President of the League of the Sierra," a self-described brigand and a Jew. He corresponds to Shaw's conception of the Devil as he would be portrayed in the Don Juan myth (Shaw writes of "The Devil" in Act III: "A scarlet halo begins to glow; and into it the Devil rises, very Mephistophelean, and not at all unlike Mendoza, though not so interesting").

Interpretation and performances

The long third act of the play, which shows Don Juan himself having a conversation with several characters in Hell, is often cut. Charles A. Berst observes of Act III:

Paradoxically, the act is both extraneous and central to the drama which surrounds it. It can be dispensed with, and usually is, on grounds that it is just too long to include in an already full-length play. More significantly, it is in some aspects a digression, operates in a different mode from the rest of the material, delays the immediate well-made story line, and much of its subject matter is already implicit in the rest of the play. The play performs well without it.

Don Juan in Hell consists of a philosophical debate between Don Juan (played by the same actor who plays Jack Tanner), and the Devil, with Doña Ana (Ann) and the Statue of Don Gonzalo, Ana's father (Roebuck Ramsden) looking on. This third act is often performed separately as a play in its own right, most famously during the 1950s in a concert version, featuring Charles Boyeras Don Juan, Charles Laughton as the Devil, Cedric Hardwicke as the Commander and Agnes Moorehead as Doña Ana. This version was also released as a

spoken word album on LP, but is yet to appear on CD. However, the complete performance recording is now available at various sites on the internet. In 1974–75 Kurt Kaszner, Myrna Loy, Edward Mulhare and Ricardo Montalban toured nationwide in John Houseman's reprise of the production, playing 158 cities in six months.

Although *Man and Superman* can be performed as a light comedy of manners, Shaw intended the drama to be something much deeper, as suggested by the title. This title comes from Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical ideas about the "Übermensch" ("Superman"). The plot centres on John Tanner, author of "The Revolutionist's Handbook and Pocket Companion", which is published with the play as a 58-page appendix. Tanner is a confirmed bachelor despite the pursuits of Ann Whitefield and her persistent efforts to entice him to marry her. Ann is referred to as "the Life Force" and represents Shaw's view that in every culture, it is the women who force the men to marry them rather than the men who take the initiative. Sally Peters Vogt proposes, "Thematically, the fluid Don Juan myth becomes a favorable milieu for Creative Evolution," and that "the legend...becomes in *Man and Superman* the vehicle through which Shaw communicates his cosmic philosophy". In 1982, the play was filmed with Peter O'Toole in the starring role.

B. B Shaw's Pygmalion

Pygmalion is a play by George Bernard Shaw, named after a Greek mythological character. It was first presented on stage to the public in 1912.

Professor of phonetics Henry Higgins makes a bet that he can train a bedraggled Cockney flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, to pass for a duchess at an ambassador's garden party by teaching her to assume a veneer of gentility, the most important element of which, he believes, is impeccable speech. The play is a sharp lampoon of the rigid British class system of the day and a commentary on women's independence.

In ancient Greek mythology, Pygmalion fell in love with one of his sculptures, which then came to life. The general idea of that myth was a popular subject for Victorian era English playwrights, including one of Shaw's influences, W. S. Gilbert, who wrote a successful play based on the story called *Pygmalion and Galatea* first presented in 1871. Shaw also would have been familiar with the burlesque version, *Galatea, or Pygmalion Reversed*. Shaw's play has been adapted numerous times, most notably as the musical *My Fair Lady* and the film of that name.

Shaw mentions that the character of Professor Henry Higgins was inspired by several British professors of phonetics: Alexander Melville Bell, Alexander J. Ellis, Tito Pagliardini, but above all, the cantankerous Henry Sweet

First productions

Shaw wrote the play in the spring of 1912 and read it to famed actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell in June. She came on board almost immediately, but her mild nervous breakdown (and its doctor-enforced seisure, which led to a quasi-romantic intrigue with Shaw) contributed to the delay of a London production. *Pygmalion* premiered at the Hofburg Theatre in Vienna on October 16, 1913, in a German translation by Shaw's Viennese literary agent and acolyte, Siegfried Trebitsch. Its first New York production opened March 24, 1914 at the German-language

Irving Place Theatre. It opened in London April 11, 1914, at Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree's His Majesty's Theatre and starred Mrs. Campbell as Eliza and Tree as Higgins, running for 118 performances. Shaw directed the actors through tempestuous rehearsals often punctuated by at least one of the two storming out of the theater in a rage

Plot

Shaw was conscious of the difficulties involved in staging a complete representation of the play. Acknowledging in a "note for technicians" that such a thing would only be possible "on the cinema screen or on stages furnished with exceptionally elaborate machinery", he marked some scenes as candidates for omission if necessary. Of these, a short scene at the end of Act One in which Eliza goes home, and a scene in Act Two in which Eliza is unwilling to undress for her bath, are not described here. The others are the scene at the Embassy Ball in Act Three and the scene with Eliza and Freddy in Act Four. Neither the Gutenberg edition referenced throughout this page nor the Wikisource text linked below contain these sequences.

Act One

A group of people are sheltering from the rain. Among them are the **Eynsford-Hills**, superficial social climbers eking out a living in "genteel poverty", consisting initially of **Mrs. Sanford-Hill** and her daughter **Clara**. Clara's brother **Freddy** enters having earlier been dispatched to secure them a cab (which they can ill-afford), but being rather timid and faint-hearted he has failed to do so. As he goes off once again to find a cab, he bumps into a flower girl, **Eliza**. Her flowers drop into the mud of Covent Garden, the flowers she needs to survive in her poverty-stricken world. Shortly they are joined by a gentleman, **Colonel Pickering**. While Eliza tries to sell flowers to the Colonel, a bystander informs her that a man is writing down everything she says. The man is Henry Higgins, a professor of phonetics. Eliza worries that **Higgins** is a police officer and will not calm down until Higgins introduces himself. It soon becomes apparent that he and Colonel Pickering have a shared interest in phonetics; indeed, Pickering has come from India to meet Higgins, and Higgins was planning to go to India to meet Pickering. Higgins tells Pickering that he could pass off the flower girl as a duchess merely by teaching her to speak properly. These words of bravado spark an interest in Eliza, who would love to make changes in her life and become more mannerly, even though, to her, it only means working in a flower shop. At the end of the act, Freddy returns after finding a taxi, only to find that his mother and sister have gone and left him with the cab. The streetwise Eliza takes the cab from him, using the money that Higgins tossed to her, leaving him on his own.

Act Two

Higgins' – Next Day

As Higgins demonstrates his phonetics to Pickering, the housekeeper, **Mrs. Pearce**, tells him that a young girl wants to see him. Eliza has shown up, because she wishes to talk like a lady in a flower shop. She then tells Higgins that she will pay for lessons. He shows no interest in her, but she reminds him of his boast the previous day. Higgins claimed that he could pass her for a duchess. Pickering makes a bet with him on his claim, and

says that he will pay for her lessons if Higgins succeeds. She is sent off to have a bath. Mrs. Pearce tells Higgins that he must behave himself in the young girl's presence. He must stop swearing, and improve his table manners. He is at a loss to understand why she should find fault with him. Then **Alfred Doolittle**, Eliza's father, appears with the sole purpose of getting money out of Higgins. He has no interest in his daughter in a paternal way. He sees himself as a member of the undeserving poor, and means to go on being undeserving. He has an eccentric view of life, brought about by a lack of education and an intelligent brain. He is also aggressive, and when Eliza, on her return, sticks her tongue out at him, he goes to hit her, but is prevented by Pickering. The scene ends with Higgins telling Pickering that they really have got a difficult job on their hands.

Act Three

Mrs. Higgins' drawing room

Higgins bursts in and tells his mother he has picked up a "common flower girl" whom he has been teaching. Mrs. Higgins is not very impressed with her son's attempts to win her approval because it is her 'at home' day and she is entertaining visitors. The visitors are the Eynsford-Hills. Higgins is rude to them on their arrival. Eliza enters and soon falls into talking about the weather and her family. Whilst she is now able to speak in beautifully modulated tones, the substance of what she says remains unchanged from the gutter. She confides her suspicions that her aunt was killed by relatives, and mentions that gin had been "mother's milk" to this aunt, and that Eliza's own father was always more cheerful after a goodly amount of gin. Higgins passes off her remarks as "the new small talk", and Freddy is enraptured. When she is leaving, he asks her if she is going to walk across the park, to which she replies, "Walk? Not bloody likely!" (This is the most famous line from the play, and, for many years after the play's debut, use of the word 'bloody' was known as a pygmalion; Mrs. Campbell was considered to have risked her career by speaking the line on stage) After she and the Eynsford-Hills leave, Henry asks for his mother's opinion. She says the girl is not presentable and is very concerned about what will happen to her, but neither Higgins nor Pickering understand her thoughts of Eliza's future, and leave feeling confident and excited about how Eliza will get on. This leaves Mrs. Higgins feeling exasperated, and exclaiming, "Men! Men!! Men!!!"

Act Four

Higgins' home – The time is midnight, and Higgins, Pickering, and Eliza have returned from the ball. A tired Eliza sits unnoticed, brooding and silent, while Pickering congratulates Higgins on winning the bet. Higgins scoffs and declares the evening a "silly tomfoolery", thanking God it's over and saying that he had been sick of the whole thing for the last two months. Still barely acknowledging Eliza beyond asking her to leave a note for Mrs. Pearce regarding coffee, the two retire to bed. Higgins returns to the room, looking for his slippers, and Eliza throws them at him. Higgins is taken aback, and is at first completely unable to understand Eliza's preoccupation, which aside from being ignored after her triumph is the question of what she is to do now. When Higgins does understand he makes light of it, saying she could get married, but Eliza interprets this as selling herself like a prostitute. "We were above that at the corner of Tottenham Court Road." Finally she returns her

jewellery to Higgins, including the ring he had given her, which he throws into the fireplace with a violence that scares Eliza. Furious with himself for losing his temper, he damns Mrs. Pearce, the coffee and then Eliza, and finally himself, for "lavishing" his knowledge and his "regard and intimacy" on a "heartless guttersnipe", and retires in great dudgeon. Eliza roots around in the fireplace and retrieves the ring.

Act Five

Mrs. Higgins' drawing room, the next morning

Higgins and Pickering, perturbed by the discovery that Eliza has walked out on them, call on Mrs. Higgins to phone the police. Higgins is particularly distracted, since Eliza had assumed the responsibility of maintaining his diary and keeping track of his possessions, which causes Mrs. Higgins to decry their calling the police as though Eliza were "a lost umbrella". Doolittle is announced; he emerges dressed in splendid wedding attire and is furious with Higgins, who after their previous encounter had been so taken with Doolittle's unorthodox ethics that he had recommended him as the "most original moralist in England" to a rich American founding Moral Reform Societies; the American had subsequently left Doolittle a pension worth three thousand pounds a year, as a consequence of which Doolittle feels intimidated into joining the middle class and marrying his missus. Mrs. Higgins observes that this at least settles the problem of who shall provide for Eliza, to which Higgins objects — after all, he paid Doolittle five pounds for her. Mrs. Higgins informs her son that Eliza is upstairs, and explains the circumstances of her arrival, alluding to how marginalised and overlooked Eliza felt the previous night. Higgins is unable to appreciate this, and sulks when told that he must behave if Eliza is to join them. Doolittle is asked to wait outside.

Eliza enters, at ease and self-possessed. Higgins blusters but Eliza isn't shaken and speaks exclusively to Pickering. Throwing Higgins' previous insults back at him ("Oh, I'm only a squashed cabbage leaf"), Eliza remarks that it was only by Pickering's example that she learned to be a lady, which renders Higgins speechless. Eliza goes on to say that she has completely left behind the flower girl she was, and that she couldn't utter any of her old sounds if she tried — at which point Doolittle emerges from the balcony, causing Eliza to relapse totally into her gutter speech. Higgins is jubilant, jumping up and crowing over her. Doolittle explains his situation and asks if Eliza will come to his wedding. Pickering and Mrs. Higgins also agree to go, and leave with Doolittle and Eliza to follow.

The scene ends with another confrontation between Higgins and Eliza. Higgins asks if Eliza is satisfied with the revenge she has wrought thus far and if she will now come back, but she refuses. Higgins defends himself from Eliza's earlier accusation by arguing that he treats everyone the same, so she shouldn't feel singled out. Eliza replies that she just wants a little kindness, and that since he will never stop to show her this, she will not come back, but will marry Freddy. Higgins scolds her for such low ambitions: he has made her "a consort for a king." When she threatens to teach phonetics and offer herself as an assistant to Nepommuck, Higgins again loses his temper and promises to wring her neck if she does so. Eliza realises that this last threat strikes Higgins at the very core and that it gives her power over him; Higgins, for his part, is delighted to see a spark of fight in Eliza

rather than her erstwhile fretting and worrying. He remarks "I like you like this", and calls her a "pillar of strength". Mrs. Higgins returns and she and Eliza depart for the wedding. As they leave Higgins incorrigibly gives Eliza a number of errands to run, as though their recent conversation had not taken place. Eliza disdainfully explains why they are unnecessary, and wonders what Higgins is going to do without her. Higgins laughs to himself at the idea of Eliza marrying Freddy as the play ends.

Ending

Pygmalion was the most broadly appealing of all Shaw's plays. But popular audiences, looking for pleasant entertainment with big stars in a West End venue, wanted a "happy ending" for the characters they liked so well, as did some critics. During the 1914 run, to Shaw's exasperation but not to his surprise, Tree sought to sweeten Shaw's ending to please himself and his record houses. Shaw returned for the 100th performance and watched Higgins, standing at the window, toss a bouquet down to Eliza. "My ending makes money, you ought to be grateful," protested Tree. "Your ending is damnable; you ought to be shot." Shaw remained sufficiently irritated to add a postscript essay, "What Happened Afterwards," to the 1916 print edition for inclusion with subsequent editions, in which he explained precisely why it was impossible for the story to end with Higgins and Eliza getting married.

He continued to protect the play's and Eliza's integrity by protecting the last scene. For at least some performances during the 1920 revival, Shaw adjusted the ending in a way that underscored the Shavian message. In an undated note to Mrs. Campbell he wrote,

When Eliza emancipates herself — when Galatea comes to life — she must not relapse. She must retain her pride and triumph to the end. When Higgins takes your arm on 'consort battleship' you must instantly throw him off with implacable pride; and this is the note until the final 'Buy them yourself.' He will go out on the balcony to watch your departure; come back triumphantly into the room; exclaim 'Galatea!' (meaning that the statue has come to life at last); and — curtain. Thus he gets the last word; and you get it too.

(This ending is not included in any print version of the play.)

Shaw fought uphill against such a reversal of fortune for Eliza all the way to 1938. He sent the film's harried producer, Gabriel Pascal, a concluding sequence which he felt offered a fair compromise: a romantically-set farewell scene between Higgins and Eliza, then Freddy and Eliza happy in their greengrocery/flower shop. Only at the sneak preview did he learn that Pascal had shot the "I washed my face and hands" conclusion, to reassure audiences that Shaw's Galatea wouldn't really come to life, after all.

Differing versions

Different printed versions of the play omit or add certain lines, much like Shakespeare's First Folio and First Quarto editions. The Project Gutenberg version published online, for instance, omits Higgins' famous declaration to Eliza, "Yes, you squashed cabbage-leaf, you disgrace to the noble architecture of these columns,

you incarnate insult to the English language! I could pass you off as the Queen of Sheba!" – a line so famous that it is now retained in nearly all productions of the play, including the 1938 film version of *Pygmalion* as well as in the stage and film versions of *My Fair Lady*.

The director of the 1938 film, Anthony Asquith, had seen Mrs. Campbell in the 1920 revival of *Pygmalion* and noticed that she spoke the line, "It's my belief as how they done the old woman in." He knew "as how" was not in Shaw's text, but he felt it added color and rhythm to Eliza's speech, and liked to think that Mrs. Campbell had ad libbed it herself. Eighteen years later he added it to Wendy Hiller's line in the film.

In the original play Eliza's test is met at an ambassador's garden party, offstage. For the 1938 film Shaw and co-writers replaced that exposition with a scene at an embassy ball; Nepommuck, the dangerous translator spoken about in the play, is finally seen, but his name is updated to Arstid Karpathy — named so by Gabriel Pascal, the film's Hungarian producer, who also made sure that Karpathy mistakes Eliza for a Hungarian princess. In *My Fair Lady* he became Zoltan Karpathy.

Shaw's screen version of the play as well as a new print version incorporating the new sequences he had added for the film script were published in 1941. The scenes he had noted in "Note for Technicians" are added.

Influence

Pygmalion remains Shaw's most popular play. The play's widest audiences know it as the inspiration for the highly romanticized 1956 musical and 1964 film *My Fair Lady*.

Ironically, *Pygmalion* has transcended cultural and language barriers since its first production. The British Museum contains "images of the Polish production...; a series of shots of a wonderfully Gallicised Higgins and Eliza in the first French production in Paris in 1923; a fascinating set for a Russian production of the 1930s. There was no country which didn't have its own 'take' on the subjects of class division and social mobility, and it's as enjoyable to view these subtle differences in settings and costumes as it is to imagine translators wracking their brains for their own equivalent of 'Not bloody likely'."

Joseph Weizenbaum named his artificial intelligence computer program ELIZA after the character Eliza Doolittle

Chapter 2

T.S Eliot and John Osborne

T.S Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral

Murder in the Cathedral is a verse drama by T. S. Eliot that portrays the assassination of Archbishop Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170, first performed in 1935. Eliot drew heavily on the writing of Edward Grim, a clerk who was an eyewitness to the event.

The play, dealing with an individual's opposition to authority, was written at the time of rising Fascism in Central Europe.

Some material that the producer asked Eliot to remove or replace during the writing was transformed into the poem "Burnt Norton"

Plot

The action occurs between 2 and 29 December 1170, chronicling the days leading up to the martyrdom of Thomas Becket following his absence of seven years in France. Becket's internal struggle is the main focus of the play.

The book is divided into two parts. Part one takes place in the Archbishop Thomas Becket's hall on 2 December 1170. The play begins with a Chorus singing, foreshadowing the coming violence. The Chorus is a key part of the drama, with its voice changing and developing during the play, offering comments about the action and providing a link between the audience and the characters and action, as in Greek drama. Three priests are present, and they reflect on the absence of Becket and the rise of temporal power. A herald announces Becket's arrival. Becket is immediately reflective about his coming martyrdom, which he embraces, and which is understood to be a sign of his own selfishness—his fatal weakness. The tempters arrive, three of whom parallel the Temptations of Christ.

The first tempter offers the prospect of physical safety.

Take a friend's advice. Leave well alone,
Or your goose may be cooked and eaten to the bone.

The second offers power, riches and fame in serving the King.

To set down the great, protect the poor,
Beneath the throne of God can man do more?

The third tempter suggests a coalition with the barons and a chance to resist the King.

For us, Church favour would be an advantage,
Blessing of Pope powerful protection
In the fight for liberty. You, my Lord,

In being with us, would fight a good stroke
Finally, a fourth tempter urges him to seek the glory of martyrdom.
You hold the keys of heaven and hell.

Power to bind and loose : bind, Thomas, bind,
King and bishop under your heel.

King, emperor, bishop, baron, king:

Becket responds to all of the tempters and specifically addresses the immoral suggestions of the fourth tempter at the end of the first act:

Now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain:

Temptation shall not come in this kind again.

The last temptation is the greatest treason:

To do the right deed for the wrong reason.

The Interlude of the play is a sermon given by Becket on Christmas morning 1170. It is about the strange contradiction that Christmas is a day both of mourning and rejoicing, which Christians also do for martyrs. He announces at the end of his sermon, "it is possible that in a short time you may have yet another martyr". We see in the sermon something of Becket's ultimate peace of mind, as he elects not to seek sainthood, but to accept his death as inevitable and part of a better whole.

Part II of the play takes place in the Archbishop's Hall and in the Cathedral, 29 December 1170. Four knights arrive with "Urgent business" from the king. These knights had heard the king speak of his frustration with Becket, and had interpreted this as an order to kill Becket. They accuse him of betrayal, and he claims to be loyal. He tells them to accuse him in public, and they make to attack him, but priests intervene. The priests insist that he leave and protect himself, but he refuses. The knights leave and Becket again says he is ready to die. The chorus sings that they knew this conflict was coming, that it had long been in the fabric of their lives, both temporal and spiritual. The chorus again reflects on the coming devastation. Thomas is taken to the Cathedral, where the knights break in and kill him. The chorus laments: "Clean the air! Clean the sky!", and "The land is foul, the water is foul, our beasts and ourselves defiled with blood." At the close of the play, the knights step up, address the audience, and defend their actions. The murder was all right and for the best: it was in the right spirit, sober, and justified so that the church's power would not undermine stability and state power.

Performances

First performance

George Bell, the Bishop of Chichester, was instrumental in getting Eliot to work as writer with producer E. Martin Browne in producing the pageant play *The Rock* (1934.) Bell then asked Eliot to write another play for the Canterbury Festival in 1935. Eliot agreed to do so if Browne once again produced (he did). The first performance was given on 15 June 1935 in the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral. Robert Speaight played

the part of Becket. The production then moved to the Mercury Theatre, Notting Hill Gate in London and ran there for several months.

Other notable performances

Robert Donat played Becket at the Old Vic in 1953 in a production directed by Robert Helpmann.

Jonathan Frid played Becket off-Broadway in a production by Robert Teuscher for two weeks during March 1971 at Central Theatre, Park Ave., NYC, NY.

The RSC staged revivals in 1972 at the Aldwych Theatre, with Richard Pasco as Becket, and at The Swan in 1993 transferring to The Pit in 1994 with Michael Feast.

Television and film

The play, starring Robert Speaight, was broadcast live on British television by the BBC in 1936 in its first few months of broadcasting TV.

The play was later made into a black and white film. It was directed by the Austrian director George Hoellering with music by the Hungarian composer Laszlo Lajtha and won the Grand Prix at the Venice Film Festival in 1951. It was released in the UK in 1952. In the film the fourth tempter is not seen. His voice was that of Eliot himself.

Opera

The play is the basis for the opera *Assassinio nella cattedrale* by the Italian composer Ildebrando Pizzetti, first performed at La Scala, Milan, in 1958.

Reception and criticism

Eliot's own criticism

In 1951, in the first Theodore Spencer Memorial Lecture at Harvard University, Eliot criticised his own plays in the second half of the lecture, explicitly the plays *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Family Reunion*, and *The Cocktail Party*. The lecture was published as *Poetry and Drama* and later included in Eliot's 1957 collection *On Poetry and Poets*.

Parodies

In 1982, the play was lampooned by the Canadian/US TV comedy show *SCTV*. In a typically surreal *SCTV* sketch, the play is presented by NASA and "Buzz Aldrin's Mercury III Players," with space-suited astronauts as the actors, and proceedings narrated by Walter Cronkite as if they were a NASA moon mission. "[Spacesuit transmission from astronaut] Mission control ... I think we've found a body." The mission is aborted when the doors of the cathedral will not open, and not even Becket's EVA can open them.

John Osborne's Look Back in Anger

Look Back in Anger (1956) is a John Osborne play—made into films in 1959, 1980, and 1989—about a love triangle involving an intelligent and educated but disaffected young man of working class origin (Jimmy Porter), his upper-middle-class, impassive wife (Alison), and her haughty best friend (Helena Charles). Cliff, an amiable Welsh lodger, attempts to keep the peace. The play was a success on the London stage, and spawned the term "angry young men" to describe Osborne and those of his generation who employed the harshness of realism in the theatre in contrast to the more escapist theatre that characterized the previous generation.

Background

Look Back in Anger was a strongly autobiographical piece based on Osborne's unhappy marriage to actress Pamela Lane and their life in cramped accommodation in Derby. While Osborne aspired towards a career in theatre, Lane was of a more practical and materialistic persuasion, not taking Osborne's ambitions seriously while cuckolding him with a local dentist. It also contains much of Osborne's earlier life, the wrenching speech of seeing a loved one die being, for example, a replay of the death of Thomas, Osborne's father. What it is best remembered for, though, are Jimmy's tirades. Some of these are directed against generalised British middle-class smugness in the post-atomic world. Many are directed against the female characters, and this is a very distinct echo of the playwright's profoundly uneasy relations with women, starting with his mother Nellie Beatrice, described by Osborne in his autobiography *A Better Class of Person* as "hypocritical, self-absorbed, calculating and indifferent". Madeline, the lost love Jimmy pines for, is based on Stella Linden, an older rep-company actress who first encouraged Osborne to write. After the first production in London, Osborne began a relationship with Mary Ure, who played Alison, and divorced his wife to marry Ure in 1957.

Production

The play was premiered at London's Royal Court Theatre, on 8 May 1956 by the English Stage Company under the direction of Tony Richardson, setting by Alan Tagg, and music for songs by Tom Eastwood. The press release called the author an angry young man, a phrase that came to represent a new movement in 1950s British theatre. Legend has it that audiences gasped at the sight of an ironing board on a London stage. The cast was as follows: Kenneth Haigh (Jimmy), Alan Bates (Cliff), Mary Ure (Alison), Helena Hughes (Helena) and John Welsh (Colonel Redfern).

The following year, the production moved to Broadway under producer David Merrick and director Tony Richardson. Retaining the original cast but starring Vivienne Drummond as Helena, it would receive three Tony Award nominations including for Best Play and "Best Dramatic Actress" for Ure.

Setting

- Time- The present, The action throughout takes place in the Porters' one-room flat in the Midlands.
- Act I
- Scene 1 - Early evening, April
- Act II
- Scene 1 - Two weeks later

- Scene 2 - The following evening
- Act III
- Scene 1 - Several months later
- Scene 2 - A few minutes later

Play synopsis

Act 1

Act 1 opens on a dismal Sunday afternoon in Jimmy and Alison's cramped attic in the Midlands. Jimmy and Cliff are attempting to read the Sunday papers, plus the radical weekly, "priceninepence, obtainable at any bookstall" as Jimmy snaps, claiming it from Cliff. This is a reference to the *New Statesman*, and in the context of the period would have instantly signalled the pair's political preference to the audience. Alison is attempting to do the week's ironing and is only half listening as Jimmy and Cliff engage in the expository dialogue.

It becomes apparent that there is a huge social gulf between Jimmy and Alison. Her family is upper-middle-class military, perhaps verging on upper class, while Jimmy is decidedly working class. He had to fight hard against her family's disapproval to win her. "Alison's mummy and I took one look at each other, and from then on the age of chivalry was dead", he explains. We also learn that the sole family income is derived from a sweet stall in the local market—an enterprise that is surely well beneath Jimmy's education, let alone Alison's "station in life".

As Act 1 progresses, Jimmy becomes more and more vituperative, transferring his contempt for Alison's family onto her personally, calling her "pusillanimous" and generally belittling her to Cliff. It is possible to play this scene as though Jimmy thinks everything is just a joke, but most actors opt for playing it as though he really is excoriating her. The tirade ends with some physical horseplay, resulting in the ironing board overturning and Alison's arm getting a burn. Jimmy exits to play his trumpet off stage.

Alison and Cliff play a tender scene, during which she confides that she's accidentally pregnant and can't quite bring herself to tell Jimmy. Cliff urges her to tell him. When Jimmy returns, Alison announces that her actress friend Helena Charles is coming to stay, and it is entirely obvious that Jimmy despises Helena even more than Alison. He flies into a total rage, and conflict is inevitable.

Act 2

Act 2 opens on another Sunday afternoon, with Helena and Alison making lunch. In a two-handed scene, Alison gives a clue as to why she decided to take Jimmy on—her own minor rebellion against her upbringing plus her admiration of Jimmy's campaigns against the dereliction of English post-war, post-atom-bomb life. She describes Jimmy to Helena as a "knight in shining armour". Helena says, firmly, "You've got to fight him".

Jimmy enters, and the tirade continues. If his Act 1 material could be played as a joke, there's no doubt about the intentional viciousness of his attacks on Helena. When the women put on hats and declare that they are

going to church, Jimmy's sense of betrayal peaks. When he leaves to take an urgent phone call, Helena announces that she has forced the issue. She has sent a telegram to Alison's parents asking them to come and "rescue" her. Alison is stunned but agrees that she will go.

After a scene break, we see Alison's father, Colonel Redfern, who has come to collect her to take her back to her family home. The playwright allows the Colonel to come across as quite a sympathetic character, albeit totally out of touch with the modern world (as he himself admits). "You're hurt because everything's changed", Alison tells him, "and Jimmy's hurt because everything's stayed the same".

Helena arrives to say goodbye, intending to leave very soon herself. Alison is surprised that Helena is staying on for another day, but she leaves, giving Cliff a note for Jimmy. Cliff in turn hands it to Helena and leaves, saying "I hope he rams it up your nostrils". Almost immediately, Jimmy bursts in. His contempt at finding a "goodbye" note makes him turn on Helena again, warning her to keep out of his way until she leaves. Helena tells him that Alison is expecting a baby, and Jimmy admits grudgingly that he's taken aback. However, his tirade continues. They first come to physical blows, and then as the Act 2 curtain falls, Jimmy and Helena are kissing passionately and falling on the bed.

Act 3

Act 3 opens as a deliberate replay of Act 1, but this time with Helena at the ironing-board wearing Jimmy's Act 1 red shirt. Months have passed. Jimmy is notably more pleasant to Helena than he was to Alison in Act 1. She actually laughs at his jokes, and the three of them (Jimmy, Cliff, and Helena) get into a music hall comedy routine that obviously is not improvised. Cliff announces that he's decided to strike out on his own. As Jimmy leaves the room to get ready for a final night out for the three of them, he opens the door to find Alison, looking like death. Instead of caring for her he snaps over his shoulder "Friend of yours to see you" and abruptly leaves. After a scene break, Alison explains to Helena that she lost the baby—one of Jimmy's cruellest speeches in Act 1 expressed the wish that Alison would conceive a child and lose it—the two women reconcile but Helena realises that what she's done is immoral and she in turn decides to leave. She summons Jimmy to hear her decision and he lets her go with a sarcastic farewell.

The play ends with a sentimental reconciliation between Jimmy and Alison. They revive an old game they used to play, pretending to be bears and squirrels, and seem to be in a state of truce.

Critical reception

At the time of production reviews of *Look Back in Anger* were deeply negative. Kenneth Tynan and Harold Hobson were among the few critics to praise it, and are now regarded among the most influential critics of the time.

For example, on BBC Radio's *The Critics*, Ivor Brown began his review by describing the play's setting—a one-room flat in the Midlands—as "unspeakably dirty and squalid" such that it was difficult for him to "believe that a colonel's daughter, brought up with some standards", would have lived in it. He expressed anger at having watched a something that "wasted [his] time". The *Daily Mail*'s Cecil Wilson wrote that the beauty of Mary Ure

was "frittered away" on a pathetic wife, who, "judging by the time she spends ironing, seems to have taken on the nation's laundry". Indeed, Alison, Ure's character, irons during Act One, makes lunch in Act Two, and leaves the ironing to her rival in Act Three.

On the other hand, Kenneth Tynan wrote that he "could not love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*", describing the play as a "minor miracle" containing "all the qualities...one had despaired of ever seeing on the stage—the drift towards anarchy, the instinctive leftishness, the automatic rejection of "official" attitudes, the surrealist sense of humour (e.g., Jimmy describes an effeminate male friend as a 'female Emily Brontë'), the casual promiscuity, the sense of lacking a crusade worth fighting for and, underlying all these, the determination that no one who dies shall go unmourned." Harold Hobson was also quick to recognize the importance of the play "as a landmark of British theatre". He praised Osborne for the play, despite the fact that the "blinkers still obscure his vision".

Alan Sillitoe, author of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (both of which are also part of the "angry young men" movement), wrote that Osborne "didn't contribute to British theatre, he set off a landmine and blew most of it up".

References in popular culture

- In 1958 it was made into a British film starring Richard Burton, Claire Bloom, and Mary Ure and directed by Tony Richardson. The screenplay was written by the play's author, John Osborne, with Nigel Kneale. Interior set design was by Loudon Sainthill. The film was nominated in four categories in the 1959 BAFTA Awards, including a Best Actor nomination for Richard Burton, but it did not win any of them. In the United States, the film failed at the box office, but in later years would be liked for Burton's performance, although others felt he was not the right age for his role.
- An episode of the BBC radio sitcom *Hancock's Half Hour* paid tribute to Osborne's play in "The East Cheam Drama Festival" (1958). The episode features the regular cast spoofing a number of theatrical genres, with *Look Back in Anger* recast as "Look Back in Hunger—a new play by the Hungry Young Man, Mr. John Eastbourne". Scriptwriters Alan Simpson and Ray Galton mimic several elements of Osborne's play, from Jimmy's railing against the iniquities of modern life to the values of middle-class bourgeois life.
- In *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, an American dramedy television series by Aaron Sorkin, the character Andy Mackinaw translates *Look Back in Anger* into Dutch.

In media

- "Look Back in Anger" is a song by British singer David Bowie from his 1979 album *Lodger*.
- "Look Back in Anger" is a song by British rock group Television Personalities from their first album *...And Don't the Kids Just Love It* (1981).
- "Don't Look Back in Anger" is a song by the British rock band Oasis on (What's the Story) *Morning Glory?* (1995).
- "Look Back in Annoyance" is the title a retrospective episode of *Daria*, an animated television series.

Chapter 3

Waiting for Godot

Waiting for Godot is an absurdist play by Samuel Beckett, in which two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, wait endlessly and in vain for the arrival of someone named Godot. Godot's absence, as well as numerous other aspects of the play, have led to many different interpretations since the play's 1953 premiere. It was voted "the most significant English language play of the 20th century". *Waiting for Godot* is Beckett's translation of his own original French version,

En attendant Godot, and is subtitled (in English only) "a tragicomedy in two acts". The original French text was composed between 9 October 1948 and 29 January 1949. The première was on 5 January 1953 in the Théâtre de Babylone, Paris. The production was directed by Roger Blin, who also played the role of Pozzo.

Plot

Act I

The play opens with Estragon struggling to remove one of his boots, giving up, and muttering, "Nothing to be done." Vladimir takes up the thought and muses on it. Estragon claims that he spent the night in a ditch and was beaten by unknown assailants. He finally succeeds in removing the boot, but looks inside and finds nothing; he later removes his second one. Bickering and bantering, the pair discusses whether they should repent. This leads to Vladimir's pondering about the two thieves crucified alongside Jesus Christ, and the strange fact that only one of the Four Evangelists mentions a thief being saved. All the while, Estragon struggles to maintain sufficiently preoccupying conversation, and Vladimir heckles him for his lack of conversational skills. Estragon suddenly decides to leave but Vladimir tells him that they must stay and wait for Godot—a segment of dialogue that repeats often throughout the play. Unfortunately, the pair cannot agree on whether or not they are in the right place, or that this is the right day for their meeting with Godot. They only know that they are supposed to wait for someone named Godot at a tree and there is indeed a leafless one nearby.

Estragon soon dozes off, but, after rousing him, Vladimir is not interested in hearing about Estragon's dreams—another recurring motif. Estragon wants to hear an old joke, which Vladimir starts but cannot finish, as he is urgently compelled to rush off and urinate due to a kidney ailment that pains him whenever he laughs. Estragon

next suggests that they hang themselves, but they abandon the idea when their strategy seems infeasible. Estragon asks what Godot is going to do for them once he arrives, but "Oh ... nothing very definite" is the best that Vladimir can manage. When Estragon declares that he is hungry, Vladimir provides a carrot (among a collection of turnips), at which Estragon idly gnaws, loudly reiterating their boredom.

"A terrible cry" from off-stage abruptly heralds the entrance of Lucky, a baggage-burdened, nearly-silent slave who has a rope tied around his neck. His aggressive and pompous master, Pozzo, soon appears holding the other end. The master barks orders at the slave and frequently calls him a "pig", but acts civil, though terse, towards the other two. The original pair is astounded by this arrival, and at first mistake Pozzo for Godot. Pozzo stops to rest, enjoying chicken and wine without any thought of sharing, and eventually casts the bones to the ground. Estragon jumps at the chance to have them, much to Vladimir's embarrassment, but Pozzo cautions that the bones now belong to Lucky, so Estragon will have to ask him for them personally. Estragon tries to communicate with the slave, who merely hangs his head without answering, so Estragon claims the bones. Now past his initial astonishment, Vladimir suddenly blows up at Pozzo for his mistreatment of Lucky. Pozzo ignores this and explains that he is on his way to sell Lucky, at which point the slave begins to cry. Pozzo presents a handkerchief, but, when Estragon tries to use it to wipe Lucky's tears away, Lucky kicks him in the shin. Pozzo then speaks maudlinly as though he were the victim and Lucky the abuser. When he thanks Vladimir and Estragon for their company and offers them some kind of compensation, Estragon tries to beg for money, but Vladimir quickly cuts him short. When Pozzo suggests that Lucky can "dance" and "think" for their entertainment, the other two agree. Lucky's dance, called "the Net", is clumsy and shuffling. Lucky's "thinking" is a long-winded and disjointed verbal stream of consciousness; it is the first and only time in the play that Lucky speaks. The soliloquy begins as a relatively coherent lecture on theology but quickly dissolves into mindless, agonising verbosity and only ends when Vladimir rips off Lucky's hat. Lucky collapses and, once he is revived, Pozzo has him pack up his bags and they leave at last.

Vladimir and Estragon begin to reflect on the encounter, with Vladimir suspecting that they have met Pozzo and Lucky before. Suddenly a boy arrives, purporting to be a messenger sent from Godot in order to tell the pair that Godot will not be coming that "evening but surely tomorrow." During Vladimir's interrogation of the boy, he asks if he came the day before, making it apparent that the two men have been waiting for an indefinite period and will likely continue this trend. After the boy departs, the moon finally appears and the two men decide to leave in order to find shelter for the night, yet they make no attempt to do so.

Act II

It is daytime again and Vladimir begins singing a recursive round about the death of a dog, but twice forgets the lyrics as he sings. As in the previous act, Estragon claims to have spent the night in a ditch and was beaten, despite the lack of any apparent injury. Vladimir comments that the formerly bare tree now has leaves and he tries to speak with Estragon about the proceedings of the day before, but Estragon retains only a vague recollection, hampered by his extremely unreliable memory. Vladimir triumphantly sees an opportunity to

produce evidence of the previous day's events by showing Estragon the wound on his leg from when Lucky kicked him. Only then does he notice that Estragon is not wearing any boots. He discovers the pair of boots nearby, which Estragon insists are not his but nevertheless fit when he tries them on. With no carrots left, Vladimir offers Estragon the pointless choice between a turnip and a radish. He then sings Estragon to sleep with a lullaby before noticing further evidence to confirm his memory: Lucky's hat lies on the ground from the day before. This leads to his involving Estragon in a frenetic hat-swapping scene. The two wait for Godot, as they did yesterday, and in the meantime distract themselves by playfully imitating Pozzo and Lucky, firing insults at each other and then making up, and attempting some fitness routines—all of which fail miserably and end quickly.

Pozzo and Lucky unexpectedly reappear, but the rope is much shorter than yesterday, and Lucky now guides Pozzo, rather than being driven by him since Pozzo apparently cannot see in front of him. As they arrive, Pozzo trips over Lucky and they together fall into a motionless heap. Estragon sees an opportunity to exact revenge on Lucky for kicking him. The issue is debated lengthily by Estragon and Vladimir. Pozzo offers them money but soon all four end up on the ground, idly converse, and finally stand up again. Pozzo insists that he is now blind and Lucky is now mute. He claims to have lost all notion of time, and assures the others that he cannot remember meeting them the day before, but also does not expect to recall today's events when tomorrow arrives. Pozzo's commanding arrogance from yesterday now (with his blindness) appears to have been replaced by humility and insight, though his demeanor is one of utter despair. His parting words—which Vladimir expands upon later—eloquently encapsulate the brevity of human existence: "They give birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more." Estragon has again begun snoozing by the time Lucky and Pozzo depart.

While Estragon sleeps on, Vladimir is encountered by (apparently) the same boy from yesterday, though Vladimir wonders whether he might be the other boy's brother. This time, Vladimir begins consciously realising the circular nature of his experiences and existence: he even predicts exactly what the boy will say, involving the same speech about Godot not arriving today but surely tomorrow. Vladimir particularly seems to experience a moment of revelation when he asks the boy about the colour of Godot's beard and is told that it is white. In a rush of anger, Vladimir abruptly chases the boy away, demanding that he be recognised the next time they meet. Estragon awakes and pulls his boots off again. He and Vladimir again consider hanging themselves, but they test the strength of Estragon's belt (hoping to use it as a noose) and it breaks; Estragon's trousers consequently fall down. They resolve tomorrow to bring a more suitable piece of rope and, if Godot fails to arrive, to commit suicide. Again, they decide to clear out for the night, though neither of them makes any attempt to move.

Characters

Beckett refrained from elaborating on the characters beyond what he had written in the play. He once recalled that when Sir Ralph Richardson "wanted the low-down on Pozzo, his home address and curriculum vitae, and seemed to make the forthcoming of this and similar information the condition of his condescending to illustrate

the part of Vladimir ... I told him that all I knew about Pozzo was in the text, that if I had known more I would have put it in the text, and that was true also of the other characters."

Vladimir and Estragon

When Beckett started writing he did not have a visual image of Vladimir and Estragon. They are never referred to as tramps in the text, though are often performed in such costumes on stage. Roger Blin advises: "Beckett heard their voices, but he couldn't describe his characters to me. [He said]: 'The only thing I'm sure of is that they're wearing bowlers.'" "The bowler hat was of course *de rigueur* for male persons in many social contexts when Beckett was growing up in Foxrock, and [his father] commonly wore one."

There are no physical descriptions of either of the two characters; however, the text indicates that Vladimir is likely the heavier of the pair. The bowlers and other broadly comic aspects of their personas have reminded modern audiences of Laurel and Hardy, who occasionally played tramps in their films. "The hat-passing game in *Waiting For Godot* and Lucky's inability to think without his hat on are two obvious Beckett derivations from Laurel and Hardy – a substitution of form for essence, covering for reality," wrote Gerald Mast in *The Comic Mind: Comedy and the Movies* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2nd ed. 1979). Beckett also alludes to the comedy team specifically in his novel *Watt* (1953), when a healthy shrub is described at one point as "a hardy laurel."

Vladimir stands through most of the play whereas Estragon sits down numerous times and even dozes off. "Estragon is inert and Vladimir restless." Vladimir looks at the sky and muses on religious or philosophical matters. Estragon "belongs to the stone", preoccupied with mundane things, what he can get to eat and how to ease his physical aches and pains; he is direct, intuitive. He finds it hard to remember but can recall certain things when prompted, e.g. when Vladimir asks: "Do you remember the Gospels?" Estragon tells him about the coloured maps of the Holy Land and that he planned to honeymoon by the Dead Sea; it is his short-term memory that is poorest and points to the fact that he may, in fact, be suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Al Alvarez writes: "But perhaps Estragon's forgetfulness is the cement binding their relationship together. He continually forgets, Vladimir continually reminds him; between them they pass the time." They have been together for fifty years but when asked – by Pozzo – they do not reveal their actual ages.

Vladimir's life is not without its discomforts too but he is the more resilient of the pair. "Vladimir's pain is primarily mental anguish, which would thus account for his voluntary exchange of his hat for Lucky's, thus signifying Vladimir's symbolic desire for another person's thoughts."

Throughout the play the couple refer to each other by pet names, "Didi" and "Gogo" although the boy addresses Vladimir as "Mister Albert". Beckett originally intended to call Estragon "Lévy" but when Pozzo questions him he gives his name as "Magrégor, André" and also responds to "Catulle" in French or "Catullus" in the first Faber edition. This became "Adam" in the American edition. Beckett's only explanation was that he was "fed up with Catullus".

Vivian Mercier described *Waiting for Godot* as a play which "has achieved a theoretical impossibility—a play in which nothing happens, that yet keeps audiences glued to their seats. What's more, since the second act is a

subtly different reprise of the first, he has written a play in which nothing happens, twice." (Irish Times, 18 February 1956, p. 6.). Mercier once questioned Beckett on the language used by the pair: "It seemed to me ... he made Didi and Gogo sound as if they had earned PhDs. 'How do you know they hadn't?' was his reply." They clearly have known better times, a visit to the Eiffel Tower and grape-harvesting by the Rhône; it is about all either has to say about their pasts. In the first stage production, which Beckett oversaw, both are "more shabby-genteel than ragged ... Vladimir at least is capable of being scandalised ... on a matter of etiquette when Estragon begs for chicken bones or money."

Pozzo and Lucky

Although Beckett refused to be drawn on the backgrounds of the characters, this has not stopped actors looking for their own motivation. Jean Martin had a doctor friend called Marthe Gautier, who was working at the Salpêtrière Hospital, and he said to her: "Listen, Marthe, what could I find that would provide some kind of physiological explanation for a voice like the one written in the text?" [She] said: 'Well, it might be a good idea if you went to see the people who have Parkinson's disease.' So I asked her about the disease ... She explained how it begins with a trembling, which gets more and more noticeable, until later the patient can no longer speak without the voice shaking. So I said, 'That sounds exactly what I need.'" "Sam and Roger were not entirely convinced by my interpretation but had no objections." When he explained to Beckett that he was playing Lucky as if he were suffering from Parkinson's, Beckett said, "'Yes, of course.' He mentioned briefly that his mother had had Parkinson's, but quickly moved on to another subject."

When Beckett was asked why Lucky was so named, he replied, "I suppose he is lucky to have no more expectations..."

It has been contended that "Pozzo and Lucky are simply Didi and Gogo writ large", unbalanced as their relationship is. However, Pozzo's dominance is noted to be superficial; "upon closer inspection, it becomes evident that Lucky always possessed more influence in the relationship, for he danced, and more importantly, thought – not as a service, but in order to fill a vacant need of Pozzo: he committed all of these acts for Pozzo. As such, since the first appearance of the duo, the true slave had always been Pozzo." Pozzo credits Lucky with having given him all the culture, refinement, and ability to reason that he possesses. His rhetoric has been learned by rote. Pozzo's "party piece" on the sky is a clear example: as his memory crumbles, he finds himself unable to continue under his own steam.

Little is learned about Pozzo besides the fact that he is on his way to the fair to sell his slave, Lucky. He presents himself very much as the Ascendancy landlord, bullying and conceited. His pipe is made by Kapp and Peterson, Dublin's best-known tobacconists (their slogan was 'The thinking man's pipe') which he refers to as a "briar" but which Estragon calls a "dudeen" emphasising the differences in their social standing. He confesses to a poor memory but it is more a result of an abiding self-absorption. "Pozzo is a character who has to overcompensate. That's why he overdoes things ... and his overcompensation has to do with a deep insecurity in him. These were things Beckett said, psychological terms he used."

Pozzo controls Lucky by means of an extremely long rope which he jerks and tugs if Lucky is the least bit slow. Lucky is the absolutely subservient slave of Pozzo and he unquestioningly does his every bidding with "dog-like devotion". He struggles with a heavy suitcase without ever thinking of dropping it. Lucky speaks only once in the play and it is a result of Pozzo's order to "think" for Estragon and Vladimir. Pozzo and Lucky have been together for sixty years and, in that time, their relationship has deteriorated. Lucky has always been the intellectually superior but now, with age, he has become an object of contempt: his "think" is a caricature of intellectual thought and his "dance" is a sorry sight. Despite his horrid treatment at Pozzo's hand however, Lucky remains completely faithful to him. Even in the second act when Pozzo has inexplicably gone blind, and needs to be led by Lucky rather than driving him as he had done before, Lucky remains faithful and has not tried to run away; they are clearly bound together by more than a piece of rope in the same way that Didi and Gogo are "[t]ied to Godot". Beckett's advice to the American director Alan Schneider was: "[Pozzo] is a hypomaniac and the only way to play him is to play him mad."

"In his ... Beckett struggled to retain the French atmosphere as much as possible, so that he delegated all the English names and places to Lucky, whose own name, he thought, suggested such a correlation."

The Boy

The cast list specifies only one boy.

The boy in Act I, a local lad, assures Vladimir that this is the first time he has seen him. He says he was not there the previous day. He confirms he works for Mr. Godot as a goatherd. His brother, whom Godot beats, is a shepherd. Godot feeds both of them and allows them to sleep in his hayloft.

The boy in Act II also assures Vladimir that it was not he who called upon them the day before. He insists that this too is his first visit. When Vladimir asks what Godot does the boy tells him, "He does nothing, sir." We also learn he has a white beard – possibly, the boy is not certain. This boy also has a brother who it seems is sick but there is no clear evidence to suggest that his brother is the boy that came in Act I or the one who came the day before that.

Godot

The identity of Godot has been the subject of much debate. "When Colin Duckworth asked Beckett point-blank whether Pozzo was Godot, the author replied: 'No. It is just implied in the text, but it's not true.'"

"When Roger Blin asked him who or what Godot stood for, Beckett replied that it suggested itself to him by the slang word for boot in French, godillot, godasse because feet play such a prominent role in the play. This is the explanation he has given most often."

"Beckett said to Peter Woodthorpe that he regretted calling the absent character 'Godot', because of all the theories involving God to which this had given rise. "I also told [Ralph] Richardson that if by Godot I had meant God I would [have] said God, and not Godot. This seemed to disappoint him greatly." That said, Beckett did once concede, "It would be fatuous of me to pretend that I am not aware of the meanings attached to the word 'Godot', and the opinion of many that it means 'God'. But you must remember – I wrote the play in French,

and if I did have that meaning in my mind, it was somewhere in my unconscious and I was not overtly aware of it." (Note: the French word for 'God' is 'Dieu'.) However, "Beckett has often stressed the strong unconscious impulses that partly control his writing; he has even spoken of being 'in a trance' when he writes."

Unlike elsewhere in Beckett's work, no bicycle appears in this play, but Hugh Kenner in his essay "The Cartesian Centaur" reports that Beckett once, when asked about the meaning of Godot, mentioned "a veteran racing cyclist, bald, a 'stayer,' recurrent placeman in town-to-town and national championships, Christian name elusive, surname Godeau, pronounced, of course, no differently from Godot." Waiting for Godot is clearly not about track cycling, but it is said that Beckett himself did wait for French cyclist Roger Godeau (1920–2000; a professional cyclist from 1943 to 1961), outside the velodrome in Roubaix.

Of the two boys who work for Godot only one appears safe from beatings, "Beckett said, only half-jokingly, that one of Estragon's feet was saved".

The name "Godot" is pronounced in Britain and Ireland with the emphasis on the first syllable.

Setting

There is only one scene throughout both acts. Two men are waiting on a country road by a tree. The men are of unspecified origin, though it is clear that they are not English by nationality (and in English-language productions are traditionally played with Irish accents). The script calls for Estragon to sit on a low mound but in practice – as in Beckett's own 1975 German production – this is usually a stone. In the first act the tree is bare. In the second, a few leaves have appeared despite the script specifying that it is the next day. The minimal description calls to mind "the idea of the **lieu vague**, a location which should not be particularised".

Alan Schneider once suggested putting the play on in a round – Pozzo has often been commented on as a ringmaster – but Beckett dissuaded him: "I don't in my ignorance agree with the round and feel Godot needs a very closed box." He even contemplated at one point having a "faint shadow of bars on stage floor" but, in the end, decided against this level of what he called "explicitation". In his 1975 Schiller-Theatre production there are times when Didi and Gogo appear to bounce off something "like birds trapped in the strands of net", in James Knowlson's description. Didi and Gogo are only trapped because they still cling to the concept that freedom is possible; freedom is a state of mind, so is imprisonment.[original research?]

Interpretations

"Because the play is so stripped down, so elemental, it invites all kinds of social and political and religious interpretation" wrote Normand Berlin in a tribute to the play in Autumn 1999, "with Beckett himself placed in different schools of thought, different movements and 'ism's. The attempts to pin him down have not been successful, but the desire to do so is natural when we encounter a writer whose minimalist art reaches for bedrock reality. 'Less' forces us to look for 'more,' and the need to talk about Godot and about Beckett has resulted in a steady outpouring of books and articles.

Throughout Waiting for Godot, the audience may encounter religious, philosophical, classical, psychoanalytical and biographical – especially wartime – references. There are ritualistic aspects and elements taken directly

from vaudeville and there is a danger in making more of these than what they are: that is, merely structural conveniences, avatars into which the writer places his fictional characters. The play "exploits several archetypal forms and situations, all of which lend themselves to both comedy and pathos." Beckett makes this point emphatically clear in the opening notes to *Film*: "No truth value attaches to the above, regarded as of merely structural and dramatic convenience." He made another important remark to Laurence Harvey, saying that his "work does not depend on experience – [it is] not a record of experience. Of course you use it."

Beckett tired quickly of "the endless misunderstanding". As far back as 1955, he remarked, "Why people have to complicate a thing so simple I can't make out." He was not forthcoming with anything more than cryptic clues, however: "Peter Woodthrope [who played Estragon] remembered asking him one day in a taxi what the play was really about: 'It's all symbiosis, Peter; it's symbiosis,' answered Beckett."

Beckett directed the play for the Schiller-Theatre in 1975. Although he had overseen many productions, this was the first time that he had taken complete control. Walter Asmus was his conscientious young assistant director. The production was not naturalistic. Beckett explained,

It is a game, everything is a game. When all four of them are lying on the ground, that cannot be handled naturalistically. That has got to be done artificially, balletically. Otherwise everything becomes an imitation, an imitation of reality . It should become clear and transparent, not dry. It is a game in order to survive."

Over the years, Beckett clearly realised that the greater part of *Godot's* success came down to the fact that it was open to a variety of readings and that this was not necessarily a bad thing. Beckett himself sanctioned "one of the most famous mixed-race productions of *Godot*, performed at the Baxter Theatre in the University of Cape Town, directed by Donald Howarth, with two black actors, John Kani and Winston Ntshona, playing Didi and Gogo; Pozzo, dressed in checked shirt and gumboots reminiscent of an Afrikaner landlord, and Lucky ('a shanty town piece of white trash') were played by two white actors, Bill Flynn and Peter Piccolo The Baxter production has often been portrayed as if it were an explicitly political production, when in fact it received very little emphasis. What such a reaction showed, however, was that, although the play can in no way be taken as a political allegory, there are elements that are relevant to any local situation in which one man is being exploited or oppressed by another."

Political

"It was seen as an allegory of the cold war" or of French resistance to the Germans. Graham Hassell writes, "[T]he intrusion of Pozzo and Lucky seems like nothing more than a metaphor for Ireland's view of mainland Britain, where society has ever been blighted by a greedy ruling élite keeping the working classes passive and ignorant by whatever means."

The pair (i.e. Vladimir and Estragon) is often played with Irish accents, as in the *Beckett on Film* project. This, some feel, is an inevitable consequence of Beckett's rhythms and phraseology, but it is not stipulated in the text. At any rate, they are not of English stock: at one point early in the play, Estragon mocks the English pronunciation of "calm" and has fun with "the story of the Englishman in the brothel".

Freudian

"Bernard Dukore develops a triadic theory in *Didi, Gogo and the absent Godot*, based on Sigmund Freud's trinitarian description of the psyche in *The Ego and the Id* (1923) and the usage of onomastic techniques. Dukore defines the characters by what they lack: the rational Go-go embodies the incomplete ego, the missing pleasure principle: (e)go-(e)go. Di-di (id-id) – who is more instinctual and irrational – is seen as the backward id or subversion of the rational principle. Godot fulfils the function of the superego or moral standards. Pozzo and Lucky are just re-iterations of the main protagonists. Dukore finally sees Beckett's play as a metaphor for the futility of man's existence when salvation is expected from an external entity, and the self is denied introspection."

Jungian (Carl Jung, personality studies/behaviorist)

"The four archetypal personalities or the four aspects of the soul are grouped in two pairs: the ego and the shadow, the persona and the soul's image (animus or anima). The shadow is the container of all our despised emotions repressed by the ego. Lucky, the shadow serves as the polar opposite of the egocentric Pozzo, prototype of prosperous mediocrity, who incessantly controls and persecutes his subordinate, thus symbolising the oppression of the unconscious shadow by the despotic ego. Lucky's monologue in Act I appears as a manifestation of a stream of repressed unconsciousness, as he is allowed to "think" for his master. Estragon's name has another connotation, besides that of the aromatic herb, tarragon: "estragon" is a cognate of oestrogen, the female hormone (Carter, 130). This prompts us to identify him with the anima, the feminine image of Vladimir's soul. It explains Estragon's propensity for poetry, his sensitivity and dreams, his irrational moods. Vladimir appears as the complementary masculine principle, or perhaps the rational persona of the contemplative type."

Philosophical

Existential

Broadly speaking, existentialists hold that there are certain fundamental questions that every human being must come to terms with if they are to take their subjective existences seriously and with intrinsic value. Questions such as death, the meaning of human existence and the place of (or lack of) God in that existence are among them. By and large, the theories of existentialism assert that conscious reality is very complex and without an "objective" or universally known value: the individual must create value by affirming it and living it, not by simply talking about it or philosophising it in the mind. The play may be seen to touch on all of these issues.

Much of Beckett's work – including *Godot* – is often considered by philosophical and literary scholars to be part of the movement of the Theatre of the Absurd, a form of theatre which stemmed from the Absurdist philosophy of Albert Camus. Absurdism itself is a branch of the traditional assertions of existentialism, pioneered by Søren Kierkegaard, and posits that, while inherent meaning might very well exist in the universe, human beings are incapable of finding it due to some form of mental or philosophical limitation. Thus humanity is doomed to be faced with the Absurd, or the absolute absurdity of existence in lack of intrinsic purpose.

Ethical

Just after Didi and Gogo have been particularly selfish and callous, the boy comes to say that Godot is not coming. The boy (or pair of boys) may be seen to represent meekness and hope before compassion is consciously excluded by an evolving personality and character, and in which case may be the youthful Pozzo and Lucky. Thus Godot is compassion and fails to arrive every day, as he says he will. No-one is concerned that a boy is beaten. In this interpretation, there is the irony that only by changing their hearts to be compassionate can the characters fixed to the tree move on and cease to have to wait for Godot.

Christian

Much of the play, steeped as it is in scriptural allusion, deals with the subject of religion. The boy from Act One mentions that he and his brother mind Godot's sheep and goats. Much can be read into Beckett's inclusion of the story of the two thieves from Luke 23:39–43 and the ensuing discussion of repentance. It is possible to see the solitary tree as representative of the Christian cross or, indeed, the tree of life. Many see God and Godot as one and the same. Vladimir's "Christ have mercy upon us!" could be taken as evidence that that is at least what he believes.

This reading is given further weight early in the first act when Estragon asks Vladimir what it is that he has requested from Godot:

VLADIMIR: Oh ... nothing very definite.

ESTRAGON: A kind of prayer.

VLADIMIR: Precisely.

ESTRAGON: A vague supplication.

VLADIMIR: Exactly.

According to Anthony Cronin, "[Beckett] always possessed a Bible, at the end more than one edition, and Bible concordances were always among the reference books on his shelves." Beckett himself was quite open on the issue: "Christianity is a mythology with which I am perfectly familiar so I naturally use it." As Cronin (one of his biographers) points out, his biblical references "may be ironic or even sarcastic".

"In answer to a defence counsel question in 1937 (during a libel action brought by his uncle) as to whether he was a Christian, Jew or atheist, Beckett replied, 'None of the three'". Looking at Beckett's entire oeuvre, Mary Bryden observed that "the hypothesised God who emerges from Beckett's texts is one who is both cursed for his perverse absence and cursed for his surveillant presence. He is by turns dismissed, satirised, or ignored, but he, and his tortured son, are never definitively discarded."

Autobiographical

Waiting for Godot has been described as a "metaphor for the long walk into Roussillon, when Beckett and Suzanne slept in haystacks during the day and walked by night of the relationship of Beckett to Joyce." The earliest drafts contain significant personal references, but these were later excised.

Homoerotic

That the play calls on only male actors, with scarcely a reference to women, has caused some to look upon Vladimir and Estragon's relationship as quasi-marital: "they bicker, they embrace each other, they depend upon each other They might be thought of as a married couple." In Act One, Estragon speaks gently to his friend, approaching him slowly and laying a hand on his shoulder. After asking for his hand in turn and telling him not to be stubborn, he suddenly embraces him but backs off just as quickly, complaining, "You stink of garlic!"

When Estragon reminisces about his occasional glances at the Bible and remembers how prettily coloured were the maps of the Dead Sea, he remarks, "That's where we'll go, I used to say, that's where we'll go for our honeymoon. We'll swim. We'll be happy." Furthermore, the temptation to achieve post-mortem erections arises in the context of a world without females. Estragon in particular is "[h]ighly excited", in contrast with Vladimir, who chooses this moment to talk about shrieking mandrakes His apparent indifference to his friend's arousal may be viewed as a sort of playful teasing.

Another possible instance of homoeroticism has been discerned in the segment in which Estragon "sucks the end of it [his carrot]", although Beckett describes this as a meditative action.

Beckett's objection to female actors

Beckett was not open to most interpretative approaches to his work. He famously objected when, in the 1980s, several women's acting companies began to stage the play. "Women don't have prostates", said Beckett, a reference to the fact that Vladimir frequently has to leave the stage to urinate.

In 1988, Beckett took a Dutch theatre company, De Haarlemse Toneelschuur to court over this issue. "Beckett lost his case. But the issue of gender seemed to him to be so vital a distinction for a playwright to make that he reacted angrily, instituting a ban on all productions of his plays in The Netherlands." This ban was short-lived, however: in 1991 (two years after Beckett's death), "Judge Huguette Le Foyer de Costil ruled that the production would not cause excessive damage to Beckett's legacy", and the play was duly performed by the all-female cast of the Brut de Beton Theater Company at the prestigious Avignon Festival.

The Italian Pontedera Theatre Foundation won a similar claim in 2006 when it cast two actresses in the roles of Vladimir and Estragon, albeit in the characters' traditional roles as men. At the 1995 Acco Festival, director Nola Chilton staged a production with Daniella Michaeli in the role of Lucky, and a 2001 production at Indiana University staged the play with women playing Pozzo and the Boy.

Production history

"[O]n 17 February 1952 ... an abridged version of the play was performed in the studio of the Club d'Essai de la Radio and was broadcast on [French] radio ... [A]lthough he sent a polite note that Roger Blin read out, Beckett himself did not turn up." Part of his introduction reads:

I don't know who Godot is. I don't even know (above all don't know) if he exists. And I don't know if they believe in him or not – those two who are waiting for him. The other two who pass by towards the end of each of the two acts, that must be to break up the monotony. All I knew I showed. It's not much, but it's enough for me, by a wide margin. I'll even say that I would have been satisfied with less. As for wanting to find in all that a

broader, loftier meaning to carry away from the performance, along with the program and the Eskimo pie, I cannot see the point of it. But it must be possible ... Estragon, Vladimir, Pozzo, Lucky, their time and their space, I was able to know them a little, but far from the need to understand. Maybe they owe you explanations. Let them supply it. Without me. They and I are through with each other.

The Minit edition appeared in print on 17 October 1952 in advance of the play's first full theatrical performance. On 4 January 1953, "[t]hirty reviewers came to the générale of *En attendant Godot* before the public opening ... Contrary to later legend, the reviewers were kind ... Some dozen reviews in daily newspapers range[d] from tolerant to enthusiastic ... Reviews in the weeklies [were] longer and more fervent; moreover, they appeared in time to lure spectators to that first thirty-day run" which began on 5 January 1953 at the Théâtre de Babylone, Paris. Early public performances were not, however, without incident: during one performance "the curtain had to be brought down after Lucky's monologue as twenty, well-dressed, but disgruntled spectators whistled and hooted derisively ... One of the protesters [even] wrote a vituperative letter dated 2 February 1953 to *Le Monde*."

The cast comprised Pierre Latour (Estragon), Lucien Raimbourg (Vladimir), Jean Martin (Lucky) and Roger Blin (Pozzo). The actor due to play Pozzo found a more remunerative role and so the director – a shy, lean man in real life – had to step in and play the stout bombaster himself with a pillow amplifying his stomach. Both boys were played by Serge Lecoq. The entire production was done on the thinnest of shoestring budgets; the large battered valise that Martin carried "was found among the city's refuse by the husband of the theatre dresser on his rounds as he worked clearing the dustbins," for example.

A particularly significant production – from Beckett's perspective – took place in Lüttringhausen Prison near Wuppertal in Germany. An inmate obtained a copy of the French first edition, translated it himself into German and obtained permission to stage the play. The first night had been on 29 November 1953. He wrote to Beckett in October 1954: "You will be surprised to be receiving a letter about your play *Waiting for Godot*, from a prison where so many thieves, forgers, toughs, homos, crazy men and killers spend this bitch of a life waiting ... and waiting ... and waiting. Waiting for what? Godot? Perhaps." Beckett was intensely moved and intended to visit the prison to see a last performance of the play but it never happened. This marked "the beginning of Beckett's enduring links with prisons and prisoners ... He took a tremendous interest in productions of his plays performed in prisons ... He even gave Rick Cluchey a former prisoner from San Quentin financial and moral support over a period of many years." Cluchey played Vladimir in two productions in the former Gallows room of the San Quentin California State Prison, which had been converted into a 65-seat theatre and, like the German prisoner before him, went on to work on a variety of Beckett's plays after his release. (The 1953 Lüttringhausen and 1957 San Quentin Prison productions of *Waiting For Godot* was the subject of the 2010 documentary film *The Impossible Itself*, produced and directed by Jacob Adams.)

The English-language premiere was on 3 August 1955 at the Arts Theatre, London, directed by the 24-year-old Peter Hall. During an early rehearsal Hall told the cast "I haven't really the foggiest idea what some of it means .

. . . But if we stop and discuss every line we'll never open." Again, the printed version preceded it (New York: Grove Press, 1954) but Faber's "mutilated" edition did not materialise until 1956. A "corrected" edition was subsequently produced in 1965. "The most accurate text is in *Theatrical Notebooks I*, (Ed.) Dougald McMillan and James Knowlson (Faber and Grove, 1993). It is based on Beckett's revisions for his Schiller-Theatre production (1975) and the London San Quentin Drama Workshop, based on the Schiller production but revised further at the Riverside Studios (March 1984)."

Like all of Beckett's translations, *Waiting for Godot* is not simply a literal translation of *En attendant Godot*. "Small but significant differences separate the French and English text. Some, like Vladimir's inability to remember the farmer's name (Bonnely), show how the translation became more indefinite, attrition and loss of memory more pronounced." A number of biographical details were removed, all adding to a general "vaguening" of the text which he continued to trim for the rest of his life.

In the nineteen-fifties, theatre was strictly censored in the UK, to Beckett's amazement since he thought it a bastion of free speech. The Lord Chamberlain insisted that the word "erection" be removed, "'Fartov' became 'Popov' and Mrs Gozzo had 'warts' instead of 'clap'". Indeed, there were attempts to ban the play completely. For example, Lady Dorothy Howitt wrote to the Lord Chamberlain, saying: "One of the many themes running through the play is the desire of two old tramps continually to relieve themselves. Such a dramatisation of lavatory necessities is offensive and against all sense of British decency. "The first unexpurgated version of *Godot* in England ... opened at the Royal Court on 30 December 1964.

The London run was not without incident. The actor Peter Bull, who played Pozzo, recalls the reaction of that first night audience:

"Waves of hostility came whirling over the footlights, and the mass exodus, which was to form such a feature of the run of the piece, started quite soon after the curtain had risen. The audible groans were also fairly disconcerting ... The curtain fell to mild applause, we took a scant three calls (Peter Woodthorpe reports only one curtain call) and a depression and a sense of anti-climax descended on us all."

The critics were less than kind but "[e]verything changed on Sunday 7 August 1955 with Kenneth Tynan's and Harold Hobson's reviews in *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times*. Beckett was always grateful to the two reviewers for their support ... which more or less transformed the play overnight into the rage of London." "At the end of the year, the Evening Standard Drama Awards were held for the first time ... Feelings ran high and the opposition, led by Sir Malcolm Sargent, threatened to resign if *Godot* won [The Best New Play category]. An English compromise was worked out by changing the title of the award. *Godot* became The Most Controversial Play of the Year. It is a prize that has never been given since."

The first production of the play in the United States was at the Coconut Grove Playhouse in Coconut Grove, Florida on 3 January 1956.[103] It starred Tom Ewell as Vladimir and Bert Lahr as Estragon. It bombed, but a Broadway version with Lahr, a new director (Herbert Berghof), and E. G. Marshall as Vladimir met with much

more favour. The production and its problems are described in John Lahr's book about his father, *Notes on a Cowardly Lion*.

In the Australian premiere at the Arrow Theatre in Melbourne in 1957, Barry Humphries played Estragon opposite Peter O'Shaughnessy's Vladimir.

Beckett resisted offers to film the play, although it was televised in his lifetime (including a 1961 American telecast with Zero Mostel as Estragon and Burgess Meredith as Vladimir that New York Times theatre critic Alvin Klein describes as having "left critics bewildered and is now a classic"). When Keep Films made Beckett an offer to film an adaptation in which Peter O'Toole would feature, Beckett tersely told his French publisher to advise them: "I do not want a film of *Godot*." The BBC broadcast a production of *Waiting for Godot* on 26 June 1961, a version for radio having already been transmitted on 25 April 1960. Beckett watched the programme with a few close friends in Peter Woodthorpe's Chelsea flat. He was unhappy with what he saw. "My play," he said, "wasn't written for this box. My play was written for small men locked in a big space. Here you're all too big for the place."

Although not his favourite amongst his plays it was the work which brought Beckett fame and financial stability and as such it always held a special place in his affections. "When the manuscript and rare books dealer, Henry Wenning, asked him if he could sell the original French manuscript for him, Beckett replied: 'Rightly or wrongly have decided not to let *Godot* go yet. Neither sentimental nor financial, probably peak of market now and never such an offer. Can't explain

In 1978, a production was staged by Walter Asmus at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York City with Sam Waterston as Vladimir, Austin Pendleton as Estragon, Milo O'Shea as Lucky and Michael Egan as Pozzo. A young Geoffrey Rush played Vladimir opposite his then flatmate Mel Gibson as Estragon in 1979 at the Jane Street Theatre in Sydney.

The Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater at Lincoln Center was the site of a 1988 revival directed by Mike Nichols, featuring Robin Williams (Estragon), Steve Martin (Vladimir), Bill Irwin (Lucky), and F. Murray Abraham (Pozzo). With a limited run of seven weeks and an all-star cast, it was financially successful but the critical reception was not particularly favourable, with Frank Rich of *The New York Times* writing, "Audiences will still be waiting for a transcendent *Godot* long after the clowns at Lincoln Center, like so many others passing through Beckett's eternal universe before them, have come and gone."

The play was revived in London's West End at the Queen's Theatre in a production directed by Les Blair, which opened on 30 September 1991. This was the first West End revival since the play's British première. Rik Mayall played Vladimir and Adrian Edmondson played Estragon, with Philip Jackson as Pozzo and Christopher Ryan as Lucky; the boy was played by Dean Gaffney and Duncan Thornley. Derek Jarman provided the scenic design, in collaboration with Madeleine Morris.

Neil Armfield directed a controversial production in 2003 with Max Cullen as Estragon at Sydney's Belvoir St Theatre.

On 30 April 2009, a production with Sir Ian McKellen as Estragon and Sir Patrick Stewart as Vladimir, opened at the Haymarket Theatre in London's West End. Their performances garnered critical acclaim, and were the subject of an eight-part documentary series called Theatreland, which was produced by Sky Arts. The Daily Telegraph reported that Patrick Stewart saw the ghost of John Baldwin Buckstone standing in the wings during a performance at the Haymarket. The production was revived at the same theatre in January 2010 for 11 weeks. In 2010, this same production toured internationally, with Roger Rees replacing Stewart as Vladimir.

A 2009 Broadway revival of the play starring Nathan Lane, John Goodman, John Glover and Bill Irwin was nominated for three Tony Awards: Best Revival of a Play, Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a Play (John Glover), and Best Costume Design of a Play (Jane Greenwood). It received rave reviews, and was a huge success for the Roundabout Theatre. Variety called it a "transcendent" production.

For the Stratford Shakespeare Festival's 61st season in 2013, Jennifer Tarver directed a new production at the Tom Patterson Theatre starring Brian Dennehy as Pozzo, Stephen Ouimette as Estragon, Tom Rooney as Vladimir and Randy Hughson as Lucky.

A new production directed by Sean Mathias began previews at the Cort Theatre on Broadway in late October 2013, with Ian McKellen as Estragon, Patrick Stewart as Vladimir, Billy Crudup as Lucky and Shuler Hensley as Pozzo.

Sydney Theatre staged Godot in November 2013 with Richard Roxburgh as Estragon and Hugo Weaving as Vladimir, Philip Quast as Pozzo. The production was originally to be directed by Tamás Ascher (hu) who had to withdraw and Andrew Upton stepped in

Chapter 4

The Tempest

The Tempest is a play by William Shakespeare, believed to have been written in 1610–11, and thought by many critics to be the last play that Shakespeare wrote alone. It is set on a remote island, where Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, plots to restore his daughter Miranda to her rightful place using illusion and skillful manipulation. He conjures up a storm, the eponymous tempest, to lure his usurping brother Antonio and the complicit King Alonso of Naples to the island. There, his machinations bring about the revelation of Antonio's lowly nature, the redemption of the King, and the marriage of Miranda to Alonso's son, Ferdinand.

There is no obvious single source for the plot of *The Tempest*, but researchers have seen parallels in Erasmus's *Naufragium*, Peter Martyr's *De orbe novo*, and eyewitness reports by William Strachey and Sylvester Jordain of the real-life shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* on the islands of Bermuda. In addition, one of Gonzalo's speeches is derived from Montaigne's essay *Of the Canibales*, and much of Prospero's renunciative speech is taken word for word from a speech by Medea in Ovid's poem *Metamorphoses*. The masque in Act 4 may have been a later addition, possibly in honour of the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Frederick V in 1613. The play was first published in the First Folio of 1623.

The story draws heavily on the tradition of the romance, and it was influenced by tragicomedy and the courtly masque and perhaps by the *commedia dell'arte*. It differs from Shakespeare's other plays in its observation of a stricter, more organized neoclassical style. Critics see *The Tempest* as explicitly concerned with its own nature as a play, frequently drawing links between Prospero's "art" and theatrical illusion, and early critics saw Prospero as a representation of Shakespeare, and his renunciation of magic as signalling Shakespeare's farewell to the stage. The play portrays Prospero as a rational, and not an occultist, magician by providing a contrast to him in Sycorax: her magic is frequently described as destructive and terrible, where Prospero's is said to be wondrous and beautiful. Beginning in about 1950, with the publication of *Psychology of Colonization* by Octave Mannoni, *The Tempest* was viewed more and more through the lens of postcolonial theory—exemplified in adaptations like Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête* set in Haiti—and there is even a scholarly journal on post-colonial criticism named after Caliban. Because of the small role that women play in the story, *The Tempest* has not attracted much feminist analysis. Miranda is typically viewed as having completely internalised the patriarchal order of things, thinking of herself as subordinate to her father.

The Tempest did not attract a significant amount of attention before the closing of the theatres in 1642, and only attained popularity after the Restoration, and then only in adapted versions. In the mid-19th century, theatre productions began to reinstate the original Shakespearean text, and in the 20th century, critics and scholars undertook a significant re-appraisal of the play's value, to the extent that it is now considered to be one of Shakespeare's greatest works. It has been adapted numerous times in a variety of styles and formats: in music, at least 46 operas by composers such as Fromental Halévy, Zdeněk Fibich and Thomas Adès; orchestral works by Tchaikovsky, Arthur Sullivan and Arthur Honegger; and songs by such diverse artists as Ralph Vaughan Williams, Michael Nyman and Pete Seeger; in literature, Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem *With a Guitar*, To Jane and W. H. Auden's *The Sea and the Mirror*; novels by Aimé Césaire and *The Diviners* by Margaret Laurence; in

paintings by William Hogarth, Henry Fuseli, and John Everett Millais; and on screen, ranging through a hand-tinted version of Herbert Beerbohm Tree's 1905 stage performance, the science fiction film *Forbidden Planet* in 1956, Peter Greenaway's 1991 *Prospero's Books* featuring John Gielgud as Prospero, to Julie Taymor's 2010 film version which changed Prospero to Prospera (as played by Helen Mirren), and Des McAnuff's 2010 Stratford Shakespeare Festival production which starred Christopher Plummer.

Characters

- Prospero, the main character. The overthrown Duke of Milan. He now lives on an island and has become a great sorcerer.
- Miranda, Prospero's daughter, who falls in love with the Prince of Naples, Ferdinand.
- Ariel, a mischievous spirit who does Prospero's bidding and is, at times, visible only to him. He became Prospero's "slave" because he was saved by Prospero from being trapped in a tree by Sycorax.
- Caliban, a villainous island native, the deformed son of a witch named Sycorax (see below), who ruled the island before Prospero arrived. He now works as Prospero's slave but despises him. In the play, he is known to have said many colorful curses. An example is "a southwest wind blow on ye and blister ye o'er".
- Sycorax, a deceased Algerian sorceress and mother of Caliban who was banished to the island before Prospero arrived and enslaved the spirits on the island, including Ariel. She is not seen or heard in the play, only referred to by other characters.
- Iris, Ceres, and Juno, spirits and goddesses
- Alonso, King of Naples
- Sebastian, Alonso's treacherous brother.
- Antonio, Prospero's brother, who usurped his position as Duke of Milan. He and Sebastian plot unsuccessfully to kill Alonso and his family to come to the throne.
- Ferdinand, Alonso's son. Falls in love with Miranda.
- Gonzalo, a kindly Neapolitan courtier, who secretly provided Prospero and Miranda with food, water, and books when they were pushed out to sea.
- Adrian and Francisco, lords.
- Trinculo, the King's jester and friend of Stephano.

- Stephano, the King's drunken steward and friend of Trinculo who tries to help Caliban overthrow his master
- Boatswain
- Master of the ship

Plot

Magician Prospero, rightful Duke of Milan, and his daughter, Miranda, have been stranded for twelve years on an island after Prospero's jealous brother Antonio (aided by Alonso, the King of Naples) deposed him and set him adrift with the then-3-year-old Miranda. Gonzalo, the King's counsellor, had secretly supplied their boat with plenty of food, water, clothes and the most-prized books from Prospero's library. Possessing magic powers due to his great learning, Prospero is reluctantly served by a spirit, Ariel, whom Prospero had rescued from a tree in which he had been trapped by the witch Sycorax. Prospero maintains Ariel's loyalty by repeatedly promising to release the "airy spirit" from servitude. Sycorax had been banished to the island, and had died before Prospero's arrival. Her son, Caliban, a deformed monster and the only non-spiritual inhabitant before the arrival of Prospero, was initially adopted and raised by him. He taught Prospero how to survive on the island, while Prospero and Miranda taught Caliban religion and their own language. Following Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda, he had been compelled by Prospero to serve as the magician's slave. In slavery, Caliban has come to view Prospero as a usurper and has grown to resent him and his daughter. Prospero and Miranda in turn view Caliban with contempt and disgust.

The play opens as Prospero, having divined that his brother, Antonio, is on a ship passing close by the island, has raised a tempest which causes the ship to run aground. Also on the ship are Antonio's friend and fellow conspirator, King Alonso of Naples, Alonso's brother and son (Sebastian and Ferdinand), and Alonso's advisor, Gonzalo. All these passengers are returning from the wedding of Alonso's daughter Claribel with the King of Tunis. Prospero contrives to separate the shipwreck survivors into several groups by his spells, and so Alonso and Ferdinand are separated, each believing the other to be dead.

Three plots then alternate through the play. In one, Caliban falls in with Stephano and Trinculo, two drunkards, who he believes have come from the moon. They attempt to raise a rebellion against Prospero, which ultimately fails. In another, Prospero works to establish a romantic relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda; the two fall immediately in love, but Prospero worries that "too light winning [may] make the prize light," and compels Ferdinand to become his servant, pretending that he regards him as a spy. In the third subplot, Antonio and Sebastian conspire to kill Alonso and Gonzalo so that Sebastian can become King. Ariel thwarts them, at Prospero's command. Ariel appears to the "three men of sin" (Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian) as a harpy, reprimanding them for their betrayal of Prospero. Prospero manipulates the course of his enemies' path through the island, drawing them closer and closer to him.

In the conclusion, all the main characters are brought together before Prospero, who forgives Alonso. He also forgives Antonio and Sebastian, but warns them against further betrayal. Ariel is charged to prepare the proper sailing weather to guide Alonso and his entourage (including Prospero and Miranda) back to the Royal fleet and then to Naples, where Ferdinand and Miranda will be married. After discharging this task, Ariel will finally be free. Prospero pardons Caliban, who is sent to prepare Prospero's cell, to which Alonso and his party are invited for a final night before their departure. Prospero indicates that he intends to entertain them with the story of his life on the island. Prospero has resolved to break and bury his magic staff, and "drown" his book of magic, and in his epilogue, shorn of his magic powers, he invites the audience to set him free from the island with their applause.

Date and sources

Date

The *Tempest* is thought by most scholars to have been written in 1610–11, and is generally accepted as the last play that Shakespeare wrote alone, although some have questioned either or both assertions. Scholars also note that it is impossible to determine if the play was written before, after, or at the same time as *The Winter's Tale*, the dating of which has been equally problematic. Edward Blount entered *The Tempest* into the Stationers' Register on 8 November 1623. It was one of 16 Shakespearean plays that Blount registered on that date

Contemporary sources

There is no obvious single source for the plot of *The Tempest*; it seems to have been created out of an amalgamation of sources. Since source scholarship began in the 18th century, researchers have suggested passages from Erasmus's *Naufragium* (1523), (translated into English 1606) and Richard Eden's 1555 translation of Peter Martyr's *De orbo novo* (1530). In addition, William Strachey's *A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Knight*, an eyewitness report of the real-life shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* in 1609 on the island of Bermuda while sailing towards Virginia, is considered by most critics to be one of Shakespeare's primary sources because of certain verbal, plot and thematic similarities. Although not published until 1625, Strachey's report, one of several describing the incident, is dated 15 July 1610, and critics say that Shakespeare must have seen it in manuscript sometime during that year. E.K. Chambers identified the *True Reportory* as Shakespeare's "main authority" for *The Tempest*, and the modern Arden editors say Shakespeare "surely drew" on Strachey and Montaigne for specific passages in the play. There has, however, been some scepticism about the alleged influence of Strachey in the play. Kenneth Muir argued that although "here is little doubt that Shakespeare had read ... William Strachey's *True Reportory*" and other accounts, "the extent of the verbal echoes of [the Bermuda] pamphlets has, I think, been exaggerated. There is hardly a shipwreck in history or fiction which does not mention splitting, in which the ship is not lightened of its cargo, in which the passengers do not give themselves up for lost, in which north winds are not sharp, and in which no one gets to shore by clinging to wreckage," and goes on to say that "Strachey's account of the shipwreck is blended with memories of Saint Paul's – in which too not a hair perished – and with Erasmus' colloquy."

Beyond the plot, Shakespeare drew the magical structure of thinking as well as the practices magic used by Prospero, from Cornelius Agrippa's *Vanity of the Arts and Sciences* that was translated into English in 1569. The English translation was used by his colleagues Christopher Marlowe (*Doctor Faustus*) and Thomas Nashe (*The Unfortunate Traveler*).

Another Sea Venture survivor, Sylvester Jourdain, also published an account, *A Discovery of The Barmudas* dated 13 October 1610, and Edmond Malone argued for the 1610–11 date on the account by Jourdain and the Virginia Council of London's *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia* dated 8 November 1610.

Other sources

The *Tempest* may take its overall structure from traditional Italian *commedia dell'arte*, which sometimes featured a magus and his daughter, their supernatural attendants, and a number of rustics. The *commedia* often featured a clown known as *Arlecchino* (or his predecessor, *Zanni*) and his partner *Brighella*, who bear a striking resemblance to Stephano and Trinculo; a lecherous Neapolitan hunchback who corresponds to Caliban; and the clever and beautiful Isabella, whose wealthy and manipulative father, Pantalone, constantly seeks a suitor for her, thus mirroring the relationship between Miranda and Prospero.

Gonzalo's description of his ideal society (2.1.148–57, 160–5) thematically and verbally echoes Montaigne's essay *Of the Canibales*, translated into English in a version published by John Florio in 1603. Montaigne praises the society of the Caribbean natives: "It is a nation ... that hath no kinde of traffike, no knowledge of Letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches, or of poverty; no contracts, no successions, no dividences, no occupation but idle; no respect of kinred, but common, no apparrell but natural, no manuring of lands, no use of wine, corne, or mettle. The very words that import lying, falsehood, treason, dissimulation, covetousnes, envie, detraction, and pardon, were never heard of amongst them. In addition, much of Prospero's renunciative speech (5.1.33–57) is taken word-for-word from a speech by Medea in Ovid's poem *Metamorphoses*.

Text

The *Tempest* presents relatively few textual problems in comparison with many of Shakespeare's other plays. The text in its current form has a simple history: it was first published in the *First Folio* in December 1623. In that volume, *The Tempest* is the first play in the section of *Comedies*, and therefore the opening play of the collection. This printing includes more stage directions than any of Shakespeare's other plays, although these directions seem to have been written more for a reader than for an actor. This leads scholars to infer that the editors of the *First Folio*, John Heminges and Henry Condell, added the directions to the folio to aid the reader, and that they were not necessarily what Shakespeare originally intended. Scholars have also wondered about the masque in Act 4, which seems to have been added as an afterthought, possibly in honour of the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Frederick V in 1613. However, other scholars see this as unlikely, arguing that to take the masque out of the play creates more problems than it solves.

Themes and motifs

The theatre

The *Tempest* is explicitly concerned with its own nature as a play, frequently drawing links between Prospero's Art and theatrical illusion; the shipwreck was a spectacle that Ariel performed, while Antonio and Sebastian are cast in a troop to act. Prospero may even refer to the Globe Theatre when he describes the whole world as an illusion: "the great globe ... shall dissolve ... like this insubstantial pageant". Ariel frequently disguises himself as figures from Classical mythology, for example a nymph, a harpy, and Ceres, acting as the latter in a masque and anti-masque that Prospero creates.

Early critics, such as Thomas Campbell in 1838, saw this constant allusion to the theatre as an indication that Prospero was meant to represent Shakespeare; the character's renunciation of magic thus signalling Shakespeare's farewell to the stage. This theory persists among later critics, and remains solidly within the critical canon.

Magic

Magic was a controversial subject in Shakespeare's day. In Italy in 1600, Giordano Bruno was burnt at the stake for his occult studies. Outside the Catholic world, in Protestant England where Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*, magic was also taboo; not all "magic", however, was considered evil. Several thinkers took a more rational approach to the study of the supernatural, with the determination to discover the workings of unusual phenomena. The German Henricus Cornelius Agrippa was one such thinker, who published in *De Occulta Philosophia* (1531, 1533) his observations of "divine" magic. Agrippa's work influenced Dr. John Dee, an Englishman and student of supernatural phenomena. Both Agrippa and Dee describe a kind of magic similar to Prospero's: one that is based on 16th-century science, rationality, and divinity, rather than the occult. When King James took the throne, Dee found himself under attack for his beliefs, but was able to defend himself successfully by explaining the divine nature of his profession. However, he died in disgrace in 1608.

Shakespeare is also careful to make the distinction that Prospero is a rational, and not an occultist, magician. He does this by providing a contrast to him in Sycorax. Sycorax is said to have worshipped the devil and been full of "earthy and abhorred commands". She was unable to control Ariel, who was "too delicate" for such dark tasks. Prospero's rational goodness enables him to control Ariel where Sycorax can only trap him in a tree. Sycorax's magic is frequently described as destructive and terrible, where Prospero's is said to be wondrous and beautiful. Prospero seeks to set things right in his world through his magic, and once that is done, he renounces it, setting Ariel free.

The soul

The *Tempest* can be interpreted as Shakespeare's last treatise on the human soul, in particular the Renaissance conception of the tripartite soul divided into vegetative, sensitive, and rational spheres, as described in Plato's tripartite theory of soul and Christian Philosophy. This was later also described in Freud's id, ego and super ego which was first linked to *The Tempest* in the 1956 screenplay for *Forbidden Planet* by Cyril Hume, Irving

Block, and Allen Adler. The film presents Caliban reinterpreted as the 'monster from the Id', although the theory is dismissed as 'obsolete' in that imagined future, and was also scholarly dismissed by James E Phillips in 1964. Prospero is exiled to an island with a symbol of his baser, 'vegetative' nature – Caliban – and his higher, 'sensitive' or supernatural side – Ariel. Some productions have seen the same actor play all three roles, making them symbols of the conflict within a fully actualised or awakened Prospero – that between crude selfish physicality and a higher, mystical side. In the screenplay for *Forbidden Planet* it is revealed that the id monster is an externalization of Dr Morbius' psyche.

For as long as Prospero is battling with these qualities and lost in books, he is banished from Milan. As the play finds its conclusion, he is both able to accept his base, brutal nature ("this thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" he says when taking responsibility for Caliban) while letting go of his connection with higher, powerful forces ("then to the elements be free, and fare thou well" he says, setting Ariel free). Abandoning magic and acknowledging the brutal potential of his nature, he is allowed to return to his rightful place as Duke, subject to agreement from the audience: "as you from crimes would pardon'd be, let your indulgence set me free."

Criticism and interpretation

Genre

The story draws heavily on the tradition of the romance, a fictitious narrative set far away from ordinary life. Romances were typically based around themes such as the supernatural, wandering, exploration and discovery. They were often set in coastal regions, and typically featured exotic, fantastical locations and themes of transgression and redemption, loss and retrieval, exile and reunion. As a result, while *The Tempest* was originally listed as a comedy in the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, subsequent editors have chosen to give it the more specific label of Shakespearean romance. Like the other romances, the play was influenced by the then-new genre of tragicomedy, introduced by John Fletcher in the first decade of the 17th century and developed in the Beaumont and Fletcher collaborations, as well as by the explosion of development of the courtly masque form by such as Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones at the same time.

Dramatic structure

The Tempest differs from Shakespeare's other plays in its observation of a stricter, more organised neoclassical style. The clearest indication of this is Shakespeare's respect for the three unities in the play: the Unities of Time, Place, and Action. Shakespeare's other plays rarely respected the three unities, taking place in separate locations miles apart and over several days or even years. The play's events unfold in real time before the audience, Prospero even declaring in the last act that everything has happened in, more or less, three hours. All action is unified into one basic plot: Prospero's struggle to regain his dukedom; it is also confined to one place, a fictional island, which many scholars agree is meant to be located in the Mediterranean Sea. Another reading suggests that it takes place in the New World, as some parts read like records of English and Spanish conquest in the Americas. Still others argue that the Island can represent any land that has been colonised.

Postcolonial

In Shakespeare's day, much of the world was still being discovered by European seafarers, and stories were coming back from distant islands, with myths about the Cannibals of the Caribbean, faraway Edens, and distant tropical Utopias. With the character Caliban (whose name is almost an anagram of Cannibal and also resembles "Cariban", the term then used for natives in the West Indies), Shakespeare may be offering an in-depth discussion into the morality of colonialism. Different views of this are found in the play, with examples including Gonzalo's Utopia, Prospero's enslavement of Caliban, and Caliban's subsequent resentment. Caliban is also shown as one of the most natural characters in the play, being very much in touch with the natural world (and modern audiences have come to view him as far nobler than his two Old World friends, Stephano and Trinculo, although the original intent of the author may have been different). There is evidence that Shakespeare drew on Montaigne's essay *Of Cannibals*—which discusses the values of societies insulated from European influences—while writing *The Tempest*.

Beginning in about 1950, with the publication of *Psychology of Colonization* by Octave Mannoni, *The Tempest* was viewed more and more through the lens of postcolonial theory. This new way of looking at the text explored the effect of the coloniser (Prospero) on the colonised (Ariel and Caliban). Though Ariel is often overlooked in these debates in favour of the more intriguing Caliban, he is nonetheless an essential component of them. The French writer Aimé Césaire, in his play *Une Tempête* sets *The Tempest* in Haiti, portraying Ariel as a mulatto who, unlike the more rebellious Caliban, feels that negotiation and partnership is the way to freedom from the colonisers. Fernandez Retamar sets his version of the play in Cuba, and portrays Ariel as a wealthy Cuban (in comparison to the lower-class Caliban) who also must choose between rebellion or negotiation. Although scholars have suggested that his dialogue with Caliban in Act two, Scene one, contains hints of a future alliance between the two when Prospero leaves, Ariel is generally viewed by scholars as the good servant, in comparison with the conniving Caliban—a view which Shakespeare's audience may well have shared. Ariel is used by some postcolonial writers as a symbol of their efforts to overcome the effects of colonisation on their culture. For example, Michelle Cliff, a Jamaican author, has said that she tries to combine Caliban and Ariel within herself to create a way of writing that represents her culture better. Such use of Ariel in postcolonial thought is far from uncommon; the spirit is even the namesake of a scholarly journal covering post-colonial criticism.

Feminist

The Tempest has only one female character, Miranda. Other women, such as Caliban's mother Sycorax, Miranda's mother and Alonso's daughter Claribel, are only mentioned. Because of the small role women play in the story in comparison to other Shakespeare plays, *The Tempest* has attracted much feminist criticism. Miranda is typically viewed as being completely deprived of freedom by her father. Her only duty in his eyes is to remain chaste. Ann Thompson argues that Miranda, in a manner typical of women in a colonial atmosphere, has completely internalised the patriarchal order of things, thinking of herself as subordinate to her father.

The less-prominent women mentioned in the play are subordinated as well, as they are only described through the men of the play. Most of what is said about Sycorax, for example, is said by Prospero. Further, Stephen Orgel notes that Prospero has never met Sycorax – all he learned about her he learned from Ariel. According to Orgel, Prospero's suspicion of women makes him an unreliable source of information. Orgel suggests that he is sceptical of female virtue in general, citing his ambiguous remark about his wife's fidelity. However, certain goddesses such as Juno, Ceres, Iris, and sea nymphs are in one scene of the play.

Afterlife

Shakespeare's day

A record exists of a performance of *The Tempest* on 1 November 1611 by the King's Men before James I and the English royal court at Whitehall Palace on Hallowmas night. The play was one of the eight Shakespearean plays acted at court during the winter of 1612–13 as part of the festivities surrounding the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with Frederick V, the Elector of the Palatinate of the Rhine. There is no further public performance recorded prior to the Restoration; but in his preface to the 1667 Dryden/Davenant version, Sir William Davenant states that *The Tempest* had been performed at the Blackfriars Theatre. Careful consideration of stage directions within the play supports this, strongly suggesting that the play was written with Blackfriars Theatre rather than the Globe Theatre in mind.

Restoration and 18th century

Adaptations of the play, not Shakespeare's original, dominated the performance history of *The Tempest* from the English Restoration until the mid-19th century. All theatres were closed down by the puritan government during the Commonwealth. Upon the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, two patent companies—the King's Company and the Duke's Company—were established, and the existing theatrical repertoire divided between them. Sir William Davenant's Duke's Company had the rights to perform *The Tempest*. In 1667 Davenant and John Dryden made heavy cuts and adapted it as *The Tempest or, The Enchanted Island*. They tried to appeal to upper-class audiences by emphasising royalist political and social ideals: monarchy is the natural form of government; patriarchal authority decisive in education and marriage; and patrilineality preeminent in inheritance and ownership of property. They also added characters and plotlines: Miranda has a sister, named Dorinda; and Caliban a sister, also named Sycorax. As a parallel to Shakespeare's Miranda/Ferdinand plot, Prospero has a foster-son, Hippolito, who has never set eyes on a woman. Hippolito was a popular breeches role, a man played by a woman, popular with Restoration theatre management for the opportunity to reveal actresses' legs. Scholar Michael Dobson has described *Enchanted Island* as "the most frequently revived play of the entire Restoration" and as establishing the importance of enhanced and additional roles for women.

In 1674, Thomas Shadwell re-adapted Dryden and Davenant's *Enchanted Island* as an opera (although in Restoration theatre "opera" did not have its modern meaning, instead referring to a play with added songs, closer in style to a modern musical comedy). Restoration playgoers appear to have regarded the Dryden/Davenant/Shadwell version as Shakespeare's: Samuel Pepys, for example, described it as "an old play

of Shakespeares" in his diary. The opera was extremely popular, and "full of so good variety, that I cannot be more pleased almost in a comedy" according to Pepys. The Prospero in this version is very different from Shakespeare's: Eckhard Auberlen describes him as "... reduced to the status of a Polonius-like overbusy father, intent on protecting the chastity of his two sexually naive daughters while planning advantageous dynastic marriages for them." Enchanted Island was successful enough to provoke a parody, *The Mock Tempest*, written by Thomas Duffett for the King's Company in 1675. It opened with what appeared to be a tempest, but turns out to be a riot in a brothel.

In the early 18th century, the Dryden/Davenant/Shadwell version dominated the stage. Ariel was—with two exceptions—played by a woman, and invariably by a graceful dancer and superb singer. Caliban was a comedian's role, played by actors "known for their awkward figures". In 1756, David Garrick staged another operatic version, a "three-act extravaganza" with music by John Christopher Smith.

The *Tempest* was one of the staples of the repertoire of Romantic Era theatres. John Philip Kemble produced an acting version which was closer to Shakespeare's original, but nevertheless retained Dorinda and Hippolito. Kemble was much-mocked for his insistence on archaic pronunciation of Shakespeare's texts, including "aitches" for "aches". It was said that spectators "packed the pit, just to enjoy hissing Kemble's delivery of 'I'll rack thee with old cramps, / Fill all they bones with aches'." The actor-managers of the Romantic Era established the fashion for opulence in sets and costumes which would dominate Shakespeare performances until the late 19th century: Kemble's Dorinda and Miranda, for example, were played "in white ornamented with spotted furs".

In 1757, a year after the debut of his operatic version, David Garrick produced a heavily cut performance of Shakespeare's script at Drury Lane, and it was revived, profitably, throughout the century.

19th century

It was not until William Charles Macready's influential production in 1838 that Shakespeare's text established its primacy over the adapted and operatic versions which had been popular for most of the previous two centuries. The performance was particularly admired for George Bennett's performance as Caliban; it was described by Patrick MacDonnell—in his *An Essay on the Play of The Tempest* published in 1840—as "maintaining in his mind, a strong resistance to that tyranny, which held him in the thralldom of slavery".

The Victorian Era marked the height of the movement which would later be described as "pictorial": based on lavish sets and visual spectacle, heavily cut texts making room for lengthy scene-changes, and elaborate stage effects. In Charles Kean's 1857 production of *The Tempest*, Ariel was several times seen to descend in a ball of fire. The hundred and forty stagehands supposedly employed on this production were described by the *Literary Gazette* as "unseen ... but alas never unheard". Hans Christian Andersen also saw this production and described Ariel as "isolated by the electric ray", referring to the effect of a carbon arc lamp directed at the actress playing the role. The next generation of producers, which included William Poeland Harley Granville-Barker, returned to a leaner and more text-based style.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Caliban, not Prospero, was perceived as the star act of *The Tempest*, and was the role which the actor-managers chose for themselves. Frank Benson researched the role by viewing monkeys and baboons at the zoo; on stage, he hung upside-down from a tree and gibbered.

20th century and beyond

Continuing the late-19th-century tradition, in 1904 Herbert Beerbohm Tree wore fur and seaweed to play Caliban, with waist-length hair and apelike bearing, suggestive of a primitive part-animal part-human stage of evolution. This "missing link" portrayal of Caliban became the norm in productions until Roger Livesey, in 1934, was the first actor to play the role with black makeup. In 1945 Canada Lee played the role at the Theatre Guild in New York, establishing a tradition of black actors taking the role, including Earle Hyman in 1960 and James Earl Jones in 1962.

In 1916, Percy MacKaye presented a community masque, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, at the Lewisohn Stadium in New York. Amidst a huge cast of dancers and masquers, the pageant centres on the rebellious nature of Caliban but ends with his plea for more knowledge ("I yearn to build, to be thine Artist / And 'stablish this thine Earth among the stars- / Beautiful!") followed by Shakespeare, as a character, reciting Prospero's "Our revels now are ended" speech.

John Gielgud played Prospero numerous times, and called it his favourite role. Douglas Brode describes him as "universally heralded as ... [the 20th] century's greatest stage Prospero".^[59] His first appearance in the role was in 1930: he wore a turban, later confessing that he intended to look like Dante. He played the role in three more stage productions, lastly at the Royal National Theatre in 1974.

Peter Brook directed an experimental production at the Round House in 1968, in which the text was "almost wholly abandoned" in favour of mime. According to Margaret Croydon's review, Sycorax was "portrayed by an enormous woman able to expand her face and body to still larger proportions – a fantastic emblem of the grotesque ... [who] suddenly ... gives a horrendous yell, and Caliban, with black sweater over his head, emerges from between her legs: Evil is born."

In spite of the existing tradition of a black actor playing Caliban opposite a white Prospero, colonial interpretations of the play did not find their way onto the stage until the 1970s. Performances in England directed by Jonathan Miller and by Clifford Williams explicitly portrayed Prospero as coloniser. Miller's production was described, by David Hirst, as depicting "the tragic and inevitable disintegration of a more primitive culture as the result of European invasion and colonisation." Miller developed this approach in his 1988 production at the Old Vic in London, starring Max von Sydow as Prospero. This used a mixed cast made up of white actors as the humans and black actors playing the spirits and creatures of the island. According to Michael Billington, "von Sydow's Prospero became a white overlord manipulating a mutinous black Caliban and a collaborative Ariel keenly mimicking the gestures of the island's invaders. The colonial metaphor was pushed through to its logical conclusion so that finally Ariel gathered up the pieces of Prospero's abandoned

staff and, watched by awe-struck tribesmen, fitted them back together to hold his wand of office aloft before an immobilised Caliban. The Tempest suddenly acquired a new political dimension unforeseen by Shakespeare."

Psychoanalytic interpretations have proved more difficult to depict on stage. Gerald Freedman's production at the American Shakespeare Theatre in 1979 and Ron Daniels' Royal Shakespeare Company production in 1982 both attempted to depict Ariel and Caliban as opposing aspects of Prospero's psyche. However neither was regarded as wholly successful: Shakespeare Quarterly, reviewing Freedman's production, commented that "Mr. Freedman did nothing on stage to make such a notion clear to any audience that had not heard of it before."

In 1988, John Wood played Prospero for the RSC, emphasising the character's human complexity. The Financial Times reviewer described him as "a demented stage manager on a theatrical island suspended between smouldering rage at his usurpation and unbridled glee at his alternative ethereal power".

Japanese theatre styles have been applied to The Tempest. In 1988 and again in 1992 Yukio Ninagawa brought his version of The Tempest to the UK. It was staged as a rehearsal of a Noh drama, with a traditional Noh theatre at the back of the stage, but also using elements which were at odds with Noh conventions. In 1992, Minoru Fujita presented a Bunraku (Japanese puppet) version in Osaka and at the Tokyo Globe.

Sam Mendes directed a 1993 RSC production in which Simon Russell Beale's Ariel was openly resentful of the control exercised by Alec McCowen's Prospero. Controversially, in the early performances of the run, Ariel spat at Prospero, once granted his freedom. An entirely different effect was achieved by George C. Wolfe in the outdoor New York Shakespeare Festival production of 1995, where the casting of Aunjanue Ellis as Ariel opposite Patrick Stewart's Prospero charged the production with erotic tensions. Productions in the late 20th-century have gradually increased the focus placed on sexual (and sometimes homosexual) tensions between the characters, including Prospero/Miranda, Prospero/Ariel, Miranda/Caliban, Miranda/Ferdinand and even Caliban/Trinculo.

The Tempest was performed at the Globe Theatre in 2000 with Vanessa Redgrave as Prospero, playing the role as neither male nor female, but with "authority, humanity and humour ... a watchful parent to both Miranda and Ariel." While the audience respected Prospero, Jasper Britton's Caliban "was their man" (in Peter Thomson's words), in spite of the fact that he spat fish at the groundlings, and singled some of them out for humiliating encounters. By the end of 2005, BBC Radio had aired 21 productions of The Tempest, more than any other play by Shakespeare. Several critics feel that the play is autobiographical. Trevor Nunn, in the PBS miniseries Shakespeare Uncovered, states that he feels that Prospero is meant to represent Shakespeare himself, and that Prospero's final farewell to magic is really Shakespeare's final farewell to his audience.

Music

The Tempest has more music than any other Shakespeare play, and has proved more popular as a subject for composers than most of Shakespeare's plays. Scholar Julie Sanders ascribes this to the "perceived 'musicality' or lyricism" of the play.

Two settings of songs from *The Tempest* which may have been used in performances during Shakespeare's lifetime have survived. These are "Full Fathom Five" and "Where The Bee Sucks There Suck I" in the 1659 publication *Cheerful Ayres or Ballads*, in which they are attributed to Robert Johnson, who regularly composed for the King's Men. It has been common throughout the history of the play for the producers to commission contemporary settings of these two songs, and also of "Come Unto These Yellow Sands".

The Tempest has also influenced songs written in the folk and hippie traditions: for example, versions of "Full Fathom Five" were recorded by Marianne Faithfull for *Come My Way* in 1965 and by Pete Seeger for *Dangerous Songs!* in 1966. The Decemberists' song "The Island: Come and See/The Landlord's Daughter/You'll Not Feel The Drowning" is thought by many to be based on the story of Caliban and Miranda. Michael Nyman's *Ariel Songs* are taken from his score for the film *Prospero's Books*.

Among those who wrote incidental music to *The Tempest* were:

- Arthur Sullivan: His graduation piece, completed in 1861, was a set of incidental music to "The Tempest".^[79] Revised and expanded, it was performed at The Crystal Palace in 1862, a year after his return to London, and was an immediate sensation.
- Ernest Chausson: in 1888 he wrote incidental music for *La tempête*, a French translation by Maurice Bouchor. This is believed to be the first orchestral work that made use of the celesta.
- Jean Sibelius: his 1926 incidental music was written for a lavish production at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. An epilogue was added for a 1927 performance in Helsinki. He represented individual characters through instrumentation choices: particularly admired was his use of harps and percussion to represent Prospero, said to capture the "resonant ambiguity of the character".
- Malcolm Arnold, Lennox Berkeley, Arthur Bliss, Engelbert Humperdinck, Hector Berlioz, Willem Pijper and Henry Purcell.

At least forty-six operas or semi-operas based on *The Tempest* exist. In addition to the Dryden/Davenant and Garrick versions mentioned in the "Restoration and 18th century" section above, Frederic Reynolds produced an operatic version in 1821, with music by Sir Henry Bishop. Other pre-20th-century operas based on *The Tempest* include Fromental Halévy's *La Tempesta* (1850) and Zdeněk Fibich's *Bouře* (1894).

In the 20th century, Kurt Atterberg's *Stormen* premiered in 1948 and Frank Martin's *Der Sturm* in 1955. Michael Tippett's 1971 opera *The Knot Garden*, contains various allusions to *The Tempest*. In Act 3, a psychoanalyst, Mangus, pretends to be Prospero and uses situations from Shakespeare's play in his therapy sessions. John Eaton, in 1985, produced a fusion of live jazz with pre-recorded electronic music, with a libretto by Andrew Porter. Michael Nyman's 1991 opera *Noises, Sounds & Sweet Airs* was first performed as an opera-ballet by Karine Saporta. This opera is unique in that the three vocalists, a soprano, contralto, and tenor, are voices rather than individual characters, with the tenor just as likely as the soprano to sing Miranda, or all three sing as one character.

The soprano who sings the part of Ariel in Thomas Adès' 21st-century opera is stretched at the higher end of the register, highlighting the androgyny of the role. This comment by Mike Silverman of the Associated Press—"Ades has made the role of the spirit Ariel a tour de force for coloratura soprano, giving her a vocal line that hovers much of the time well above high C."

Luca Lombardi's Prospero was premiered 2006 at Nuremberg Opera House. Ariel is sung by 4 female voices (S,S,MS,A) and has an instrumental alter ego on stage (flute). There is an instrumental alter ego (cello) also for Prospero.

Choral settings of excerpts from *The Tempest* include Amy Beach's *Come Unto These Yellow Sands* (SSAA, from *Three Shakespeare Songs*), Matthew Harris' *Full Fathom Five, I Shall No More to Sea, and Where the Bee Sucks* (SATB, from *Shakespeare Songs, Books I, V, VI*), Ryan Kelly's *The Tempest* (SATB, a setting of the play's Scene I), Jaakko Mäntyjärvi's *Full Fathom Five and A Scurvy Tune* (SATB, from *Four Shakespeare Songs and More Shakespeare Songs*), Frank Martin's *Songs of Ariel* (SATB), Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Full Fathom Five and The Cloud-capp'd Towers* (SATB, from *Three Shakespeare Songs*), and David Willcocks' *Full Fathom Five* (SSA).

Orchestral works for concert presentation include Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's fantasy *The Tempest* (1873), Fibich's symphonic poem *Bouře* (1880), John Knowles Paine's symphonic poem *The Tempest* (1876), Benjamin Dale's overture (1902), Arthur Honegger's orchestral prelude (1923), and Egon Wellesz's *Prosperos Beschwörungen* (five works 1934–36).

Ballet sequences have been used in many performances of the play since Restoration times. A one-act ballet of *The Tempest* by choreographer Alexei Ratmansky was premiered by American Ballet Theatre set to the incidental music of Jean Sibelius on October 30, 2013 in New York City.

Ludwig van Beethoven's 1802 Piano Sonata No. 17 in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2, was given the subtitle "The Tempest" some time after Beethoven's death because, when asked about the meaning of the sonata, Beethoven was alleged to have said "Read *The Tempest*". But this story comes from his associate Anton Schindler, who is often not trustworthy.

Literature and art

Percy Bysshe Shelley was one of the earliest poets to be influenced by *The Tempest*. His "With a Guitar, To Jane" identifies Ariel with the poet and his songs with poetry. The poem uses simple diction to convey Ariel's closeness to nature and "imitates the straightforward beauty of Shakespeare's original songs." Following the publication of Darwin's ideas on evolution, writers began to question mankind's place in the world and its relationship with God. One writer who explored these ideas was Robert Browning, whose poem "Caliban upon Setebos" (1864) sets Shakespeare's character pondering theological and philosophical questions. The French philosopher Ernest Renan wrote a closet drama, *Caliban: Suite de La Tempête* (*Caliban: Sequel to The Tempest*), in 1878. This features a female Ariel who follows Prospero back to Milan, and a Caliban who leads a coup against Prospero, after the success of which he actively imitates his former master's virtues. W. H. Auden's

"long poem" *The Sea and the Mirror* takes the form of a reflection by each of the supporting characters of *The Tempest* on their experiences. The poem takes a Freudian viewpoint, seeing Caliban (whose lengthy contribution is a prose poem) as Prospero's libido.

In 1968 Franco-Caribbean writer Aimé Césaire published *Une Tempête*, a radical adaptation of the play based on its colonial and postcolonial interpretations, in which Caliban is a black rebel and Ariel is mixed-race. The figure of Caliban influenced numerous works of African literature in the 1970s, including pieces by Taban Lo Liyong in Uganda, Lemuel Johnson in Sierra Leone, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in Kenya, and David Wallace of Zambia's *Do You Love Me, Master?*. A similar phenomenon occurred in late 20th-century Canada, where several writers produced works inspired by *Miranda*, including *The Diviners* by Margaret Laurence, *Prospero's Daughter* by Constance Beresford-Howe and *The Measure of Miranda* by Sarah Murphy. Other writers have feminised Ariel (as in Marina Warner's novel *Indigo*) or Caliban (as in Suniti Namjoshi's sequence of poems *Snapshots of Caliban*).

From the mid-18th century, Shakespeare's plays, including *The Tempest*, began to appear as the subject of paintings. In around 1735, William Hogarth produced his painting *A Scene from The Tempest*: "a baroque, sentimental fantasy costumed in the style of Van Dyck and Rembrandt". The painting is based upon Shakespeare's text, containing no representation of the stage, nor of the (Davenant-Dryden centred) stage tradition of the time. Henry Fuseli, in a painting commissioned for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery (1789) modelled his Prospero on Leonardo da Vinci. These two 18th-century depictions of the play indicate that Prospero was regarded as its moral centre: viewers of Hogarth's and Fuseli's paintings would have accepted Prospero's wisdom and authority. John Everett Millais's *Ferdinand Lured by Ariel* (1851) is among the Pre-Raphaelite paintings based on the play. In the late 19th century, artists tended to depict Caliban as a Darwinian "missing-link", with fish-like or ape-like features, as evidenced in Noel Paton's *Caliban*.

Charles Knight produced the *Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakespeare* in eight volumes (1838–43). The work attempted to translate the contents of the plays into pictorial form. This extended not just to the action, but also to images and metaphors: Gonzalo's line about "mountaineers dewlapped like bulls" is illustrated with a picture of a Swiss peasant with a goitre. In 1908, Edmund Dulac produced an edition of Shakespeare's *Comedy of The Tempest* with a scholarly plot summary and commentary by Arthur Quiller-Couch, lavishly bound and illustrated with 40 watercolour illustrations. The illustrations highlight the fairy-tale quality of the play, avoiding its dark side. Of the 40, only 12 are direct depictions of the action of the play: the others are based on action before the play begins, or on images such as "full fathom five thy father lies" or "sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not".

Fantasy writer Neil Gaiman based a story on the play in one issue of his comics series *The Sandman*. The comic stands as a sequel to the earlier 'Midsummer Night's Dream' issue. This issue follows Shakespeare over a period of several months as he writes the play, which is named as his last solo project, as the final part of his bargain with the Dream King to write two plays celebrating dreams. The story draws many parallels between the

characters and events in the play and Shakespeare's life and family relationships at the time. It is hinted that he based Miranda on his daughter Judith Shakespeare and Caliban on her suitor Thomas Quiney.

Fantasy writer L. Jagi Lamplighter wrote a series based on *The Tempest*. Her *Prospero's Daughter* series, from Tor, has been described as *Shakespeare meets Dante*. The books claim that Prospero never drowned his books and that he and his offsprings are still around in the present day, protecting mankind from supernatural enemies. When Prospero goes missing, Miranda must gather up the children Prospero has fathered since the end of Shakespeare's play and organize a rescue. The books are: *Prospero Lost*, *Prospero In Hell*, and *Prospero Regained*.

Screen

The Tempest first appeared on the screen in 1905. Charles Urban filmed the opening storm sequence of Herbert Beerbohm Tree's version at Her Majesty's Theatre for a 2½-minute flicker, on which individual frames were hand-tinted, long before the invention of colour film. In 1908, Percy Stowe directed a *Tempest* running a little over ten minutes, which is now a part of the British Film Institute's compilation *Silent Shakespeare*. Much of its action takes place on Prospero's island before the storm which opens Shakespeare's play. At least two further silent versions, one of them by Edwin Thanhouser, are known to have existed, but have been lost. The plot was adapted for the *Western Yellow Sky*, directed by William A. Wellman, in 1946.

The 1956 science fiction film *Forbidden Planet* set the story on Altair IV, a planet in space rather than an island in the ocean. Professor Morbius (Walter Pidgeon) and his daughter Altaira (Anne Francis) are the Prospero and Miranda figures. Both Prospero and Morbius have gained the knowledge required to harness the mighty forces that inhabit their new home. Ariel is represented by the helpful Robbie the Robot, while Sycorax is replaced with the powerful race of the Krell. Caliban is represented by the dangerous and invisible "monster from the id": a projection of Morbius' psyche, born from the Krell technology instead of Sycorax's womb.

In the opinion of Douglas Brode, there has only been one screen "performance" of *The Tempest* since the silent era: he describes all other versions as "variations". That one performance is the Hallmark Hall of Fame version from 1960, directed by George Schaefer, and starring Maurice Evans as Prospero, Richard Burton as Caliban, Lee Remick as Miranda and Roddy McDowall as Ariel. It cut the play to slightly less than ninety minutes. Critic Virginia Vaughan praised it as "light as a soufflé, but ... substantial enough for the main course."

In 1979, animator George Dunning, director of *Yellow Submarine*, planned an animated version of *The Tempest*; but died while working on it.

Also in 1979, Derek Jarman produced a homoerotic *Tempest* which used Shakespeare's language, but was most notable for its deviations from Shakespeare. One scene shows a corpulent and naked Sycorax (Claire Davenport) breastfeeding her adult son Caliban (Jack Birkett). The film reaches its climax with Elisabeth Welch belting out *Stormy Weather*. The central performances were Toyah Willcox' Miranda and Heathcote Williams' Prospero, a "dark brooding figure who takes pleasure in exploiting both his servants"

There have been several other television versions of the play; among the most notable was the 1980 BBC Shakespeare production, virtually complete, starring Michael Hordern as Prospero.

Paul Mazursky's 1982 modern-language adaptation of *The Tempest*, with Philip Dimitrius (Prospero) as a disillusioned New York architect who retreats to a lonely Greek island with his daughter Miranda after learning of his wife Antonia's infidelity with Alonzo, dealt frankly with the sexual tensions of the characters' isolated existence. The Caliban character, the goatherd Kalibanos, asks Philip which of them is going to have sex with Miranda. John Cassavetes played Philip, Raul Julia Kalibanos, Gena Rowlands Antonia and Molly Ringwald Miranda. Susan Sarandon plays the Ariel character, Philip's frequently bored girlfriend Aretha. The film has been criticised as "overlong and rambling", but also praised for its good humour, especially in a sequence in which Kalibanos' and his goats dance to Kander and Ebb's *New York, New York*.

John Gielgud has written that playing Prospero in a film of *The Tempest* was his life's ambition. Over the years, he approached Alain Resnais, Ingmar Bergman, Akira Kurosawa, and Orson Welles to direct. Eventually, the project was taken on by Peter Greenaway, who directed *Prospero's Books* (1991) featuring "an 87-year-old John Gielgud and an impressive amount of nudity". Prospero is reimagined as the author of *The Tempest*, speaking the lines of the other characters, as well as his own. Although the film was acknowledged as innovative in its use of Quantel Paintbox to create visual tableaux, resulting in "unprecedented visual complexity", critical responses to the film were frequently negative: John Simon called it "contemptible and pretentious".

The Swedish-made animated film from 1989 called "Resan till Melonia" (directed by Per Åhlin) is an adaptation of the Shakespeare play, focusing on ecological values. "Resan till Melonia" was critically acclaimed for its stunning visuals drawn by Åhlin and its at times quite dark and nightmare-like sequences, even though the film was originally marketed for children.

Closer to the spirit of Shakespeare's original, in the view of critics such as Brode, is Leon Garfield's abridgement of the play for S4C's 1992 *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* series. The 29-minute production, directed by Stanislav Sokolov and featuring Timothy West as the voice of Prospero, used stop-motion puppets to capture the fairy-tale quality of the play. Disney's animated feature *Pocahontas* has been described as a "politically corrected" *Tempest*. Another "offbeat variation" (in Brode's words) was produced for NBC in 1998: Jack Bender's *The Tempest* featured Peter Fonda as Gideon Prosper, a Southern slave-owner forced off his plantation by his brother shortly before the Civil War. A magician who has learned his art from one of his slaves, Prosper uses his magic to protect his teenage daughter and to assist the Union Army.

The PBS series *Wishbone* featured a television adaptation of "The Tempest" in its episode "Shakespaw" with Wishbone as Ariel.

In Julie Taymor's 2010 film version of *The Tempest*, Prospero is a woman named Prospera, played by Helen Mirren.

The Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada presented a version in 2010 in which Christopher Plummer played Prospero. It was subsequently filmed in hi-def and is now available on DVD.

The anime and manga series Blast of Tempest was heavily influenced by The Tempest and Hamlet. Where several dialogues and plot elements pays homage to the two works of Shakespeare, which are two stories of retribution, albeit with completely opposing outcome.

In The Maltese Falcon Humphrey Bogart says "It's the stuff that dreams are made of." This expression is derived ultimately from Prospero's:

- "We are such stuff
- As dreams are made on, and our little life
- Is rounded with a sleep."

Chapter 5

King Lear

King Lear is a tragedy by William Shakespeare. The title character descends into madness after disposing of his estate between two of his three daughters based on their flattery, bringing tragic consequences for all. The play is based on the legend of Leir of Britain, a mythological pre-Roman Celtic king. It has been widely adapted for the stage and motion pictures, and the role of Lear has been coveted and played by many of the world's most accomplished actors.

The play was written between 1603 and 1606 and later revised. Shakespeare's earlier version, *The True Chronicle of the History of the Life and Death of King Lear and His Three Daughters*, was published in quarto in 1608. *The Tragedy of King Lear*, a more theatrical version, was included in the 1623 First Folio. Modern editors usually conflate the two, though some insist that each version has its individual integrity that should be preserved.

After the Restoration, the play was often revised with a happy ending for audiences who disliked its dark and depressing tone, but since the 19th century Shakespeare's original version has been regarded as one of his supreme achievements. The tragedy is particularly noted for its probing observations on the nature of human suffering and kinship. George Bernard Shaw wrote, "No man will ever write a better tragedy than Lear"

Characters

- Lear, King of Britain
- Goneril (sometimes written Gonerill or Gonoril), eldest daughter of Lear
- Regan, second daughter of Lear
- Cordelia, youngest daughter of Lear
- Duke of Albany, husband to Goneril
- Duke of Cornwall, husband to Regan
- Earl of Gloucester (sometimes written as Gloster)
- Earl of Kent, often appearing under the disguise of Caius
- Edgar, son of Gloucester
- Edmund (sometimes written Edmond), illegitimate son of Gloucester
- Poor Tom, disguised Edgar

- Oswald, steward to Goneril
- Fool, Lear's fool or court jester (not his nephew, he calls Lear nuncle in jest)
- King of France, suitor and later husband to Cordelia
- Duke of Burgundy, suitor to Cordelia
- Curan, a courtier
- Old man, tenant of Gloucester
- A Doctor, an Officer employed by Edmund, a Gentleman attending on Cordelia, a Herald, Servants to Cornwall, Knights of Lear's Train, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants

Synopsis

King Lear, who is elderly and wants to retire from power, decides to divide his realm among his three daughters, and offers the largest share to the one who loves him best. Goneril and Regan both proclaim in fulsome terms that they love him more than anything in the world, which pleases him. For Cordelia, there is nothing to compare her love to, nor words to properly express it; she speaks honestly but bluntly, which infuriates him. In his anger he disinherits her, and divides the kingdom between Regan and Goneril. Kent objects to this unfair treatment. Lear is further enraged by Kent's protests, and banishes him from the country. Lear summons the Duke of Burgundy and the King of France, who have both proposed marriage to Cordelia. Learning that Cordelia has been disinherited, the Duke of Burgundy withdraws his suit, but the King of France is impressed by her honesty and marries her anyway.

Lear announces he will live alternately with Goneril and Regan, and their husbands, the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall respectively. He reserves to himself a retinue of one hundred knights, to be supported by his daughters. Goneril and Regan speak privately, revealing that their declarations of love were fake, and they view Lear as an old and foolish man.

Edmund resents his illegitimate status, and plots to dispose of his legitimate older brother Edgar. He tricks their father Gloucester with a forged letter, making him think Edgar plans to usurp the estate. Kent returns from exile in disguise under the name of Caius, and Lear hires him as a servant. Lear discovers that now that Goneril has power, she no longer respects him. She orders him to behave better and reduces his retinue. Enraged, Lear departs for Regan's home. The Fool mocks Lear's misfortune.

Edmund learns from Curan that there is likely to be war between Albany and Cornwall, and that Regan and Cornwall are to arrive at Gloucester's house that evening. Taking advantage of the arrival of the duke and Regan, Edmund fakes an attack by Edgar, and Gloucester is completely taken in. He disinherits Edgar and proclaims him an outlaw.

Bearing Lear's message to Regan, Kent-as-Caius meets Oswald at Gloucester's home, quarrels with him, and is put in the stocks by Regan and her husband Cornwall. When Lear arrives, he objects to the mistreatment of his messenger, but Regan is as dismissive of her father as Goneril was. Lear is enraged but impotent. Goneril arrives and supports Regan's argument against him. Lear yields completely to his rage. He rushes out into a storm to rant against his ungrateful daughters, accompanied by the mocking Fool. Kent later follows to protect him. Gloucester protests against Lear's mistreatment. Wandering on the heath after the storm, Lear meets Edgar, in the guise of a madman named Tom o'Bedlam. Edgar babbles madly while Lear denounces his daughters. Kent leads them all to shelter.

Edmund betrays Gloucester to Cornwall, Regan, and Goneril. He shows a letter from his father to the King of France asking for help against them; and in fact a French army has landed in Britain. Once Edmund leaves with Goneril to warn Albany about the invasion, Gloucester is arrested, and Cornwall gouges out Gloucester's eyes. As he is doing so, a servant is overcome with rage by what he is witnessing and attacks Cornwall, mortally wounding him. Regan kills the servant, and tells Gloucester that Edmund betrayed him; then she turns him out to wander the heath too. Edgar, in his madman's guise, meets his blinded father on the heath. Gloucester, not recognising him, begs Tom to lead him to a cliff at Dover so that he may jump to his death.

Goneril discovers that she finds Edmund more attractive than her honest husband Albany, whom she regards as cowardly. Albany has developed a conscience - he is disgusted by the sisters' treatment of Lear, and the mutilation of Gloucester, and denounces his wife. Goneril sends Edmund back to Regan; receiving news of Cornwall's death, she fears her newly widowed sister may steal Edmund and sends him a letter through Oswald. Kent leads Lear to the French army, which is commanded by Cordelia. But Lear is half-mad and terribly embarrassed by his earlier follies. At Regan's instigation, Albany joins his forces with hers against the French. Goneril's suspicions about Regan's motives are confirmed and returned, as Regan rightly guesses the meaning of her letter and declares to Oswald that she is a more appropriate match for Edmund. Edgar pretends to lead Gloucester to a cliff, then changes his voice and tells Gloucester he has miraculously survived a great fall. Lear appears, by now completely mad. He rants that the whole world is corrupt and runs off.

Oswald appears, still looking for Edmund. On Regan's orders, he tries to kill Gloucester but is killed by Edgar. In Oswald's pocket, Edgar finds Goneril's letter, in which she encourages Edmund to kill her husband and take her as his wife. Kent and Cordelia take charge of Lear, whose madness slowly passes. Regan, Goneril, Albany, and Edmund meet with their forces. Albany insists that they fight the French invaders but not harm Lear or Cordelia. The two sisters lust for Edmund, who has made promises to both. He considers the dilemma and plots the deaths of Albany, Lear, and Cordelia. Edgar gives Goneril's letter to Albany. The armies meet in battle, the British defeat the French, and Lear and Cordelia are captured. Edmund sends them off with secret orders for execution.

The victorious British leaders meet, and the recently widowed Regan now declares she will marry Edmund. But Albany exposes the intrigues of Edmund and Goneril and proclaims Edmund a traitor. Regan falls ill, and is

escorted offstage, where she dies. It is stated that Goneril slipped poison into her food. Edmund defies Albany, who calls for a trial by combat. Edgar appears in his own clothes, and challenges Edmund to a duel. Edgar wounds Edmund fatally, though he does not die immediately. Albany confronts Goneril with the letter which was intended to be his death warrant; she flees in shame and rage. Edgar reveals himself, and reports that Gloucester died offstage from the shock and joy of learning that Edgar is alive, after Edgar revealed himself to his father.

Offstage, Goneril, with all her evil plans thwarted, commits suicide. The dying Edmund decides, though he admits it is against his own character, to try and save Lear and Cordelia; however, his confession comes too late. Soon after Albany sends men to countermand Edmund's orders, Lear enters bearing Cordelia's corpse in his arms, having survived by killing the executioner. Lear now recognizes Kent, but fails to make the connection between Kent and his alter-ego, Caius. Albany urges Lear to resume his throne, but like Gloucester, the trials Lear has been through have finally overwhelmed him, and he dies. Albany then asks Kent and Edgar to take charge of the throne. Kent declines, explaining that his master is calling him on a journey. It is unclear whether Kent intends to commit suicide, following Lear into death, or feels he is going to die in the same manner as Lear and Gloucester. Finally, either Albany (in the Quarto version) or Edgar (in the Folio version) has the final speech, with the implication that he will now become king.

Sources

Shakespeare's play is based on various accounts of the semi-legendary Brythonic figure Leir of Britain, whose name has been linked by some scholars to the Brythonic god Lir/Liŷr, though in actuality the names are not etymologically related. Shakespeare's most important source is probably the second edition of *The Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande* by Raphael Holinshed, published in 1587. Holinshed himself found the story in the earlier *Historia Regum Britanniae* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, that was written in the 12th century. Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, published 1590, also contains a character named Cordelia, who also dies from hanging, as in *King Lear*.

Other possible sources are the anonymous play *King Leir* (published in 1605); *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1574), by John Higgins; *The Malcontent* (1604), by John Marston; *The London Prodigal* (1605); *Arcadia* (1580–1590), by Sir Philip Sidney, from which Shakespeare took the main outline of the Gloucester subplot; *Montaigne's Essays*, which were translated into English by John Florio in 1603; *An Historical Description of Iland of Britaine*, by William Harrison; *Remaines Concerning Britaine*, by William Camden (1606); *Albion's England*, by William Warner, (1589); and *A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures*, by Samuel Harsnett (1603), which provided some of the language used by Edgar while he feigns madness. *King Lear* is also a literary variant of a common fairy tale, *Love Like Salt*, Aarne-Thompson type 923, in which a father rejects his youngest daughter for a statement of her love that does not please him.

The source of the subplot involving Gloucester, Edgar, and Edmund is a tale in Philip Sidney's *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, with a blind Paphlagonian king and his two sons, Leonatus and Plexitrus.

Changes from source material

Besides the subplot involving the Earl of Gloucester and his sons, the principal innovation Shakespeare made to this story was the death of Cordelia and Lear at the end. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this tragic ending was much criticised and alternative versions were written and performed, in which the leading characters survived and Edgar and Cordelia were married (despite the fact that Cordelia was already betrothed to the King of France).

Date and text

Although an exact date of composition cannot be given, many academic editors of the play date King Lear between 1603 and 1606. The latest it could have been written is 1606, as the Stationers' Register notes a performance on 26 December 1606. The 1603 date originates from words in Edgar's speeches which may derive from Samuel Harsnett's Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures (1603). In his Arden edition, R.A. Foakes argues for a date of 1605–6, because one of Shakespeare's sources, The True Chronicle History of King Leir, was not published until 1605; close correspondences between that play and Shakespeare's suggest that he may have been working from a text (rather than from recollections of a performance). Conversely, Frank Kermode, in the Riverside Shakespeare, considers the publication of Leir to have been a response to performances of Shakespeare's already-written play; noting a sonnet by William Strachey that may have verbal resemblances with Lear, Kermode concludes that "1604-5 seems the best compromise". Dr. Naseeb Shaheen dates the play c1605-6 per line 1.2.103 "These late eclipses in the sun and moon" which relates to the lunar eclipse of September 27, 1605 and the solar eclipse of October 2, 1605.

The modern text of King Lear derives from three sources: two quartos, published in 1608 (Q1) and 1619 (Q2) respectively, and the version in the First Folio of 1623 (F1). The differences between these versions are significant. Q1 contains 285 lines not in F1; F1 contains around 100 lines not in Q1. Also, at least a thousand individual words are changed between the two texts, each text has a completely different style of punctuation, and about half the verse lines in the F1 are either printed as prose or differently divided in the Q1. The early editors, beginning with Alexander Pope, simply conflated the two texts, creating the modern version that has remained nearly universal for centuries. The conflated version is born from the presumption that Shakespeare wrote only one original manuscript, now unfortunately lost, and that the Quarto and Folio versions are distortions of that original.

As early as 1931, Madeleine Doran suggested that the two texts had basically different provenances, and that these differences between them were critically interesting. This argument, however, was not widely discussed until the late 1970s, when it was revived, principally by Michael Warren and Gary Taylor. Their thesis, while controversial, has gained significant acceptance. It posits, essentially, that the Quarto derives from something close to Shakespeare's foul papers, and the Folio is drawn in some way from a promptbook, prepared for production by Shakespeare's company or someone else. In short, Q1 is "authorial"; F1 is "theatrical." In criticism, the rise of "revision criticism" has been part of the pronounced trend away from mid-century

formalism. The New Cambridge Shakespeare has published separate editions of Q and F; the most recent Pelican Shakespeare edition contains both the 1608 Quarto and the 1623 Folio text as well as a conflated version; the New Arden edition edited by R.A. Foakes is not the only recent edition to offer the traditional conflated text.

Analysis and criticism

The words "nature," "natural" and "unnatural" occur over forty times in the play. There was a debate in Shakespeare's time about what nature really was like, a debate that pervades the play and finds symbolic expression in Lear's changing attitude to Thunder. John F. Danby, in his *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature – A Study of King Lear* (1949), argues that Lear dramatises, among other things, the current meanings of "Nature." There are two strongly contrasting views of Nature in the play: that of the Lear party (Lear, Gloucester, Albany, Kent), exemplifying the philosophy of Bacon and Hooker, and that of the Edmund party (Edmund, Cornwall, Goneril, Regan), akin to the views later formulated by Hobbes. Along with the two views of Nature, Lear contains two views of Reason, brought out in Gloucester and Edmund's speeches on astrology (1.2). The rationality of the Edmund party is one with which a modern audience more readily identifies. But the Edmund party carries bold rationalism to such extremes that it becomes madness: a madness-in-reason, the ironic counterpart of Lear's "reason in madness" (IV.6.190) and the Fool's wisdom-in-folly. This betrayal of reason lies behind the play's later emphasis on feeling.

The two Natures and the two Reasons imply two societies. Edmund is the New Man, a member of an age of competition, suspicion, glory, in contrast with the older society which has come down from the Middle Ages, with its belief in co-operation, reasonable decency, and respect for the whole as greater than the part. King Lear is thus an allegory. The older society, that of the medieval vision, with its doting king, falls into error, and is threatened by the new machiavellianism; it is regenerated and saved by a vision of a new order, embodied in the king's rejected daughter. Cordelia, in the allegorical scheme, is threefold: a person; an ethical principle (love); and a community. Nevertheless, Shakespeare's understanding of the New Man is so extensive as to amount almost to sympathy. Edmund is the last great expression in Shakespeare of that side of Renaissance individualism – the energy, the emancipation, the courage – which has made a positive contribution to the heritage of the West. "He embodies something vital which a final synthesis must reaffirm. But he makes an absolute claim which Shakespeare will not support. It is right for man to feel, as Edmund does, that society exists for man, not man for society. It is not right to assert the kind of man Edmund would erect to this supremacy."

The play offers an alternative to the feudal-machiavellian polarity, an alternative foreshadowed in France's speech (I.1.245–256), in Lear and Gloucester's prayers (III.4. 28–36; IV.1.61–66), and in the figure of Cordelia. Until the decent society is achieved, we are meant to take as role-model (though qualified by Shakespearean ironies) Edgar, "the machiavel of goodness," endurance, courage and "ripeness."

Since there are no literal mothers in *King Lear*, Coppélia Kahn provides a psychoanalytic interpretation of the "maternal subtext" found in the play. According to Kahn, Lear in his old age regresses to an infantile disposition, and now seeks for a love that is normally satisfied by a mothering woman. Her characterisation of Lear is that of a child being mothered, but without real mothers, his children become the daughter-mother figures. Lear's contest of love serves as the binding agreement; his daughters will get their inheritance provided they care for him, especially Cordelia, whose "kind nursery" he will greatly depend on. Her refusal to love him more than a father is often interpreted as a resistance from incest, but Kahn also inserts the image of a rejecting mother. The situation is now a reversal of parent-child roles, in which Lear's madness is essentially a childlike rage from being deprived of maternal care. Even when Lear and Cordelia are captured together, this madness persists as Lear envisions a nursery in prison, where Cordelia's sole existence is for him. However, it is Cordelia's death that ultimately ends his fantasy of a daughter-mother, as the play ends with only male characters left.

Sigmund Freud asserted that Cordelia symbolises Death. Therefore, when the play begins with Lear rejecting his daughter, it can be interpreted as him rejecting death; Lear is unwilling to face the finitude of his being. The play's poignant ending scene, wherein Lear carries the body of his beloved Cordelia, was of great importance to Freud. In this scene, she causes in Lear a realisation of his finitude, or as Freud put it, she causes him to "make friends with the necessity of dying". It is logical to infer that Shakespeare had special intentions with Cordelia's death, as he was the only writer to have Cordelia killed (in the version by the anonymous author, she continues to live happily, and in Holinshed's, she restores her father and succeeds him).

A study by psychologist Rachel E. Goldsmith and others suggests that Lear's temporary amnesia of his daughters' betrayal is consistent with psychogenic amnesia. [

Points of debate

Opening

The play opens with a formal ceremony in which King Lear seemingly divides his kingdom among his daughters according to their avowals of their love for him. If this were a test, it would make most sense for Lear to hear out all three daughters before starting to divide the kingdom. David Ball posits an alternative interpretation. He bases this analysis on the conversation between Kent and Gloucester which are the first seven lines of the play and serve to help the audience understand the context of the drama about to unfold.

“Kent: I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Gloucester: It did always seem so to us, but now in the division of the kingdom it appears not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weighed that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety”.

King Lear, Act I, Scene I

Ball interprets this statement to mean that the court already knows how the King is going to divide his kingdom; that the outcome of the ceremony is already decided and publicly known. Nor do Kent and Gloucester express the slightest surprise about the division.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that the King's "contest" has more to do with his control over the unmarried Cordelia.

Tragic ending

The adaptations that Shakespeare made to the legend of King Lear to produce his tragic version are quite telling of the effect they would have had on his contemporary audience. The story of King Lear was familiar to the average English Renaissance theatre goer (as were many of Shakespeare's sources) and any discrepancies between versions would have been immediately apparent.

Shakespeare's tragic conclusion gains its sting from such a discrepancy. The traditional legend and all adaptations preceding Shakespeare's have it that after Lear is restored to the throne, he remains there until "made ripe for death" (Edmund Spenser). Cordelia, her sisters also dead, takes the throne as rightful heir, but after a few years is overthrown and imprisoned by nephews, leading to her suicide.

Shakespeare shocks his audience by bringing the worn and haggard Lear onto the stage, carrying his dead youngest daughter. He taunts them with the possibility that she may live yet with Lear saying, "This feather stirs; she lives!" But Cordelia's death is soon confirmed.

This was indeed too bleak for some to take, even many years later. King Lear was at first unsuccessful on the Restoration stage, and it was only with Nahum Tate's happy-ending version of 1681 that it became part of the repertory. Tate's Lear, in which Lear survives and triumphs, the fool is completely omitted, and Edgar and Cordelia get married, held the stage until 1838 when British actor and manager William Macready insisted on restoring both the Fool and the tragic ending. Samuel Johnson endorsed the use of Tate's version in his edition of Shakespeare's plays (1765): "Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add anything to the general suffrage, I might relate that I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor."

The Fool, important in the first half of the play, disappears without explanation in the third act. A popular explanation for the Fool's disappearance is that the actor playing the Fool also played Cordelia. The two characters are never on stage simultaneously, and dual-roling was common in Shakespeare's time. However, the Fool would have been played by Robert Armin, the regular clown actor of Shakespeare's company, who is unlikely to have been cast as a tragic heroine. Even so, the play does ask us to at least compare the two; Lear chides Cordelia for foolishness in Act I; chides himself as equal in folly in Act V; and as he holds the dead Cordelia in the final scene, says, "And my poor fool is hanged" ("fool" could be taken as either a direct reference to the Fool, or an affectionate reference to Cordelia herself, or it could refer to both the Fool and

Cordelia). Furthermore, it is worth noting that in the 19th Century it became popular for the Fool to be played by an actress, which emphasized the similarity between the Fool and Cordelia (although the same actress did not necessarily play Cordelia). Likely, the decision was an effort to reconcile 19th Century artistic expectations with Shakespeare's seemingly conflicted elements—at the beginning of rehearsals for Macready's 1838 production, the manager wrote despairingly of fitting the fool into his play: "[my] opinion of the introduction of the Fool is that, like many such terrible contrasts in poetry and painting, in acting representation, it will fail of effect." Several days later, Macready fired the actor who was playing the Fool and attempted to reconcile the "terrible contrasts" by casting a woman in the role.

Christianity

Critics are strongly divided on the question of whether or not King Lear represents an affirmation of Christian doctrine. Among those who argue that Lear is redeemed in the Christian sense through suffering are A. C. Bradley and John Reibetanz, who has written: "through his sufferings, Lear has won an enlightened soul". Other critics who find no evidence of redemption and emphasize the horrors of the final act include John Holloway and Marvin Rosenberg. William R. Elton stresses the pre-Christian setting of the play, writing that, "Lear fulfills the criteria for pagan behavior in life," falling "into total blasphemy at the moment of his irredeemable loss".

Performance history

17th and 18th centuries

Shakespeare wrote the role of Lear for his company's chief tragedian, Richard Burbage, for whom Shakespeare was incrementally writing older characters as their careers progressed. It has been speculated either that the role of the Fool was written for the company's clown Robert Armin, or that it was written for performance by one of the company's boys, doubling the role of Cordelia. Only one specific performance of the play during Shakespeare's lifetime is known: before the court of King James I at Whitehall on 26 December 1606. Its original performances would have been at The Globe, where there were no sets in the modern sense, and characters would have signified their roles visually with props and costumes: Lear's costume, for example, would have changed in the course of the play as his status diminished: commencing in crown and regalia; then as a huntsman; raging bareheaded in the storm scene; and finally crowned with flowers in parody of his original status.

All theatres were closed down by the Puritan government on 6 September 1642. Upon the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, two patent companies (the King's Company and the Duke's Company) were established, and the existing theatrical repertoire divided between them. And from the restoration until the mid nineteenth-century the performance history of King Lear is not the story of Shakespeare's version, but instead of *The History of King Lear*, a popular adaptation by Nahum Tate. Its most significant deviations from Shakespeare were to omit the Fool entirely, to introduce a happy ending in which Lear and Cordelia survive, and to develop a love story between Cordelia and Edgar (two characters who never interact in Shakespeare) which ends with

their marriage. Like most Restoration adapters of Shakespeare, Tate admired Shakespeare's natural genius but saw fit to augment his work with contemporary standards of art (which were largely guided by the neoclassical unities of time, place, and action). Tate's struggle to strike a balance between raw nature and refined art is apparent in his description of the tragedy: "a heap of jewels, unstrung and unpolish't; yet so dazzling in their disorder, that I soon perceiv'd I had seiz'd a treasure." Other changes included giving Cordelia a confidante named Arante, bringing the play closer to contemporary notions of poetic justice, and added titillating material such as amorous encounters between Edmund and both Regan and Goneril, a scene in which Edgar rescues Cordelia from Edmund's attempted kidnap and rape, and a scene in which Cordelia wears men's pants that would reveal the actress's ankles. The play ends with a celebration of "the King's blest Restauration", an obvious reference to Charles II.

In the early 18th Century, some writers began to express objections to this (and other) Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare. For example, in *The Spectator* on 16 April 1711 Joseph Addison wrote "King Lear is an admirable Tragedy ... as Shakespeare wrote it; but as it is reformed according to the chymical Notion of poetical Justice in my humble Opinion it hath lost half its Beauty." Yet on the stage, Tate's version prevailed.

David Garrick was the first actor-manager to begin to cut back on elements of Tate's adaptation in favour of Shakespeare's original: he retained Tate's major changes, including the happy ending, but removed many of Tate's lines, including Edgar's closing speech. He also reduced the prominence of the Edgar-Cordelia love story, in order to focus more on the relationship between Lear and his daughters. His version had a powerful emotional impact: Lear driven to madness by his daughters was (in the words of one spectator, Arthur Murphy) "the finest tragic distress ever seen on any stage" and, in contrast, the devotion shown to Lear by Cordelia (a mix of Shakespeare's, Tate's and Garrick's contributions to the part) moved the audience to tears.

The first professional performances of *King Lear* in North America are likely to have been those of the Hallam Company (later the American Company) which arrived in Virginia in 1752 and who counted the play among their repertoire by the time of their departure for Jamaica in 1774.

19th century

Charles Lamb established the Romantics' attitude to *King Lear* in his 1811 essay "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare, considered with reference to their fitness for stage representation" where he says that the play "is essentially impossible to be represented on the stage", preferring to experience it in the study. In the theatre, he argues, "to see Lear acted, to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters on a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting" yet "while we read it, we see not Lear but we are Lear, – we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms."

King Lear was politically controversial during the period of George III's madness, and as a result was not performed at all in the two professional theatres of London from 1811 to 1820: but was then the subject of major productions in both, within three months of his death. The nineteenth century saw the gradual

reintroduction of Shakespeare's text to displace Tate's version. Like Garrick before him, John Philip Kemble had introduced more of Shakespeare's text, while still preserving the three main elements of Tate's version: the love story, the omission of the Fool, and the happy ending. Edmund Kean played King Lear with its tragic ending in 1823, but failed and reverted to Tate's crowd-pleaser after only three performances. At last in 1838 William Macready at Covent Garden performed Shakespeare's version, freed from Tate's adaptations. The restored character of the Fool was played by an actress, Priscilla Horton, as, in the words of one spectator, "a fragile, hectic, beautiful-faced, half-idiot-looking boy." And Helen Faucit's final appearance as Cordelia, dead in her father's arms, became one of the most iconic of Victorian images. John Forster, writing in the Examiner on 14 February 1838, expressed the hope that "Mr Macready's success has banished that disgrace from the stage for ever." But even this version was not close to Shakespeare's: the nineteenth-century actor-managers heavily cut Shakespeare's scripts: ending scenes on big "curtain effects" and reducing or eliminating supporting roles to give greater prominence to the star. One of Macready's innovations – the use of Stonehenge-like structures on stage to indicate an ancient setting – proved enduring on stage into the twentieth century, and can be seen in the 1983 television version starring Laurence Olivier.

In 1843, the Act for Regulating the Theatres came into force, bringing an end to the monopolies of the two existing companies and, by doing so, increased the number of theatres in London. At the same time, the fashion in theatre was "pictorial": valuing visual spectacle above plot or characterisation and often required lengthy (and time consuming) scene changes. For example, Henry Irving's 1892 King Lear offered spectacles such as Lear's death beneath a cliff at Dover, his face lit by the red glow of a setting sun; at the expense of cutting 46% of the text, including the blinding of Gloucester. But Irving's production clearly evoked strong emotions: one spectator, Gordon Crosse, wrote of the first entrance of Lear, "a striking figure with masses of white hair. He is leaning on a huge scabbarded sword which he raises with a wild cry in answer to the shouted greeting of his guards. His gait, his looks, his gestures, all reveal the noble, imperious mind already degenerating into senile irritability under the coming shocks of grief and age."

The importance of pictorialism to Irving, and to other theatre professionals of the Victorian era, is exemplified by the fact that Irving had used Ford Madox Brown's painting Cordelia's Portion as the inspiration for the look of his production, and that the artist himself was brought in to provide sketches for the settings of other scenes. A reaction against pictorialism came with the rise of reconstructive movement, believers in a simple style of staging more similar to that which would have pertained in renaissance theatres, whose chief early exponent was the actor-manager William Poel. Poel was influenced by a performance of King Lear directed by Jozsa Savits at the Hoftheater in Munich in 1890, set on an apron stage with a three-tier Globe-like reconstruction theatre as its backdrop. Poel would use this same configuration for his own Shakespearean performances in 1893.

20th and 21st centuries

The character of Lear in the nineteenth century was often that of a frail old man from the opening scene, but Lear's of the twentieth century often began the play as strong men displaying regal authority, including John Gielgud, Donald Wolfit and Donald Sinden. Cordelia, also, evolved in the twentieth century: earlier Cordelias had often been praised for being sweet, innocent and modest, but twentieth-century Cordelias were often portrayed as war leaders. For example, Peggy Ashcroft, at the RST in 1950, played the role in a breastplate and carrying a sword. Similarly, the Fool evolved through the course of the century, with portrayals often deriving from the music hall or circus tradition.

By mid-century, the actor-manager tradition had declined, to be replaced by a structure where the major theatre companies employed professional directors as auteurs. The last of the great actor-managers, Donald Wolfit, played Lear on a Stonehenge-like set in 1944 and was praised by James Agate as "the greatest piece of Shakespearean acting since I have been privileged to write for the Sunday Times". Wolfit supposedly drank eight bottles of Guinness in the course of each performance.

At Stratford-upon-Avon in 1962, Peter Brook (who would later film the play with the same Lear, Paul Scofield) set the action simply, against a huge, empty white stage. The effect of the scene where Lear and Gloucester meet, two tiny figures in rags in the midst of this emptiness, was said (by the scholar Roger Warren) to catch "both the human pathos ... and the universal scale ... of the scene."

In 1974, Buzz Goodbody directed Lear, a deliberately abbreviated title for Shakespeare's text, as the inaugural production of the RSC's studio theatre The Other Place. The performance was conceived as a chamber piece, the small intimate space and proximity to the audience enabled detailed psychological acting, which was performed with simple sets and in modern dress. Peter Holland has speculated that this company/directorial decision – namely choosing to present Shakespeare in a small venue for artistic reasons when a larger venue was available – may at the time have been unprecedented.

Brook's vision of the play proved influential, and directors have gone further in presenting Lear as (in the words of R. A. Foakes) "a pathetic senior citizen trapped in a violent and hostile environment". When John Wood took the role in 1990, he played the later scenes in clothes that looked like cast-offs, inviting deliberate parallels with the uncared-for in modern Western societies. Indeed, modern productions of Shakespeare's plays often reflect the world in which they are performed as much as the world for which they were written: and the Moscow theatre scene in 1994 provided an example, when two very different productions of the play (those by Sergei Zhonovach and Alexei Borodin), very different from one another in their style and outlook, were both reflections on the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Like other Shakespearean tragedies, King Lear has proved amenable to conversion into other theatrical traditions. In 1989, David McRuvie and Iyyamkode Sreedharan adapted the play then translated it to Malayalam, for performance in Kerala in the Kathakali tradition – which itself developed around 1600, contemporary with Shakespeare's writing. The show later went on tour, and in 2000 played at Shakespeare's Globe, completing (in Anthony Dawson's words) "a kind of symbolic circle". Perhaps even more radical was

Ong Keng Sen's 1997 adaptation of *King Lear*, which featured six actors each performing in a separate Asian acting tradition and in their own separate languages. A pivotal moment occurred when the Jingju performer playing Older Daughter (a conflation of Goneril and Regan) stabbed the Noh-performed Lear whose "falling pine" deadfall, straight face-forward into the stage, astonished the audience, in what Yong Li Lan describes as a "triumph through the moving power of noh performance at the very moment of his character's defeat".

A number of women have played male roles in *King Lear*; most commonly the Fool, who has been played (among others) by Judy Davis and Emma Thompson but also, significantly, Lear himself, played by Marianne Hoppe in 1990 and by Kathryn Hunter in 1996-7. Marcia Gay Harden plays Lear in the few scenes of the play-within-the-film *If I Were You*.

In 2012, Peter Hinton directed an all-First Nations production of *King Lear* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, with the setting changed to an Algonquin nation in the 17th century. The cast included August Schellenberg as Lear, Billy Merasty as Gloucester, Tantoo Cardinal as Regan, Jani Lauzon in a dual role as Cordelia and the Fool, and Craig Lauzon as Kent.

Screen

The first film of *King Lear* was a five-minute German version made around 1905, which has not survived. The oldest extant version is a ten-minute studio-based version from 1909 by Vitagraph, which made (in Luke McKernan's words) the "ill-advised" decision to attempt to cram in as much of the plot as possible. Two silent versions, both titled *Re Lear*, were made in Italy in 1910. Of these, the version by director Gerolamo Lo Savio was filmed on location, and it dropped the Edgar sub-plot and used frequent intertitling to make the plot easier to follow than its Vitagraph predecessor. A contemporary setting was used for Louis Feuillade's 1911 French adaptation *Le Roi Lear Au Village*, and in 1914 in America, Ernest Warde expanded the story to an hour, including spectacles such as a final battle scene.

The only two significant big-screen performances of Shakespeare's text date from the early 1970s: Grigori Kozintsev was working on his *Korol Lir* at the same time as Peter Brook was filming his *King Lear*. Brook's film starkly divided the critics: Pauline Kael said "I didn't just dislike this production, I hated it!" and suggested the alternative title "Night of the Living Dead". Yet Robert Hatch in *The Nation* thought it as "excellent a filming of the play as one can expect" and Vincent Canby in *The New York Times* called it "an exalting Lear, full of exquisite terror". The film drew heavily on the ideas of Jan Kott, in particular his observation that *King Lear* was the precursor of absurdist theatre: in particular, the film has parallels with Beckett's *Endgame*. Critics who dislike the film particularly draw attention to its bleak nature from its opening: complaining that the world of the play does not deteriorate with Lear's suffering, but commences dark, colourless and wintry, leaving (in Douglas Brode's words) "Lear, the land, and us with nowhere to go". Cruelty pervades the film, which does not distinguish between the violence of ostensibly good and evil characters, presenting both savagely. Paul Scofield, as Lear, eschews sentimentality: this demanding old man with a coterie of unruly knights provokes

audience sympathy for the daughters in the early scenes, and his presentation explicitly rejects the tradition (as Daniel Rosenthal describes it) of playing Lear as "poor old white-haired patriarch".

By contrast, Korol Lir has been praised, for example by critic Anikst Alexander, for the "serious, deeply thoughtful" even "philosophical approach" of director Grigori Kozintsev and writer Boris Pasternak. Making a thinly veiled criticism of Brook in the process, Alexander praised the fact that there were "no attempts at sensationalism, no efforts to 'modernise' Shakespeare by introducing Freudian themes, Existentialist ideas, eroticism, or sexual perversion. [Kozintsev]... has simply made a film of Shakespeare's tragedy." Dmitri Shostakovich provided an epic score, its motifs including an (increasingly ironic) trumpet fanfare for Lear, and a five-bar "Call to Death" marking each character's demise. Kozintsev described his vision of the film as an ensemble piece: with Lear, played by a dynamic Jüri Järvet, as first among equals in a cast of fully developed characters. The film highlights Lear's role as king by including his people throughout the film on a scale no stage production could emulate, charting the central character's decline from their god to their helpless equal; his final descent into madness marked by his realisation that he has neglected the 'poor naked wretches'. As the film progresses, ruthless characters – Goneril, Regan, Edmund – increasingly appear isolated in shots, in contrast to the director's focus, throughout the film, on masses of human beings.

Jonathan Miller has twice directed Michael Hordern in the title role for English television, the first for the BBC's Play of the Month in 1975 and the second for the BBC Television Shakespeare in 1982. Horden received mixed reviews, and was considered a bold choice due to his history of taking much lighter roles. Also for English television, Laurence Olivier took the role in a 1983 TV production for Granada Television. It was his last screen appearance in a Shakespearean role, its pathos deriving in part from the physical frailty of Olivier the actor.

In 1985 a major screen adaptation of the play appeared: *Ran*, directed by Akira Kurosawa. At the time the most expensive Japanese film ever made, it tells the story of Hidetora, a fictional sixteenth-century Japanese warlord, whose attempt to divide his kingdom among his three sons leads to an estrangement with the youngest, and ultimately most loyal, of them, and eventually to civil war. In contrast to the cold drab greys of Brook and Kozintsev, Kurosawa's film is full of vibrant colour: external scenes in yellows, blues and greens, interiors in browns and ambers, and Emi Wada's Oscar-winning colour-coded costumes for each family member's soldiers. Hidetora has a back-story: a violent and ruthless rise to power, and the film portrays contrasting victims: the virtuous characters Sue and Tsurumaru who are able to forgive, and the vengeful Kaede (Mieko Harada), Hidetora's daughter-in-law and the film's Lady Macbeth-like villain.

The play's plot, or major elements from it, have frequently been used by film makers. Joseph Mankiewicz' 1949 *House of Strangers* is often considered a Lear adaptation, but the parallels are more striking in its 1954 Western remake *Broken Lance* in which a cattle baron played by Spencer Tracy tyrannises over his three sons, of whom only the youngest, Joe, played by Robert Wagner, remains loyal. A scene in which a character is threatened with blinding in the manner of Gloucester forms the climax of the 1973 parody horror *Theatre of Blood*. Comic

use is made of Sir's inability to physically carry any actress cast as Cordelia opposite his Lear in the 1983 film of the stage play *The Dresser*. John Boorman's 1990 *Where the Heart Is* features a father who disinherits his three spoiled children. Francis Ford Coppola deliberately incorporated elements of Lear in his 1990 sequel *The Godfather Part III*, including Michael Corleone's attempt to retire from crime throwing his domain into anarchy, and most obviously the death of his daughter in his arms. Parallels have also been drawn between Andy Garcia's character Vincent and both Edgar and Edmund, and between Talia Shire's character Connie and Kaede in *Ran*. In 1997, Jocelyn Moorhouse directed *A Thousand Acres*, based on Jane Smiley's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, set in 1990s Iowa. The film is described, by scholar Tony Howard, as the first adaptation to confront the play's disturbing sexual dimensions. The story is told from the viewpoint of the elder two daughters, Ginny played by Jessica Lange and Rose played by Michelle Pfeiffer, who were sexually abused by their father as teenagers. Their younger sister Caroline, played by Jennifer Jason Leigh had escaped this fate and is ultimately the only one to remain loyal.

The play was again adapted to the world of gangsters in Don Boyd's 2001 *My Kingdom*, a version which differs from all others in commencing with the Lear character, Sandeman, played by Richard Harris, in a loving relationship with his wife. But her violent death marks the start of an increasingly bleak and violent chain of events (influenced by co-writer Nick Davies' documentary book *Dark Heart*) which in spite of the director's denial that the film had "serious parallels" to Shakespeare's play, actually mirror aspects of its plot closely. Unlike Shakespeare's Lear, but like Hidetora and Sandeman, the central character of Uli Edel's 2002 American TV adaptation *King of Texas*, John Lear played by Patrick Stewart, has a back-story centred on his violent rise to power. Daniel Rosenthal comments that the film was able, by reason of having been commissioned by the cable channel TNT, to include a bleaker and more violent ending than would have been possible on the national networks. 2003's Channel 4-commissioned two-parter *Second Generation* set the story in the world of Asian manufacturing and music in England.

Chapter 6

Twelfth Night

Twelfth Night; or, What You Will is a comedy by William Shakespeare, believed to have been written around 1601–02 as a Twelfth Night's entertainment for the close of the Christmas season. The play expanded on the musical interludes and riotous disorder expected of the occasion, with plot elements drawn from the short story "Of Apollonius and Silla" by Barnabe Rich, based on a story by Matteo Bandello. The first recorded performance was on 2 February 1602, at Candlemas, the formal end of Christmastide in the year's calendar. The play was not published until its inclusion in the 1623 First Folio.

Characters

- Viola – a shipwrecked young lady, the heroine of the play, later disguised as a young man named Cesario.
- Duke Orsino – Duke of Illyria
- Olivia – a wealthy countess
- Sebastian – Viola's twin brother
- Malvolio – steward in the household of Olivia
- Maria – Olivia's gentlewoman
- Sir Toby Belch – Olivia's uncle
- Sir Andrew Aguecheek – a rich man who Sir Toby brings to be Olivia's wooer
- Feste – the clown, or court jester, of Olivia's household
- Fabian – a servant and friend to Sir Toby
- Antonio – a captain and friend to Sebastian
- Valentine and Curio – gentlemen attending on the Duke

Setting

Illyria, the setting of Twelfth Night, is important to the play's romantic atmosphere. Illyria was an ancient region on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea covering parts of modern Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Albania, Croatia, and Montenegro, and the city state of the Republic of Ragusa has been proposed as the setting. Illyria

may have been suggested by the Roman comedy *Menaechmi*, the plot of which also involves twins who are mistaken for each other. Illyria is also referred to as a site of pirates in Shakespeare's earlier play, *Henry VI, Part 2*. It has been noted that the play's setting also has English characteristics such as Viola's use of "Westward ho!", a typical cry of 16th-century London boatmen, and also Antonio's recommendation to Sebastian of "The Elephant" as where it is best to lodge in Illyria; The Elephant was a pub not far from the Globe Theatre.

Synopsis

Viola is shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria and she comes ashore with the help of a captain. She loses contact with her twin brother, Sebastian, whom she believes to be dead. Disguising herself as a young man under the name Cesario, she enters the service of Duke Orsino through the help of the sea captain who rescues her. Orsino has convinced himself that he is in love with Olivia, whose father and brother have recently died, and who refuses to see any suitor until seven years have passed, the Duke included. Orsino then uses 'Cesario' as an intermediary to profess his passionate love before Olivia. Olivia however, falls in love with 'Cesario', as she does not realise 'he' is Viola in disguise. In the meantime, Viola has fallen in love with the Duke.

In the comic subplot, several characters conspire to make Olivia's pompous steward, Malvolio, believe that Olivia has fallen for him. This involves Olivia's uncle, Sir Toby Belch; another would-be suitor, a silly squire named Sir Andrew Aguecheek; her servants Maria and Fabian; and her fool, Feste. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew engage themselves in drinking and revelry, thus disturbing the peace of Olivia's house until late into the night, prompting Malvolio to chastise them. Sir Toby famously retorts, "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (Act II, Scene III) Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Maria are provoked to plan revenge on Malvolio. They convince Malvolio that Olivia is secretly in love with him by planting a love letter, written by Maria in Olivia's hand. It asks Malvolio to wear yellow stockings cross-gartered, to be rude to the rest of the servants, and to smile constantly in the presence of Olivia. Malvolio finds the letter and reacts in surprised delight. He starts acting out the contents of the letter to show Olivia his positive response. Olivia is shocked by the changes in Malvolio and leaves him to the contrivances of his tormentors. Pretending that Malvolio is insane, they lock him up in a dark chamber. Feste visits him to mock his insanity, both disguised as a priest and as himself.

Meanwhile, Sebastian (who had been rescued by a sea captain, Antonio) arrives on the scene, which adds confusion of mistaken identity. Mistaking Sebastian for 'Cesario', Olivia asks him to marry her, and they are secretly married in a church. Finally, when 'Cesario' and Sebastian appear in the presence of both Olivia and Orsino, there is more wonder and confusion at their similarity. At this point Viola reveals she is a female and that Sebastian is her twin brother. The play ends in a declaration of marriage between Duke Orsino and Viola, and it is learned that Sir Toby has married Maria. Malvolio swears revenge on his tormentors but Orsino sends Fabian to console him.

Date and text

The full title of the play is *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*. Subtitles for plays were fashionable in the Elizabethan era, and though some editors place *The Merchant of Venice's* alternative title, *The Jew of Venice*, as a subtitle, this is the only Shakespearean play to bear one when first published.

The play was probably finished between 1600 and 1601, a period suggested by the play's referencing of events which happened during that time. A law student, John Manningham, who was studying in the Middle Temple in London, described the performance on 2 February 1602 (Candlemas) which took place in the hall of the Middle Temple at the formal end of Christmastide in the year's calendar, and to which students were invited. This was the first recorded performance of the play. The play was not published until its inclusion in the First Folio in 1623.

"Twelfth Night" is a reference to the twelfth night after Christmas Day, called the Eve of the Feast of Epiphany. It was originally a Catholic holiday but, prior to Shakespeare's play, had become a day of revelry. Servants often dressed up as their masters, men as women and so forth. This history of festive ritual and Carnavalesque reversal, based on the ancient Roman festival of Saturnalia at the same time of year (characterized by drunken revelry and inversion of the social order; masters became slaves for a day, and vice versa), is the cultural origin of the play's gender confusion-driven plot. The source story, "Of Apolonius and Silla", appeared in Barnabe Riche's collection, *Riche his Farewell to Militarie Profession conteneing verie pleasaunt discourses fit for a peaceable tyme* (1581), which in turn is derived from a story by Matteo Bandello.

Sources

The play is believed to have drawn extensively on the Italian production *Gl'ingannati* (or *The Deceived Ones*), collectively written by the *Accademia degli Intronati* in 1531. It is conjectured that the name of its male lead, Orsino, was suggested by Virginio Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, an Italian nobleman who visited London in the winter of 1600 to 1601.

The actual Elizabethan festival of Twelfth Night would involve the antics of a Lord of Misrule, who before leaving his temporary position of authority, would call for entertainment, songs and mummery; the play has been regarded as preserving this festive and traditional atmosphere of licensed disorder. This leads to the general inversion of the order of things, most notably gender roles. The embittered and isolated Malvolio can be regarded as an adversary of festive enjoyment and community, led by Sir Toby Belch, "the vice-regent spokesman for cakes and ale" and his partner in a comic stock duo, the simple and constantly exploited Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

Viola is not alone among Shakespeare's cross-dressing heroines; in Shakespeare's theatre, convention dictated that adolescent boys play the roles of female characters, creating humour in the multiplicity of disguise found in a female character who for a while pretended at masculinity. Her cross dressing enables Viola to fulfill usually male roles, such as acting as a messenger between Orsino and Olivia, as well as being Orsino's confidant. She does not, however, use her disguise to enable her to intervene directly in the plot (unlike other Shakespearean heroines such as Rosalind in *As You Like It* and Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*), remaining someone who

allows "Time" to untangle the plot. Viola's persistence in transvestism through her betrothal in the final scene of the play often engenders a discussion of the possibly homoerotic relationship between Viola and Orsino. Her impassioned speech to Orsino, in which she describes an imaginary sister who "sat like patience on a monument, / Smiling at grief" for her love, likewise causes many critics to consider Viola's attitude of suffering in her love as a sign of the perceived weakness of the feminine (2.4).

Metatheatre

At Olivia's first meeting with "Cesario" (Viola) in I.V she asks her "Are you a comedian?" (an Elizabethan term for "actor"). Viola's reply, "I am not that I play", epitomising her adoption of the role of Cesario, is regarded as one of several references to theatricality and "playing" within the play. The plot against Malvolio revolves around these ideas, and Fabian remarks in Act III, Scene iv: "If this were play'd upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction". In Act IV, Scene ii, Feste (The Fool) plays both parts in the "play" for Malvolio's benefit, alternating between adopting the voice of the local curate, Sir Topas, and his own voice. He finishes by likening himself to "the old Vice" of English Morality plays. Other influences of the English folk tradition can be seen in Feste's songs and dialogue, such as his final song in Act V. The last line of this song, "And we'll strive to please you every day", is a direct echo of similar lines from several English folk plays.

Stage history

During and just after Shakespeare's lifetime

The earliest known performance took place at Middle Temple Hall, one of the Inns of Court, on Candlemas night, 2 February 1602. The only record of the performance is an entry in the diary of the lawyer John Manningham, who wrote:

At our feast we had a play called "Twelve Night, or What You Will", much like "The Comedy of Errors" or "Menaechmi" in Plautus, but most like and near to that in Italian called "Inganni". A good practice in it to make the steward believe his lady-widow was in love with him, by counterfeiting a letter as from his lady, in general term telling him what she liked best in him and prescribing his gesture in smiling, his apparel, etc. and then, when he came to practice, making him believe they took him for mad.

Clearly, Manningham enjoyed the Malvolio story most of all, and noted the play's similarity with Shakespeare's earlier play, as well as its relationship with one of its sources, the Inganni plays.

At this particular performance, Manningham also notes the interesting dimension that is added when a male actor plays a female character who disguises herself as a man. Some scholars attribute this to an innate Elizabethan structure that systematically deprived gender diversity of its nature and meaning. Although male actors playing female roles were a natural feature of theatre productions during the Elizabethan era, they hold special significance in the production of this particular play. As the very nature of Twelfth Night explores gender identity and sexual attraction, having a male actor play Viola enhanced the impression of androgyny and sexual ambiguity. Some modern scholars believe that Twelfth Night, with the added confusion of male actors and Viola's deception, addresses gender issues "with particular immediacy." They also accept that the depiction

of gender in *Twelfth Night* stems from the era's prevalent scientific theory that females are simply imperfect males. This belief explains the almost indistinguishable differences between the sexes reflected in the casting and characters of *Twelfth Night*.

It may have been performed earlier as well, before the Court at Whitehall Palace on Twelfth Night (6 January) of 1601. *Twelfth Night* was also performed at Court on Easter Monday, 6 April 1618, and again at Candlemas in 1623.

Restoration to 20th century

The play was also one of the earliest Shakespearean works acted at the start of the Restoration; Sir William Davenant's adaptation was staged in 1661, with Thomas Betterton in the role of Sir Toby Belch. Samuel Pepys thought it "a silly play", but saw it three times anyway during the period of his diary on 11 September 1661, 6 January 1663, and 20 January 1669. Another adaptation, *Love Betray'd, or, The Agreeable Disappointment*, was acted at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1703.

After holding the stage only in the adaptations in the late 17th century and early 18th century, the original Shakespearean text of *Twelfth Night* was revived in 1741, in a production at Drury Lane. In 1820 an operatic version by Frederic Reynolds was staged, with music composed by Henry Bishop.

20th and 21st century

Influential productions were staged in 1912, by Harley Granville-Barker, and in 1916, at the Old Vic.

Lilian Baylis reopened the long-dormant Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1931 with a notable production of the play starring Ralph Richardson as Sir Toby and John Gielgud as Malvolio. The Old Vic Theatre was reopened in 1950 (after suffering severe damage in the London Blitz in 1941) with a memorable production starring Peggy Ashcroft as Viola. Gielgud directed a production at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre with Laurence Olivier as Malvolio and Vivien Leigh playing both Viola and Sebastian in 1955. The longest running Broadway production by far was Margaret Webster's 1940 staging starring Maurice Evans as Malvolio and Helen Hayes as Viola. It ran for 129 performances, more than twice as long as any other Broadway production.

A memorable production directed by Liviu Ciulei at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, October–November 1984, was set in the context of an archetypal circus world, emphasising its convivial, carnival tone.

When the play was first performed, all female parts were played by men or boys, but it has been the practice for some centuries now to cast women or girls in the female parts in all plays. The company of Shakespeare's Globe, London, has produced many notable, highly popular all-male performances, and a highlight of their 2002 season was *Twelfth Night*, with the Globe's artistic director Mark Rylance playing the part of Olivia. This season was preceded, in February, by a performance of the play by the same company at Middle Temple Hall, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the play's première, at the same venue. The same production was revived in 2012-13 and transferred to sell-out runs in the West End and Broadway.

Interpretations of the role of Viola have been given by many well-renowned actresses in the latter half of the 20th century, and have been interpreted in the light of how far they allow the audience to experience the

transgressions of stereotypical gender roles. This has sometimes correlated with how far productions of the play go towards reaffirming a sense of unification, for example a 1947 production concentrated on showing a post-World War II community reuniting at the end of the play, led by a robust hero/heroine in Viola, played by Beatrix Lehmann, then 44 years old. The 1966 Royal Shakespeare Company production played on gender transgressions more obviously, with Diana Rigg as Viola showing much more physical attraction towards the duke than previously seen, and the court in general being a more physically demonstrative place, particularly between males. John Barton's 1969 production starred Donald Sinden as Malvolio and Judi Dench as Viola; their performances were highly acclaimed and the production as a whole was commented on as showing a dying society crumbling into decay.

Malvolio is a popular character choice among stage actors; others who have taken the part include Ian Holm many times, Simon Russell Beale (Donmar Warehouse, 2002), Richard Cordery in 2005, Patrick Stewart, in Chichester, in 2007, Derek Jacobi (Donmar Warehouse) in 2009, Richard Wilson in 2009 and Stephen Fry at the Globe in 2012.

Adaptations

Stage

Due to its themes such as young women seeking independence in a "man's world", "gender-bending" and "same-sex attraction" (albeit in a roundabout way), there have been a number of re-workings for the stage, particularly in musical theatre, among them *Your Own Thing* (1968), *Music Is* (1976), *All Shook Up* (2005), and *Play On!* (1997), the last two jukebox musicals featuring the music of Elvis Presley and Duke Ellington, respectively. Another adaptation is *Illyria*, by composer Pete Mills. Theatre Grottesco created a modern version of the play from the point of view of the servants working for Duke Orsino and Lady Olivia. The adaptation takes a much deeper look at the issues of classism, and society without leadership. In 1999, the play was adapted as *Epiphany* by the Takarazuka Revue, adding more overt commentary on the role of theatre and actors, as well as gender as applied to the stage (made more layered by the fact that all roles in this production were played by women).

Film

In 1910, Vitagraph Studios released the silent, short adaptation *Twelfth Night* starring actors Florence Turner, Julia Swayne Gordon and Marin Sais.

There was a 1986 Australian film.

The 1996 film adapted and directed by Trevor Nunn and set in the 19th century, stars Imogen Stubbs as Viola, Helena Bonham Carter as Olivia and Toby Stephens as Duke Orsino. The film also features Mel Smith as Sir Toby, Richard E. Grant as Sir Andrew, Ben Kingsley as Feste, Imelda Staunton as Maria and Nigel Hawthorne as Malvolio. Much of the comic material was downplayed into straightforward drama, and the film received some criticism for this.

The 2001 "Disney Channel Original Movie" "*Motocrossed*" sets the story in the world of motocross racing.

In the 2004 movie *Wicker Park*, Rose Byrne's character Alex plays Viola in an amateur production of *Twelfth Night*.

The 2006 film *She's the Man* modernises the story as a contemporary teenage comedy (as *10 Things I Hate About You* did with *The Taming of the Shrew*). It is set in a prep school named Illyria and incorporates the names of the play's major characters. For example, Orsino, Duke of Illyria becomes simply Duke Orsino ("Duke" being his forename). The story was changed to revolve around the idea of soccer rivalry but the twisted character romance remained the same as the original. Viola, the main character, pretends to be her brother Sebastian to play an all-boys sport. She also goes to restaurant named "Cesario's". Two of Duke's Illyria soccer teammates are named Andrew and Toby.

Shakespeare in Love contains several references to *Twelfth Night*. Near the end of the movie, Elizabeth I (Judi Dench) asks Shakespeare (Joseph Fiennes) to write a comedy for the *Twelfth Night* holiday. Shakespeare's love interest in the film, "Viola" (Gwyneth Paltrow), is the daughter of a wealthy merchant who disguises herself as a boy to become an actor; while Shakespeare, a financially struggling playwright suffering from writer's block is trying to write *Romeo and Juliet*. She is presented in the final scene of the film as William Shakespeare's "true" inspiration for the heroine of *Twelfth Night*. In a nod to the shipwrecked opening of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, the movie includes a scene where the character Viola, separated from her love by an arranged marriage and bound for the American colonies, survives a shipwreck and comes ashore to Virginia.

The play was referenced in the movie *V For Vendetta*. The character V quotes: "Conceal me what I am, and be my aid... for such disguise as haply shall become the form of my intent" as he's dancing with Evey.

Television

On 14 May 1937, the BBC Television Service in London broadcast a thirty-minute excerpt of the play, the first known instance of a work of Shakespeare being performed on television. Produced for the new medium by George More O'Ferrall, the production is also notable for having featured a young actress who would later go on to win an Academy Award – Greer Garson. As the performance was transmitted live from the BBC's studios at Alexandra Palace and the technology to record television programmes did not at the time exist, no visual record survives other than still photographs.

The entire play was produced for television in 1939, directed by Michel Saint-Denis and starring another future Oscar-winner, Peggy Ashcroft. The part of Sir Toby Belch was taken by a young George Devine.

In 1957, another adaptation of the play was presented by NBC on U.S. television's *Hallmark Hall of Fame*, with Maurice Evans recreating his performance as Malvolio. This was the first color version ever produced on TV. Dennis King, Rosemary Harris, and Frances Hyland co-starred.

Another version for UK television was produced in 1969, directed by John Sichel and John Dexter. The production featured Joan Plowright as Viola and Sebastian, Alec Guinness as Malvolio, Ralph Richardson as Sir Toby Belch and Tommy Steele as an unusually prominent Feste.

Yet another TV adaptation followed in 1980. This version was part of the BBC Television Shakespeare series and featured Felicity Kendal in the role of Viola, Sinéad Cusack as Olivia, Alec McCowen as Malvolio and Robert Hardy as Sir Toby Belch.

In 1988, Kenneth Branagh's stage production of the play, starring Frances Barber as Viola and Richard Briers as Malvolio, was adapted for Thames Television.

In 1998 the Lincoln Center Theater production directed by Nicholas Hytner was broadcast on PBS Live From Lincoln Center. It starred Helen Hunt as Viola, Paul Rudd as Orsino, Kyra Sedgwick as Olivia, Philip Bosco as Malvolio, Brian Murray as Sir Toby, Max Wright as Sir Andrew, and David Patrick Kelly as Feste.

A 2003 telemovie adapted and directed by Tim Supple is set in the present day. It features David Troughton as Sir Toby, and is notable for its multi-ethnic cast including Parminder Nagra as Viola and Chiwetel Ejio for as Orsino. Its portrayal of Viola and Sebastian's arrival in Illyria is reminiscent of news footage of asylum seekers. An episode of the British series *Skins*, entitled *Grace*, featured the main characters playing *Twelfth Night*, with a love triangle between Franky, Liv and Matty, who respectively played Viola, Olivia and Orsino.

Radio

In 1937 an adaptation was performed on the CBS Radio Playhouse starring Orson Welles as Orsino and Tallulah Bankhead as Viola. A year later, Welles played Malvolio in a production with his Mercury Theater Company.

There have been several full adaptations on BBC Radio. A 1982 BBC Radio 4 broadcast featured Alec McCowen as Orsino, Wendy Murray as Viola, Norman Rodway as Sir Toby Belch, Andrew Sachs as Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and Bernard Hepton as Malvolio; in 1993, BBC Radio 3 broadcast a version of the play (set on a Caribbean Island), with Michael Maloney as Orsino, Eve Matheson as Viola, Iain Cuthbertson as Malvolio, and Joss Ackland as Sir Toby Belch; this adaptation was broadcast again on 6 January 2011 by BBC Radio 7 (now Radio 4 Extra). 1998 saw another Radio 3 adaptation, with Michael Maloney, again as Orsino, Josette Simon as Olivia and Nicky Henson as Feste. In April 2012, BBC Radio 3 broadcast a version directed by Sally Avens, with Paul Ready as Orsino, Naomi Frederick as Viola, David Tennant as Malvolio and Ron Cook as Sir Toby Belch.

Influence

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard opens his book *Philosophical Fragments* with the quote "Better well hanged than ill wed" which is a paraphrase of Feste's comment to Maria in Act 1, Scene 5: "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage". Nietzsche also refers passingly to *Twelfth Night* (specifically, to Sir Andrew Aguecheek's suspicion, expressed in Act 1, Scene 3, that his excessive intake of beef is having an inverse effect on his wit) in the third essay of his *Genealogy of Morality*.

The *Kiddy Grade* characters Viola and Cesario are named for Viola and her alter ego Cesario, respectively.

Elizabeth Hand's novella *Illyria* features a high school production of *Twelfth Night*, containing many references to the play, especially Feste's song.

One of Club Penguin's plays, Twelfth Fish, is a spoof of Shakespeare's works. It is a story about a countess, a jester, and a bard who catch a fish that talks. As the play ends, they begin discussing eating the fish. Many of the lines are parodies of Shakespeare.

American Playwright Ken Ludwig wrote a play inspired by the details of Twelfth Night; called Leading Ladies. Cassandra Clare's 2009 novel City of Glass contains chapter names inspired by quotations of Antonio and Sebastian.

Two of the dogs in the film Hotel for Dogs are twins called Sebastian and Viola.

Clive Barker's short story "Sex, Death and Starshine" revolves around a doomed production of Twelfth Night.

Chapter 7

Doctor Faustus

The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, commonly referred to simply as **Doctor Faustus**, is a play by Christopher Marlowe, based on the Faust story, in which a man sells his soul to the devil for power and knowledge. Doctor Faustus was first published in 1604, eleven years after Marlowe's death and at least twelve years after the first performance of the play.

"No Elizabethan play outside the Shakespeare canon has raised more controversy than Doctor Faustus. There is no agreement concerning the nature of the text and the date of composition... and the centrality of the Faust legend in the history of the Western world precludes any definitive agreement on the interpretation of the play..."

Performance

The Admiral's Men performed Doctor Faustus twenty-five times in the three years between October 1594 and October 1597. On 22 November 1602, the Diary of Philip Henslowe recorded a £4 payment to Samuel Rowley and William Bird for additions to the play, which suggests a revival soon after that date.

The powerful effect of the early productions is indicated by the legends that quickly accrued around them. In *Histriomastix*, his 1632 polemic against the drama, William Prynne records the tale that actual devils once appeared on the stage during a performance of Faustus, "to the great amazement of both the actors and spectators". Some people were allegedly driven mad, "distracted with that fearful sight". John Aubrey recorded a related legend, that Edward Alleyn, lead actor of The Admiral's Men, devoted his later years to charitable endeavours, like the founding of Dulwich College, in direct response to this incident.

Text

The play may have been entered into the Stationers' Register on 18 December 1592—though the records are confused, and appear to indicate a conflict over the rights to the play. A subsequent Stationers' Register entry, dated 7 January 1601, assigns the play to the bookseller Thomas Bushnell, the publisher of the 1604 first edition. Bushnell transferred his rights to the play to John Wright on 13 September 1610

The two versions

Two versions of the play exist:

1. The 1604 quarto, printed by Valentine Simmes for Thomas Law; sometimes termed the A text. The title page attributes the play to "Ch. Marl.". A second edition (A2) in 1609, printed by George Eld for John Wright, is merely a reprint of the 1604 text. The text is short for an English Renaissance play, only 1485 lines long.
2. The 1616 quarto, published by John Wright, the enlarged and altered text; sometimes called the B text. This second text was reprinted in 1619, 1620, 1624, 1631, and as late as 1663.

The 1616 version omits 36 lines but adds 676 new lines, making it roughly one third longer than the 1604 version. Among the lines shared by both versions, there are some small but significant changes in wording; for example, "Never too late, if Faustus can repent" in the 1604 text becomes "Never too late, if Faustus will repent" in the 1616 text, a change that offers a very different possibility for Faustus's hope and repentance.

A major change between texts A and B is the name of the devil summoned by Faustus. Text A states the name is generally "Mephastophilis", while the version of text B commonly states "Mephostophilis". The name of the devil is in each case a reference to Mephistopheles in Faustbuch, the source work, which appeared in English translation in about 1588.

The relationship between the texts is uncertain and many modern editions print both. As an Elizabethan playwright, Marlowe had nothing to do with the publication and had no control over the play in performance, so it was possible for scenes to be dropped or shortened, or for new scenes to be added, so that the resulting publications may be modified versions of the original script.

The 1604 version is believed by most scholars to be closer to the play as originally performed in Marlowe's lifetime, and the 1616 version to be a posthumous adaptation by other hands. However, some disagree, seeing the 1604 version as an abbreviation and the 1616 version as Marlowe's original fuller version.

Comic scenes

In the past, it was assumed that the comic scenes were additions by other writers. However, most scholars today consider the comic interludes, whoever wrote them, an integral part of the play. Their tone shows the change in Faustus's ambitions, suggesting Marlowe did oversee the composition of them. The clown is seen as the archetype for comic relief.

Sources

Doctor Faustus is based on an older tale; it is believed to be the first dramatisation of the Faust legend. Some scholars believe that Marlowe developed the story from a popular 1592 translation, commonly called The English Faust Book. There is thought to have been an earlier, lost, German edition of 1587, which itself may have been influenced by even earlier, equally unpreserved pamphlets in Latin, such as those that likely inspired Jacob Bidermann's treatment of the damnation of the doctor of Paris, Cenodoxus (1602). Several soothsayers or necromancers of the late fifteenth century adopted the name Faustus, a reference to the Latin for "favoured" or "auspicious"; typical was Georgius Faustus Helmstetensis, calling himself astrologer and chiromancer, who was expelled from the town of Ingolstadt for such practices. Subsequent commentators have identified this individual as the prototypical Faustus of the legend.

Whatever the inspiration, the development of Marlowe's play is very faithful to the Faust Book especially in the way it mixes comedy with tragedy.

However, Marlowe also introduced some changes to make it more original. Here, he made three main additions in the play:

- Faustus's soliloquy in the Act 1 on the vanity of human science
- Good and Bad Angels
- Substitution of Seven Deadly Sins for a pageant of Devils

He also emphasised his intellectual aspirations and curiosity and minimised the vices in the character of Faustus to lend a Renaissance aura to the story.

Structure

The play is in blank verse and prose in thirteen scenes (1604) or twenty scenes (1616).

Blank verse is largely reserved for the main scenes while prose is used in the comic scenes. Modern texts divide the play into five acts; act 5 being the shortest. As in many Elizabethan plays, there is a chorus that does not

interact with the other characters but rather provides an introduction and conclusion to the play and gives an introduction to the events that have unfolded at the beginning of some acts.

Along with history and language style, scholars have critiqued and analysed the structure of Doctor Faustus and its effects on the play as a whole. Leonard H. Frey wrote a document entitled "In the Opening and Close of Doctor Faustus," which mainly focuses on Faustus's opening and closing soliloquies. He stresses the importance of the soliloquies in the play, saying: "the soliloquy, perhaps more than any other dramatic device, involved the audience in an imaginative concern with the happenings on stage". By having Doctor Faustus deliver these soliloquies at the beginning and end of the play, the focus is drawn to his inner thoughts and feelings about succumbing to the devil. The soliloquies have parallel concepts. In the introductory soliloquy, Faustus begins by pondering the fate of his life and what he wants his career to be. He ends his soliloquy with the solution and decision to give his soul to the devil. Similarly in the closing soliloquy, Faustus begins pondering, and finally comes to terms with the fate he created for himself. Frey also explains: "The whole pattern of this final soliloquy is thus a grim parody of the opening one, where decision is reached after, not prior to, the survey"

Synopsis

Faustus learns necromancy

As a prologue, the Chorus tells us what type of play Doctor Faustus is. It is not about war and courtly love, but about Faustus, who was born of lower class parents. This can be seen as a departure from the medieval tradition; Faustus holds a lower status than kings and saints, but his story is still worth telling. It gives an introduction to his wisdom and abilities, most notably in academia, in which he excels so tremendously that he is awarded a doctorate. During this opening, we also get our first clue to the source of Faustus's downfall. Faustus's tale is likened to that of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun and fell to his death when the sun melted his waxen wings. This is indeed a hint to Faustus's end as well as bringing our attention to the idea of hubris(excessive pride) which is represented in the Icarus story.

Faustus comments that he has reached the end of every subject he has studied. He appreciates Logic as being a tool for arguing; Medicine as being unvalued unless it allowed raising the dead and immortality; Law as being upstanding and above him; Divinity as useless because he feels that all humans commit sin, and thus to have sins punishable by death complicates the logic of Divinity. He dismisses it as "What doctrine call you this? Que sera, sera" (What will be, shall be).

He calls upon his servant Wagner to bring forth Valdes and Cornelius, two famous magicians. The Good Angel and the Bad Angel dispense their own perspective of his interest in Satan. Though Faustus is momentarily dissuaded, proclaiming "How am I glugged with conceit of this?", he is apparently won over by the possibilities Magic offers to him. Valdes declares that if Faustus devotes himself to Magic, he must vow not to study anything else and points out that great things are indeed possible with someone of Faustus's standing.

Faustus's absence is noted by two scholars who are less accomplished than Faustus himself. They request that Wagner reveal Faustus's present location, a request which Wagner haughtily denies. The two scholars worry about Faustus falling deep into the art of Magic and leave to inform the King.

Faustus summons a devil, in the presence of Lucifer and other devils although Faustus is unaware of it. After creating a magic circle and speaking an incantation in which he revokes his baptism, Faustus sees a devil named Mephistophilis appear before him. Faustus is unable to tolerate the hideous looks of the devil and commands it to change its appearance. Faustus, in seeing the obedience of the devil (for changing form), takes pride in his skill. He tries to bind the devil to his service but is unable to because Mephistophilis already serves Lucifer, the prince of devils. Mephistophilis also reveals that it was not Faustus's power that summoned him but rather that if anyone abjures the scriptures it results in the Devil coming to claim their soul.

Mephistophilis introduces the history of Lucifer and the other devils while indirectly telling Faustus that hell has no circumference and is more of a state of mind than a physical location. Faustus inquiries into the nature of hell lead to Mephistophilis saying: "Oh, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, which strikes a terror to my fainting soul".

The pact with Lucifer

Using Mephistophilis as a messenger, Faustus strikes a deal with Lucifer: he is to be allotted twenty-four years of life on Earth, during which time he will have Mephistophilis as his personal servant. At the end he will give his soul over to Lucifer as payment and spend the rest of time as one damned to Hell. This deal is to be sealed in Faustus's own blood. After cutting his arm, the wound is divinely healed and the Latin words "Homo, fuge!" (Flee, man!) then appear upon it. Despite the dramatic nature of this divine intervention, Faustus disregards the inscription with the assertion that he is already damned by his actions thus far and therefore left with no place to which he could flee. Mephistophilis brings coals to break the wound open again, and thus Faustus is able to take his oath that was written in his own blood.

Wasting his skills

Faustus begins by asking Mephistophilis a series of science-related questions. However, the devil seems to be quite evasive and finishes with a Latin phrase, "Per inoequalem motum respectu totius" ("through unequal motion with respect to the whole thing"). This sentence has not the slightest scientific value, thus giving the impression that Mephistophilis is untrustworthy.

Two angels, one good and one bad, appear to Faustus: the good angel urges him to repent and revoke his oath to Lucifer. This is the largest fault of Faustus throughout the play: he is blind to his own salvation. Though he is told initially by Mephistophilis to "leave these frivolous demands", Faustus remains set on his soul's damnation. Lucifer brings to Faustus the personification of the seven deadly sins. Faustus fails to see them as warnings and ignores them.

From this point until the end of the play, Faustus does nothing worthwhile, having begun his pact with the attitude that he would be able to do anything. Faustus appears to scholars and warns them that he is damned and

will not be long on the earth. He gives a speech about how he is damned and eventually seems to repent for his deeds. Mephistophilis comes to collect his soul, and we are told that he exits back to hell with him.

Damnation or salvation

The text leaves Faustus's final confrontation with Mephistophilis offstage, and his final fate obvious. The scene following begins with Faustus's friends discovering his clothes strewn about the stage: from this they conclude that Faustus was damned. However, his friends decide to give him a final party, a religious ceremony that hints at salvation. The discovery of the clothes is a scene present only in the later 'B text' of the play — in the earlier version of the play devils carry Faustus off the stage.

The Calvinist/anti-Calvinist controversy

The theological implications of Doctor Faustus have been the subject of considerable debate throughout the last century. Among the most complicated points of contention is whether the play supports or challenges the Calvinist doctrine of absolute predestination, which dominated the lectures and writings of many English scholars in the latter half of the sixteenth century. According to Calvin, predestination meant that God, acting of his own free will, elects some people to be saved and others to be damned – thus, the individual has no control over his own ultimate fate. This doctrine was the source of great controversy because it was seen by the so-called anti-Calvinists to limit man's free will in regard to faith and salvation, and to present a dilemma in terms of theodicy.

At the time Doctor Faustus was performed, this doctrine was on the rise in England, and under the direction of Puritan theologians at Cambridge and Oxford had come to be considered the orthodox position of the Church of England. Nevertheless, it remained the source of vigorous and, at times, heated debate between Calvinist scholars, such as William Whitaker and William Perkins, and anti-Calvinists, such as William Barrett and Peter Baro. The dispute between these Cambridge intellectuals had quite nearly reached its zenith by the time Marlowe was a student there in the 1580s, and likely would have influenced him deeply, as it did many of his fellow students.

Concerning the fate of Faustus, the Calvinist concludes that his damnation was inevitable. His rejection of God and subsequent inability to repent are taken as evidence that he never really belonged to the elect, but rather had been predestined from the very beginning for reprobation. In his *Chiefe Points of Christian Religion*, Theodore Beza, the successor to John Calvin, describes the category of sinner into which Faustus would most likely have been cast:

To conclude, they which are most miserable of all, those climb a degree higher, that their fall might be more grievous: for they are raised so high by some gift of grace, that they are little moved with some taste of the heavenly gift: so that for the time they seem to have received the seed...But this is plain, that the spirit of adoption, which we have said to be only proper unto them which are never cast forth, but are written in the secret of God's people, is never communicated to them, for were they of the elect they should remain still with

the elect. All these therefore (because of necessity, and yet willingly, as they which are under the slavery of sin, return to their vomit, and fall away from faith) are plucked up by the roots, to be cast into the fire

For the Calvinist, Faustus represents the worst kind of sinner, having tasted the heavenly gift and rejected it. His damnation is justified and deserved because he was never truly adopted among the elect. According to this view, the play demonstrates Calvin's "three-tiered concept of causation," in which the damnation of Faustus is first willed by God, then by Satan, and finally, by himself. As Calvin himself explains it in his Institutes of Christian Religion:

We see therefore that it is no absurdity, that one self act be ascribed to God, to Satan, and to man: but the diversity in the end and manner of doing, causeth that therein appeareth the justice of God to be without fault, and also the wickedness of Satan and man, bewrayeth itself to their reproach

The anti-Calvinist view, however, finds such thinking repugnant, and prefers to interpret Doctor Faustus as a criticism of such doctrines. One of the greatest critics of Calvinism in Marlowe's day was Peter Baro, who argued that such teachings fostered despair among believers, rather than repentance among sinners. He claimed, in fact, that Calvinism created a theodical dilemma:

What shall we say then? That this question so long debated of the Philosophers, most wise men, and yet undetermined, cannot even of Divines, and men endued with heavenly wisdom, be discussed and decided? And that God hath in this case laid a crosse upon learned men, wherein they might perpetually torment themselves? I cannot so think

Baro recognised the threat of despair which faced the Protestant church if it did not come to an agreement of how to understand the fundamentals. For him, the Calvinists were overcomplicating the issues of faith and repentance, and thereby causing great and unnecessary confusion among struggling believers. Faustus himself confesses a similar sentiment regarding predestination:

"The reward of sin is death." That's hard.

..."If we say that we have no sin,

We deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us."

Why then belike we must sin,

And so consequently die.

Ay, we must die an everlasting death.

What doctrine call you this? Che sera, sera,

"What will be, shall be"? Divinity, adieu!

Ultimately, however, the theology of Marlowe and the text of Doctor Faustus remain far too ambiguous for any kind of conclusive interpretation.

Quotations

Faustus includes a well-known speech addressed to the summoned shade of Helen of Troy, in Act V, scene I. The following is from the Gutenberg project e-text of the 1604 quarto (with footnotes removed).

Faustus

"Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium--
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.--
"[kisses her]"

Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!--
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest;
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.

O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!"

Excerpts from this speech appear in the film *Shakespeare in Love* and the *Star Trek* episode "The Squire of Gothos"; it also served as inspiration for the title of Volume 1 of the popular *Age of Bronze* comic book.

Another well-known quote comes after Faustus asks Mephistophilis how he is out of Hell, to which Mephistophilis replies:

"Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss?"

This quote comes from a translation of Saint John Chrysostom, and implies that Mephistophilis has both a deep knowledge of God and a desire to return to heaven.

Themes and motifs

One theme in Doctor Faustus is sin. Throughout the play, Faustus is continuously making wrong choices. His first sin was greed. Faustus began his downfall by making a pact with the devil. Doctor Faustus is a German scholar who is well known for his accomplishments. He grows sick of the limitations on human knowledge, which leads him to his interest with magic. Faustus summons a demon, Mephistophilis, ordering him to go to Lucifer with the offer of Faustus's soul in return for twenty-four years of servitude from Mephistophilis. At the news of acceptance from Lucifer, Faustus begins his years filled with sinful nature. Faustus feeds sin with his need for power, praise, and trickery. He becomes absorbed in the way people look up to him, believing him to be a sort of 'hero'. In the end, Faustus realises his mistake in believing power will bring him happiness. At the end of his twenty-four years, Faustus is filled with fear and he becomes remorseful for his past actions, yet this comes too late. When fellow scholars find Faustus the next morning, he is torn limb from limb, with his soul carried off to hell.

In terms of historical context, a major thematic idea is that related to knowledge and the quest for it. With Enlightenment thinkers demonstrating the extent to which the sciences and rational speculation could inform human knowledge of the cosmos and other pressing mysteries of the age, Marlowe presents the idea of hubris which fundamentally relates to the search for knowledge in a religious age. Marlowe also draws significant attention to feelings experienced both by himself and other thinkers of his time: the unsatisfying nature of the answers found as part of this quest and the impossibility of learning everything in a lifetime as brief as that of a human.

Satanism and death are also prevalent themes. Marlowe sets the story in Wittenburg, Germany with Faustus selling his soul to the devil and declaring his servitude to Satan, Mephistophilis: "I am a servant to great Lucifer and may not follow thee without his leave. No more than he commands we must perform" (p 13 line 39–41). Marlowe shows throughout the play that his vow to forever be a servant of Satan negatively affects his life and how had he known what he was getting into, then he would never have made a deal with the devil.

Magic is also a motif that plays a major role in Dr. Faustus. Faustus's downfall began with his love of knowledge, which leads for his need to use magic. Faustus loves the praise that he gets when people view him as a 'genius', which supports his need to have 'special powers'. Faustus enjoys playing tricks on people by using his powers, and even goes so far as to use his powers on a dragon. He summons demons with magic, and later brings Helen of Troy to comfort him in his final hours. The use of magic is a show of Faustus's 'demoralisation'. He no longer wants to be a mere mortal...he wants to be as powerful as the devil himself.

One of the most apparent themes in Doctor Faustus is the battle between good and evil. At the beginning of the play, Faustus finds himself torn between good and evil, knowing the distinction and consequences of the two, but overwhelmed by his desire for worldly pleasures. Faustus's desire for mortal satisfaction is personified through the seven deadly sins who all speak to him and tempt him. Nicholas Kiessling explains how Faustus's sins brings about his own damnation, saying: "Faustus's indulgence in sensual diversions, for, once being committed to the pact with Satan, Faustus partakes of the sop of sensuality to blot out his fears of impending

damnation” Another illustration of Faustus’s battle between good and evil is shown through the good and evil angels which try to influence his decisions and behaviour. Kiessling says, “Although Faustus does not heed the plea, Marlowe very evidently implies that the chance for redemption still exists”. Although Faustus recognises the consequences of choosing to listen to the evil spirit over the good spirit, he cannot resist the temptations of the devil and the worldly and mortal pleasures he offers.

Mephistophilis

Mephistophilis is a demon which Faustus conjures up while first using his magical powers. Readers initially feel sympathy for the demon when he attempts to dissuade Faustus from giving his soul to Lucifer. Mephistophilis gives Faustus a description of hell and the continuous horrors it possesses. He wants Faustus to know what he is getting himself into before going through with the plan.

“Think’st thou that I who saw the face of God

And tasted the eternal joy of heaven

Am not tormented with ten thousand hells

In being deprived of everlasting bliss?

O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands

Which strikes a terror to my fainting soul!”

Sadly, his attempts fail with Faustus believing that supernatural powers were worth a lifetime in hell.

“Say he (Faustus) surrender up to him (Lucifer) his soul

So he will spare him four and twenty years,

Letting him live in all voluptuousness

Having thee (Mephistophilis) ever to attend on me” (Marlowe 15)

Some scholars argue that Mephistophilis depicts the sorrow that comes with separation from God. Mephistophilis is foreshadowing the pain Faustus would have to endure, should he go through with his plan. In this facet, Faustus can be likened to Icarus, whose insatiable ambition was the source of his misery and the cause of his plight.

Adaptations

The play was adapted for the screen in 1967 by Richard Burton and Nevill Coghill, who based the film on an Oxford University Dramatic Society production in which Burton starred opposite Elizabeth Taylor as Helen of Troy.

A stage production at the Greenwich Theatre in London in 2009, which was directed by Elizabeth Freestone and which starred Tim Treolar as Mephistopheles and Gareth Kennerley as Faustus, was filmed for DVD release by Stage on Screen. It played in repertoire with *School for Scandal*.

Critical history

Doctor Faustus has raised much controversy due to its interaction with the demonic realm. Before Marlowe, there were few authors who ventured into this kind of writing. After his play, other authors began to expand on their views of the spiritual world and how quickly and easily man can fall.

Chapter 8

The Duchess Of Malfi

The Duchess of Malfi (originally published as *The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy*) is a macabre, tragic play written by the English dramatist John Webster in 1612–13. It was first performed privately at the Blackfriars Theatre, then before a more general audience at The Globe, in 1613–14. Published in 1623, the play is loosely based on events that occurred between about 1508 and 1513, recounted in William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (1567). The Duchess was Giovanna d'Aragona, whose father, Enrico d'Aragona (it), Marquis of Gerace, was an illegitimate son of Ferdinand I of Naples. Her husbands were Alfonso Piccolomini (it), Duke of Amalfi, and (as in the play) Antonio Beccadelli di Bologna (it).

The play begins as a love story, with a Duchess who marries beneath her class, and ends as a nightmarish tragedy as her two brothers exact their revenge, destroying themselves in the process.

Jacobean drama continued the trend of stage violence and horror set by Elizabethan tragedy, under the influence of Seneca, and there is a great deal of all that in the later scenes of the play. The complexity of some of its characters particularly Bosola and the Duchess, plus Webster's poetic language, ensure the play is often considered among the greatest tragedies of English renaissance drama.

Characters

- Antonio Bologna. Antonio has recently returned from France, full of scorn for the Italian courtiers whom he sees as more corrupt than the French. Antonio is the steward of the Duchess of Malfi's palace.

His honesty and good judgement of character are characteristics well known to the other characters. He accepts the Duchess' proposal of marriage because of her disposition rather than her beauty. Her marrying beneath herself is a problem, however, and their marriage has to remain a secret, and Antonio shares neither her title nor her money. Bosola accidentally kills him.

- Delio. A courtier, who tries to woo Julia. Based on a historical character of the same name, his purpose is to be the sounding board for his friend Antonio. Because he asks so many pertinent questions, he serves as a source of important information to the audience, and is privy to the secrets of Antonio's marriage and children.
- Daniel de Bosola. A former servant of the Cardinal, now returned from a sentence in the galleys for murder. Publicly rejected by his previous employer the Cardinal, he is sent by Ferdinand to spy on the Duchess as her Provisor of Horse. (Ferdinand hopes to keep her away from marriage.) Bosola is involved in the murder of the Duchess, her children, Cariola, Antonio, the Cardinal, Ferdinand, and a servant. Witnessing the nobility of the Duchess and Antonio facing their deaths, he finally feels guilty, and seeks to avenge them. This change of heart makes him the play's most complex character. A malcontent and cynic, he makes numerous critical comments on the nature of Renaissance society. (He is based on the historical Daniele de Bozolo, about whom little is known.)
- The Cardinal. The brother to the Duchess and Ferdinand. A corrupt, icy official in the Roman Catholic Church who keeps a mistress—not uncharacteristic of the time—he has arranged a spy (Bosola) to spy upon his sister – all this on the quiet, however, leaving others ignorant of his plotting. Of remorse, love, loyalty, or even greed, he knows nothing, and his reasons for hating his sister are a mystery. (Historically, his name was Luigi or Lodovico.)
- Ferdinand. The Duke of Calabria and twin brother of the Duchess. Unlike his rational brother the Cardinal, Ferdinand is given to fits of rage and violent outbursts disproportionate to the perceived offence. He gradually loses his sanity—he believes he is a wolf and digs up graves— (lycanthropy) but, upon seeing his dead sister, has the grace to regret hiring Bosola to kill her. (In reality, his name was Carlo, Marquis of Gerace.)
- Castruchio. An old lord. His name plays on the word "castrated", suggesting impotence. He's the conventional elderly man with a young, unfaithful wife (Julia). He is genial and easygoing, attempting to stay on good terms with all.
- Roderigo. A courtier.
- Grisolan. A courtier.
- Silvio. A courtier.
- Pescara. A marquis.
- The Duchess. The protagonist, sister to Ferdinand and the Cardinal. At the beginning, she is a widow in the prime of her life. Though her brothers take every precaution to keep her from marriage, she secretly

marries Antonio. Her brothers arrange to have her strangled. She is described as having a sweet countenance and noble virtue. Witty and clever, she can keep up with her brothers' banter. She also has a tenderness and warmth that they lack. She has three children, two sons and a daughter by Antonio. (There is an inconsistency surrounding earlier children by her deceased husband, put down to a careless mistake by Webster.)

- Cariola. Duchess's waiting-woman and privy to her secrets. She witnesses the Duchess's wedding and delivers her children. She dies tragically by strangling following the murder of the Duchess and the youngest children. Her name plays on the Italian *carriolo*, meaning "trundle-bed", where personal servants would have slept.
- Julia. Castruchio's wife and the Cardinal's mistress. She dies at the Cardinal's hands from a poisoned Bible.
- Malateste. A hanger-on at the Cardinal's court. The name means 'headache'. Referred to as a "mere stick of sugar candy" by the Duchess, he is yet another interchangeable courtier conveying the sycophantic court of Malfi.
- Doctor. Sent for to diagnose and remedy Ferdinand's madness and his supposed "lycanthropy".
- There is also a variety of minor roles including couriers, servants, officers, a mistress, the children, executioners, etc. They further the plot or perform small tasks that cannot be accomplished by the principals.

Main themes

The main themes of the play are: corruption, misuse of power, revenge, deception, the status of women and the consequences of their assertion of authority, the argument of blood v. merit, the upshot of unequal marriage, cruelty, incest, and class.

Corruption

There is a great deal of corruption imagery within the play. Corruption includes the corruption of the court, soul and mind. The Cardinal and Ferdinand are corrupted in their soul. Bosola made use of imagery to describe The Cardinal and Ferdinand: "plum trees that grow crooked over standing pools" The corruption of mind can be seen in Ferdinand's incestuous thoughts towards The Duchess and his plan to drive The Duchess to madness. This is further emphasised by Ferdinand's character.

Misuse of power

The misuse of power can be seen in the Cardinal's and Ferdinand's actions. They make use of their power for their own greed and interest. The Cardinal abuses his ecclesiastical powers by getting the Duchess's property confiscated and by getting her banished from the state of Ancona. Ferdinand misuses his political power by ordering the death of the Duchess without any proper judgement passed by the court of law. (Ferdinand later blames Bosola for the murder of the Duchess by saying that he had no authority to get her killed privately since it was unlawful and Bosola could - and should have - helped her to escape). These are examples of corruption.

Status of women and consequences of their assertion of authority

Women in those periods are supposed to be submissive and meek. Their lives are usually dictated by men and they do not have a say. However, the Duchess went against her brothers' wishes and remarries. Her assertion of her freedom of choice is best illustrated in her soliloquy following her conversation with her brothers when they strictly advise her to not even think about remarrying. Immediately after telling her brothers that she will never remarry, she says to herself: "If all my royal kindred/ Lay in my way unto this marriage:/ I'll'd make them my low foot-steps." The consequence of her assertion of authority is her death, because if she had not chosen to marry, the tragedy would not have happened.

Cruelty

The Cardinal and Ferdinand's cruelty towards the Duchess are evident in their threats. The poniard is an important symbol to show the threats. Cruelty is also shown in Ferdinand's wish to make the Duchess mad. He makes use of wax figurines to trick the Duchess into thinking Antonio is dead. Following this, he sends various madmen to the Duchess's room. This is to devastate the Duchess, in the hope of making her mad. The cruelty of their actions includes hiring Bosola as a spy, which deprives the Duchess of her privacy.

Class

The Cardinal and Ferdinand are against the marriage of the Duchess and Antonio not only because they will have to share their wealth with him, but also because he is of a lower social status. Bosola, also of a lower class, expresses support for their marriage, at first, and even admires the Duchess for her ability to see past class; "Do I not dream? Can this ambitious age/ Have so much goodness in't as to prefer/ A man merely for worth, without these shadows/ Of wealth and painted honours? Possible?" (3.2.279-282). By the end of the play, his true feelings are revealed and he agrees with The Cardinal and Ferdinand that a steward is not a good match for the Duchess. The Duchess argues that high class is not an indicator of a good man

Theatrical Devices

The play makes use of various theatrical devices, some of them derived from Senecan Tragedy which includes violence and bloodshed on the stage. Act III, Scene iv is a mime scene in which a song is sung in honour of the Cardinal who gives up his robes and invests himself with the attire of a soldier and then does the act of banishing the Duchess. The whole scene is commented upon by two pilgrims who condemn the harsh behaviour of the Cardinal toward the Duchess. That the scene is set against the backdrop of the Shrine of Our Lady of Loretto, a religious place, adds to its sharp distinction between good and evil, and justice and injustice. Act V, Scene iii, features an important theatrical device, echo which seems to emanate from the grave of the Duchess and is also in her voice. Combined together it reads: "Deadly accent. A thing of sorrow. That suits it best. Ay, wife's voice. Be mindful of thy safety. O fly your fate. Thou art a dead thing. Never see her more." The echo repeats the last words of what Antonio and Delio speak but is selective. It adds to the feeling of inevitability of Antonio's death while highlighting the role of fate.

Plot synopsis

The play is set in the court of Malfi (Amalfi), Italy 1504 to 1510. The recently widowed Duchess falls in love with Antonio, a lowly steward, but her brothers, not wishing her to share their inheritance, forbid her from remarrying. She marries Antonio in secret and bears him three children.

The Duchess's lunatic and incestuously obsessed brother Ferdinand threatens and disowns her. In an attempt to escape, she and Antonio concoct a story that he has swindled her out of her fortune and has to flee into exile. She takes Bosola into her confidence, not knowing that he is Ferdinand's spy, and arranges that he will deliver her jewellery to Antonio at his hiding-place in Ancona. She will join them later, whilst pretending to make a pilgrimage to a town nearby. The Cardinal hears of the plan, instructs Bosola to banish the two lovers, and sends soldiers to capture them. Antonio escapes with their eldest son, but the Duchess, her maid, and her two younger children are returned to Malfi and, under instructions from Ferdinand, die at the hands of Bosola's executioners. This experience, combined with a long-standing sense of injustice and his own feeling of a lack of identity, turns Bosola against the Cardinal and his brother, deciding to take up the cause of "Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi" (V.2).

The Cardinal confesses to his mistress Julia his part in the killing of the Duchess and then murders her to silence her, using a poisoned Bible. Next, Bosola overhears the Cardinal plotting to kill him (though he accepts what he sees as punishment for his actions) and so visits the darkened chapel to kill the Cardinal at his prayers. Instead, he mistakenly kills Antonio, who has just returned to Malfi to attempt a reconciliation with the Cardinal. Bosola stabs the Cardinal, who dies. In the brawl that follows, Ferdinand and Bosola stab each other to death.

Antonio's elder son by the Duchess appears in the final scene and takes his place as the heir to the Malfi fortune, despite his father's explicit wish that he "fly the court of princes", a corrupt and increasingly deadly environment.

Plot: Scene-by-scene breakdown

Act 1

Scene 1—The Duchess's palace in Malfi: Antonio and Delio are discussing the former's return from France, and discussing how the French king runs his court, comparing it to an easily poisoned fountain. They are interrupted by the entry of Bosola and the Cardinal. Antonio and Delio hold their conversation, stepping to the background to watch as Bosola angrily tries to gain the Cardinal's pardon, speaking of the time he has spent in the galleys in penal servitude, and in the service of the Cardinal. Bosola declares that he is surely done with service, but the Cardinal is not interested in Bosola's new merit, and takes his leave. Bosola compares himself to Tantalus, never able to acquire the thing he most desires, like an injured soldier who can only depend on his crutches for support of any kind. When he leaves, Antonio and Delio comment on his past offence, and how he will surely come to no good if he is kept in neglect. Ferdinand comes into the palace, talking to his courtiers about a tournament that Antonio has just won. When the Cardinal, Duchess, and Cariola enter to speak with Ferdinand, Antonio and Delio have a moment to themselves to discuss the Cardinal's character; he is found to be a very dishonest, disagreeable person, as is his brother, Ferdinand. Only their sister, the Duchess, earns the approval of

everyone, a very pleasant and gracious woman. After the two gentlemen leave, Ferdinand petitions his sister to make Bosola the manager of her horses; when everyone else leaves, Ferdinand and the Cardinal reveal that it is because Bosola is to spy on their sister. When Bosola is brought in and made aware of this plan, he at first refuses, but ultimately is given no choice. The Cardinal and Ferdinand then turn their attention to their sister, urging her not to marry again, now that she is a widow, going so far as to threaten her with death, in Ferdinand's case. She refuses to be bullied, and once her brothers are out of sight, she proposes to Antonio by giving him her wedding ring. Having Cariola, the Duchess's maid, as their witness, this private ceremony is legally binding and the Duchess and Antonio become husband and wife.

Act 2

Scene 1—The Duchess's palace in Malfi, nine months later: Bosola and Castruchio enter, Bosola criticising his companion's appearance, and telling him that he would make a ridiculous judge. When an old woman intrudes on their conversation, Bosola's insults turn on her, calling her hideous to the point that no amount of make-up would help. He also accuses her of being too like a witch; the old lady and Castruchio leave Bosola alone to muse on the mysterious way the Duchess is acting of late. He believes she is pregnant (no one but Delio and Cariola know that the Duchess and Antonio are married), and aims to prove it by using apricots both to spark her pregnant appetite and to induce labour, as apricots were believed to do. The Duchess, when she enters, accepts the fruit from Bosola, and quickly starts going into labour. She then retires to her chamber claiming to be ill, with a worried Antonio following in her wake.

Scene 2—Same place and time as the previous scene: Bosola, alone, realises that the Duchess is indeed pregnant. After accosting the hapless old lady again, he watches as Antonio and the servants in a commotion about a Swiss mercenary who had invaded the Duchess's room, and the loss of several jewels and gold utensils. Even with all the uproar, Antonio is not distracted from his wife's "illness"; she is actually in labour. Cariola, the lady's maid, enters with good news once Antonio is alone—he is the father of a son.

Scene 3—Same place and time as the previous scene: Bosola re-enters the now empty room, having heard a woman (the Duchess) shriek. Antonio discovers him, and questions his purpose in being there, since everyone had been commanded to keep to their rooms. Antonio tells him to stay away from the Duchess, since he doesn't trust Bosola. In Antonio's agitation, he accidentally drops a horoscope for his son's birth, which Bosola retrieves. He realises what it means, and resolves to send it to the Duchess's brothers with Castruchio.

Scene 4—The Cardinal's rooms: The Cardinal and his mistress, Julia, are discussing their rendezvous, when a messenger calls the Cardinal away with an important message. Delio enters to find Julia alone. He was once a suitor of hers, and offers her money. Julia leaves to meet her husband, Castruchio, and Delio fears that her husband's arrival means Antonio's secret marriage is about to be revealed.

Scene 5—Rome, in Ferdinand's private apartments: An enraged Ferdinand, with the letter from Bosola, and his brother the Cardinal, meet to discuss what they think is an awful treachery by their sister. Ferdinand is angry to the point of shouting about his sister's "whorish" behaviour (he knows of the child, but not of the marriage),

and the Cardinal struggles to control his brother's temperamental outburst. Ferdinand resolves to discover the man his sister is seeing, threatening all and sundry.

Act 3

Scene 1—The Duchess's palace in Malfi, after some time has passed: Antonio greets the returning Delio, who has come from Rome with Ferdinand. Antonio reveals that the Duchess has had two more children in the time Delio was gone. Antonio fears the wrath of the recently arrived Ferdinand, and Delio tells him the ordinary people think the Duchess is a whore. While they talk, the Duchess and Ferdinand enter. He tells her that he has found a husband for her, the Count Malateste. She disregards this, as she is already married (still secretly of course) to Antonio. When left alone, Ferdinand consults with Bosola to discover the father of the three seemingly illegitimate children; Bosola has acquired a skeleton key to the Duchess's room, which Ferdinand takes, telling him to guess what will happen next.

Scene 2—The Duchess's bedchamber: Antonio comes up to the Duchess's bedroom to spend the night, and they banter back and forth about the point of lovers just sleeping together. Antonio and Cariola leave to allow the Duchess to complete her night-time preparations, but she is not alone; Ferdinand sneaks in and startles her. He gives her a knife, intending her to kill herself, and his fury increases when she tells him she is married without his knowledge. Ferdinand leaves, declaring he will never see her again. He exits just in time, for Antonio bursts in brandishing a pistol, but the Duchess forces him to leave again when Bosola knocks at the door. Bosola informs the Duchess that Ferdinand has left for Rome again, and she tells him that Ferdinand's bills of exchange (he has so far dealt with her accounts) will no longer work, since Antonio has been false with her accounts. This is, of course, a trick to get Antonio out of Malfi; she calls Antonio back in (once Bosola exits) to tell him to flee to Ancona, where she will send him all her treasure and valuables. The couple puts on a show argument for the benefit of the returning Bosola and officers, where she criticises his faulty record keeping and banishes him. Bosola does not believe the Duchess was justified in banishing Antonio, and tells her that Antonio is a good, honest man. This speech prompts the Duchess to confide the secret marriage to Bosola. He is then left on stage to lament his role as a spy, for now he must reveal all to Ferdinand.

Scene 3—A room in a palace at Rome: The Cardinal, Ferdinand, Malateste, Pescara, Silvio and Delio are discussing the new fortifications that are being made in Naples. Ferdinand and his men, leaving the Cardinal and Malateste to speak privately, are very harsh in their critique of Malateste, considering him too cowardly to fight in an upcoming battle. Bosola, meanwhile, interrupts the Cardinal's private conference with news of his sister. The Cardinal leaves to petition for her and her family's exile from Ancona, while Bosola goes to tell the Duchess's first child (from her first husband) what has happened with his mother. Ferdinand goes to find Antonio.

Scene 4—The shrine of Our Lady of Loreto, Italy, in the Ancona province: Two pilgrims are visiting the shrine in Ancona, and witness the Cardinal being symbolically prepared for war. The Cardinal then proceeds to take

the Duchess's wedding ring, banish her, Antonio, and their children, while the pilgrims muse over the reason for what they have just seen.

Scene 5—Near Loreto: The newly banished family, and the maid Coriola, enter Loreto. Shortly after their arrival, Bosola comes and presents the Duchess with a letter from Ferdinand, which indirectly states that Ferdinand wants Antonio dead. Antonio tells Bosola that he will not go to Ferdinand, and the Duchess urges him to take the oldest child and go to Milan to find safety, which he promptly does. Bosola and masked guards then take the Duchess and her remaining children captive, on the orders of her brothers.

Act 4

Scene 1—A prison (or the Duchess's lodgings serving as a prison) near Loreto: Ferdinand comes in with Bosola, who is describing to him how the Duchess is dealing with her imprisonment. It seems she is not affected to Ferdinand's satisfaction, and he leaves angrily. Bosola greets the Duchess, telling her that her brother wishes to speak with her, but will not do so where he can see her. She agrees to meet with her brother in the darkness. Once the lights are out, Ferdinand returns. He presents her with a dead man's hand, leading her to believe that it is Antonio's, with her wedding ring on it. He then exits, leaving Bosola to show the Duchess lifelike figures of her husband and children, made to appear as though her family was dead. The Duchess believes them to be the genuine articles, and resolves to die—her despair is so deep it affects Bosola. When she leaves, Ferdinand re-enters; Bosola pleads with him to send his sister to a convent, refusing to be a part of the plot any more. Ferdinand is beyond reason at this point, and tells Bosola to go to Milan to find the real Antonio.

Scene 2—Same place and time as the previous scene: The Duchess and her maid, Cariola, come back, distracted by the noises being made by a group of madmen (Ferdinand brought them in to terrorise her). A servant tells her that they were brought for sport, and lets in several of the madmen. Bosola, too, sneaks in with them, disguised as an old man, and tells the Duchess that he is there to make her tomb. When she tries to pull rank on him, executioners with cords and a coffin come in. Cariola is removed from the room, leaving Bosola and the executioners with the Duchess. The Duchess makes a brave show, telling the executioners to “pull, and pull strongly”, welcoming her strangulation. Cariola is brought back, and after struggling fiercely, she too is strangled. Ferdinand comes to view the scene, and is also shown the bodies of his sister's children, who were murdered as well. Ferdinand reveals that he and the Duchess were twins, and that he had hoped, if she had remained a widow, to inherit all her wealth. Bosola, sensing that Ferdinand is ready to turn on him next, demands payment for his atrocities. Ferdinand, distracted, leaves him alone with the bodies. Astonishingly, the Duchess is not dead. A shocked Bosola has no time to call for medicine; he manages to tell the Duchess that Antonio is not really dead; that the figures she saw were fake, before she finally dies. Bosola, remorseful at last, takes her body to the care of some good women, planning to leave immediately thereafter for Milan.

Act 5

Scene 1—Outside Ferdinand and the Cardinal's palace in Milan: Antonio returns to see if he can reconcile with Ferdinand and the Cardinal, but Delio is dubious as to the wisdom of this. Delio asks Pescara, a marquis, to give

him possession of Antonio's estate for safekeeping, but Pescara denies him. Julia presents Pescara with a letter from the Cardinal, which states that she should receive Antonio's property, and which Pescara grants to her. When Delio confronts him about this, Pescara says that he would not give an innocent man a property that was taken from someone by such vile means (the Cardinal took the property for himself once Antonio was banished), for it will now become an appropriate place for the Cardinal's mistress. This statement impresses the hidden Antonio. When Pescara leaves to visit an ill Ferdinand, Antonio decides to pay a night-time visit to the Cardinal.

Scene 2—Inside the same palace: Pescara, come to visit Ferdinand, is discussing his condition with the doctor, who believes Ferdinand may have lycanthropia: a condition whereby he believes he is a wolf. The doctor thinks there is a chance of a relapse, in which case Ferdinand's diseased behaviour would return; namely, digging up dead bodies at night. Pescara and the doctor make way for the mad Ferdinand, who attacks his own shadow. The Cardinal, who has entered with Ferdinand, manages to catch Bosola, who has been watching Ferdinand's ravings. The Cardinal assigns Bosola to seek out Antonio (by following Delio) and then slay him. After the Cardinal leaves, Bosola does not even make it to the door before he is stopped by Julia, who is brandishing a pistol. She accuses him of having given her a love potion, and threatens to kill him to end her love. Bosola manages to disarm her and convince her to gather intelligence for him about the Cardinal. Bosola then hides while Julia uses all of her persuasive powers to get the Cardinal to reveal his part in the death of his sister and her children. The Cardinal then makes Julia swear to keep silent, forcing her to kiss the poisoned cover of a bible, causing her to die almost instantly. Bosola comes out of hiding to confront the Cardinal, although he declares that he still intends to kill Antonio. Giving him a master key, the Cardinal takes his leave. However, once he is alone, Bosola swears to protect Antonio, and goes off to bury Julia's body.

Scene 3—A courtyard outside the same palace: Delio and Antonio are near the Duchess's tomb; as they talk, an echo from the tomb mirrors their conversation. Delio leaves to find Antonio's eldest son, and Antonio leaves to escape the distressing echo of his wife's resting place.

Scene 4—The Cardinal's apartments in Milan: The Cardinal enters, trying to dissuade Pescara, Malateste, Roderigo and Grisolan from staying to keep watch over Ferdinand. He goes so far as to say that he might feign mad fits to test their obedience; if they come to help, they will be in trouble. They unwillingly exit, and Bosola enters to find the Cardinal planning to have him killed. Antonio, unaware of Bosola, sneaks in while it is dark, planning to seek audience with the Cardinal. Not realising who has entered, Bosola attacks Antonio; he is horrified to see his mistake. He manages to relate the death of the Duchess and children to the dying Antonio, who is glad to be dying in sadness, now that life is pointless for him. Bosola then leaves to bring down the Cardinal.

Scene 5—The same apartments, near Julia's lodging: The Cardinal, unaware of what has just happened, is reading a book when Bosola enter with a servant, who is bearing Antonio's body. He threatens the Cardinal, who calls for help. Help is not forthcoming, for the gentlemen from the beginning of the previous scene, while

they can hear him calling, have no desire to go to his aid (because of his previous order to not at any cost try to help Ferdinand). Bosola kills the servant of the Cardinal first, and then stabs the Cardinal. Ferdinand bursts in, also attacking his brother; in the fight, he accidentally wounds Bosola. Bosola kills Ferdinand, and is left with the dying Cardinal. The gentlemen who heard the cries now enter the room to witness the deaths of the Cardinal and Bosola. Delio enters too late with Antonio's eldest son, and laments the unfortunate events that have passed.

Historical staging

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Set and Props: As this play would have first been produced in the Globe, the set would probably been a bare stage with movable set pieces such as tables, stools, beds, hangings, and altars, all of which would have been stock pieces used in every show. Props would also have been minimal, with essentials like swords, pistols, and candles, and dummies. Interestingly, the traveller and future translator of Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, Thomas Hoby, together with his friend Peter Whitehorne, translator of Machiavelli's *Art of War*, were lavishly entertained by a subsequent Duchess of Malfi and her son, Innico, in the Castello di Amalfi in 1550. Hoby was clearly very impressed by the decor, by implication superior to what he was used to in England, describing the chamber in which they were accommodated as: 'hanged with clothe of gold and vellett, wherein were two beddes, th'one of silver worke and the other of vellett, with pillowes bolsters and the shetes curiouslie wrowght with needle worke.'

Lighting: Lighting for a theatre like the Globe is completely dependent upon the sun. Performances would occur in the afternoon so as to see the performers since no other sources of lighting were accessible.

Costumes: This was the Jacobean era, and Renaissance clothing, often hand-me-downs from noble patrons, would have been appropriate during this time. Especially since this play takes place among wealthy, prestigious characters who belong to The Royal Court, there would have been long dresses with elaborate sleeves and headpieces for most female characters, and form fitting tunics for most of the men as a general rule. Men would wear hose and codpieces, very royal members of The Court might wear jackets with stuffed (bombast) sleeves, and both men and women would be able to wear clothing with some type of color to it. Due to the sumptuary laws, deep purple was restricted to the nobility of the times. During this period, and until the Restoration (1660) women were not generally accepted on stage. Because of this, the roles of women were played by apprentice boys or the younger men. Padding would be built into their costumes, their heads would be adorned with wigs, and extra make-up would be applied to their faces.

Music: Music would be played in the musicians' gallery located in the balcony of the theatre, where actors would also perform, depending upon space. An orchestra consisted of six instruments, including trumpets, recorders, and drums. This would be played for entrances, introductions, and battle scenes.

The 1623 quarto

The first printed edition contains a combined cast list for two productions of *The Duchess of Malfi* by the King's Men, c. 1614 and c. 1621, providing valuable information about the structure and evolution of the key dramatic company of the era. The printer was a Nicholas Okes, and the publisher John Waterson. Webster dedicated the play to George Harding, 8th Baron Berkeley, a noted patron of literature in his era. The phrasing of Webster's dedication indicates that the dramatist was soliciting the Baron's patronage, rather than acknowledging support already given; it is unknown to what degree that solicitation was successful.

Reception and performance history

The play was written for and performed by the King's Men in 1613 or 1614. The double cast lists included in the 1623 quarto suggest a revival around 1619. Contemporary reference also indicated that the play was performed in 1618, for in that year Orazio Busino, the chaplain to the Venetian ambassador to England, complained of the play's treatment of Catholics in the character of the Cardinal.

The quarto's cast list allows more precision about casting than is usually available. Richard Burbage and Joseph Taylor successively played Ferdinand to Henry Condell's Cardinal. John Lowin played Bosola; William Ostler was Antonio. Boy player Richard Sharpe originated the title role. Nicholas Tooley played Forobosco, and Robert Pallant doubled numerous minor roles, including Cariola.

The quarto title page announces that the play was performed at both the Globe Theatre and at Blackfriars; however, in tone and in some details of staging (particularly the use of special lighting effects) the play is clearly meant primarily for the indoor stage. Robert Johnson, a regular composer for Blackfriars, wrote incidental music for the play and composed a setting for the "madmen's song" in Act 4.

The play is known to have been performed for Charles I at the Cockpit-in-Court in 1630; there is little reason to doubt that it was performed intermittently throughout the period.

The play remained current through the first part of the Restoration. Samuel Pepys reports seeing the play several times; it was performed by the Duke of York's company under Thomas Betterton.

By the early eighteenth century, Webster's violence and sexual frankness had gone out of taste. In 1733, Lewis Theobald wrote and directed an adaptation, *The Fatal Secret*; the play imposed neoclassical unities on the play, for instance by eliminating the Duchess's child and preserving the Duchess at the end. By mid-century, the play had fallen with Webster out of the repertory, where it stayed until the Romantic revival of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt.

In 1850, after a generation of critical interest and theatrical neglect, the play was staged by Samuel Phelps at Sadler's Wells, with Isabella Glyn in the title role. The text was adapted by Richard Henry Horne. The production was favourably reviewed by *The Athenaeum*; George Henry Lewes, however, registered disapproval of the play's violence and what he termed its shoddy construction: "Instead of 'holding the mirror up to nature,' this drama holds the mirror up to Madame Tussauds." These would become the cornerstones of criticisms of

Webster for the next century. Still, the play was popular enough for Glyn to revive her performance periodically for the next two decades.

Shortly after, *Duchess* came to the United States. Working with Horne's text, director James Stark staged a production in San Francisco; this version is noteworthy for a sentimental apotheosis Stark added, in which the Duchess and Ferdinand are reunited in heaven. The most popular American productions, however, were produced by Wilmarth Waller and his wife Emma.

William Poel staged the play at the Opera Comique in 1892, with Mary Rorke as the Duchess and Murray Carson as Bosola. Poel's playscript followed Webster's text closely apart from scene rearrangements; however, reaction had set in, and the production received generally scathing reviews. William Archer, England's chief proponent of Ibsen's new drama, took advantage of the occasion to lambast what he saw as the overestimation of Elizabethan theatre in general.

In 1919, the Phoenix Society revived the play in London for the first time in two decades. The production featured Cathleen Nesbitt as the Duchess; Robert Farquharson played Ferdinand. The production was widely disparaged. For many of the newspaper critics, the failure indicated that Webster had become a "curio"; T. S. Eliot, conversely, argued that the production had failed to uncover the elements that made Webster a great dramatist—specifically his poetry. A 1935 production at the Embassy Theatre received similarly negative reviews; Ivor Brown noted that the audience left "rather with superior smiles than with emotional surrender." In 1938, a production was broadcast on BBC television; it was no better received than the previous two stage productions.

In the aftermath of World War II, George Rylands directed a production at the Haymarket Theatre that at last caught the public mood. John Gielgud, as Ferdinand, accentuated the element of incestuous passion in that character's treatment of the Duchess (played by Peggy Ashcroft). Cecil Truncer was Bosola. Edmund Wilson was perhaps the first to note that the play struck an audience differently in the wake of the revelation of the Holocaust; this note is, from 1945 on, continually struck in discussions of the appropriateness of Webster for the modern age. A 1946 production on Broadway did not fare as well; Rylands attempted to duplicate his London staging with John Carradine as Ferdinand and Elisabeth Bergner as the Duchess. W. H. Auden adapted Webster's text for the modern audience. However, the production's most notable innovation was in the character of Bosola, which was played by Canada Lee in whiteface. The production received savage reviews from the popular press, and it fared little better in the literary reviews.

The first successful postwar performance in America was staged at the off-Broadway Phoenix Theatre in 1957. Directed by Jack Landau, who had earlier staged a brief but well-reviewed *White Devil*, the production emphasised (and succeeded as) *Grand Guignol*. As Walter Kerr put it, "Blood runs right over the footlights, spreads slowly up the aisle and spills well out into Second Avenue."

Ashcroft returned as the Duchess in a 1960 production at the Aldwych Theatre. The play was directed by Donald McWhinnie; Eric Porter played Ferdinand and Max Adrian the Cardinal. Patrick Wymark played

Bosola. The production received generally favourable but lukewarm reviews. In 1971, Clifford Williams directed the play for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Judi Dench took the title role, with Geoffrey Hutchings as Bosola and Emrys James as the Cardinal. Dench's husband Michael Williams played Ferdinand, casting which highlighted the sexual element of the play's siblings.

In 1980, Adrian Noble directed the play at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. This production received excellent notices; it was transferred to London, where it won the London Drama Critic's Award for best play. Helen Mirren played the title role; Mike Gwilym played Ferdinand, and Bob Hoskins played Bosola. Pete Postlethwaite was Antonio. Mirren's performance received special acclaim.

The actor-centered troupe led by Ian McKellen and Edward Petherbridge chose Webster's play as one of their first productions. The production opened in January 1986 in the Lyttelton Theatre of the Royal National Theatre and was directed and designed by Philip Prowse. The staging was highly stylised, the scenic backdrop segmented, and the actors' movements tightly controlled. The result, as Jarka Burian noted, was "a unified, consistent mise-en-scene...without enough inner turbulence to create a completely satisfying theatre experience." Eleanor Bron played the Duchess; McKellen played Bosola, Jonathan Hyde Ferdinand, and Petherbridge the Cardinal.

In 2010, the production was staged for Stage on Screen at the Greenwich Theatre, London. It was directed by Elizabeth Freestone and starred Aislin McGuckin in a production that set the play in the first half of the twentieth century. In *The Guardian*, the reviewer noted that 'Much of the pleasure of this revival lies in re-encountering Webster's language...full of savage poetry.' The production is now available on DVD.

In July 2010, English National Opera and Punch drunk collaborated to stage the production, which had been commissioned by the ENO from composer Torsten Rasch. The production was staged in a promenade style and performed at a mysterious vacant site at Great Eastern Quay in London's Royal Albert Basin.

From March to June 2012, London's Old Vic Theatre staged a production, directed by Jamie Lloyd (director) and starring, amongst others, Eve Best. The play is also to be the first production at the new Sam Wanamaker Theatre in 2014.

Media adaptations

- Opera – Stephen Oliver's *The Duchess of Malfi*, staged at Oxford in 1971.
- Television – In 1972, produced by the BBC
- Television – *A Question of Happiness #1: A Question About Hell*, an adaptation by Kingsley Amis in which the names of all the characters are changed
- Audio – In 1980, produced by the BBC.
- Radio – on BBC Third Programme, 16 May 1954, with Peggy Ashcroft as the Duchess and Paul Scofield as Ferdinand.
- Radio – In 1988 on Australia's ABC, with Fay Kelton as the Duchess.
- Radio – on BBC Radio 3, 8/11/1992, with Fiona Shaw in the title role, Roger Allam and John Shrapnel.

- Radio – on BBC Radio 3, 12/10/2008, with Sophie Okonedo as the Duchess.
- Recording – (excerpts only) In 1952, read by Dylan Thomas by Caedmon
- Recording – (full dramatisation) In 1969 by Caedmon starring Barbara Jefford as the Duchess, Alec McCowen as Ferdinand, Robert Stephens as Bosola and Jeremy Brett as Antonio.
- DVD – 2010, Stage on Screen, with Aislin McGuckin (Duchess), Tim Treloar (Bosola), Tim Steed (Ferdinand) and Mike Hadfield (Cardinal).

In popular culture

- *Sleeping Murder* by Agatha Christie (Williams, Collins Sons & Co Ltd. 1976) uses the lines Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle; she died young as the novel's central refrain.
- A fragment of Scene 2, Act 4 of the play, with Struan Rodger as Ferdinand and Donald Burton as Bosola, is shown in the 1987 BBC TV film version of Agatha Christie's detective novel *Sleeping Murder*.
- *Cover Her Face* by P. D. James (initial copyright 1962) uses the first part of the quote as the title and as a comment made by the first witness on the scene of a young murdered woman.
- *The Skull Beneath the Skin* by P. D. James centres around an ageing actress who plans to perform *The Duchess of Malfi* in a Victorian castle theatre. The novel takes its title from T. S. Eliot's famous characterisation of Webster's work in his poem 'Whispers of Immortality'.
- In the culmination of John le Carré's *Call for the Dead*, Smiley is reported to have been quoting from *The Duchess of Malfi* in his delirium - "I bade thee when I was distracted of my wits go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done it", according to Peter Guillam.
- *Queen of the Damned* by Anne Rice uses the lines Cover her face. Mine eyes dazzle. She died young, as a quote from Lestat to his vampire child, Claudia.
- Stephen Fry's novel *The Stars' Tennis Balls* takes its title from Bosola's line in the play.
- *Hotel* by Mike Figgis involves a film crew trying to make a Dogme film of *The Duchess of Malfi*. The actors playing the Duchess, Antonio and Bosola are played by Saffron Burrows, Max Beesley and Heathcote Williams. The play is abbreviated and made into a 'McMalfi' script by Heathcote Williams.
- In the Oxford University Film Foundation's 1982 film *Privileged*, the students produce and rehearse lines from the play.
- Echo & the Bunnymen mentioned this play along with John Webster and *The White Devil* in their song "My White Devil" on their Porcupine album.
- Volume 2 of Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time* includes a visit to a performance of the play, where the minor character Moreland is in love with the actress playing Julia.
- On the program *I Kiss Your Shadow*, the final episode of the 1961 television series *Bus Stop* (of which author Stephen King named this specific episode as "...the single most frightening story ever done on

TV"), one of the main characters gives a rare copy of *The Duchess of Malfi* (that he purchased at auction) to his sister as a wedding gift.

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