02. Renaissance and the Elizabethan Period

The Renaissance reaches the British Isles with some delay, at the end of the 15th/beginning of the 16th century, after the Hundred Years War between England and France (1337-1453) and after the Wars of the Roses (the houses of Lancaster and of York fought for the English throne between 1455 and 1485). The wars ended with a union of the two parties when the winner, Henry Tudor (Lancastrian) married Elizabeth of York. Under the Tudor dynasty, England flourishes and the influence of the Renaissance can finally develop freely. Renaissance and humanism, coming from Italy, brought a number of new impulses that transformed the medieval society for good: a renewed appreciation for classical antiquity, a new focus on the individual and on life on earth (as opposed to the medieval concern for the religious and the afterlife) and an emphasis on education. The famous humanist scholar, Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, visited England three times for extended periods. Another important humanist intellectual in England was Sir **Thomas More** (1478-1535), a personal friend of Erasmus. Like Erasmus, More was a Catholic and remained a Catholic in the turbulent years of the English Reformation. He is the author of the famous *Utopia* (1516 in Latin), the book that gave its name to a whole later genre: a vision of a new social order and critique of current society. It was a groundbreaking work in the fact that for the first time the vision of a new social order is situated not in an idealized past, some kind of Golden Age of humanity, nor in a heavenly afterlife, but here on earth, in the present and in the future. More wrote the book first in Latin, as Latin was still the lingua franca of the intellectual elites of the day, but the Renaissance brought also a new impetus for the flowering of national languages, and particularly so in England. Translations of Classical authors started to appear and debates about literary qualities of contemporary works compared to the classical texts followed.

Hand in hand with the Renaissance and its emphasis on education, science and man as an individual went the Reformation. English Reformation was specific in the way in which the Church of England was separated from Rome: not on theological grounds but by the political decision of Henry VIII who needed a divorce. When Henry VIII declared himself the Head of the Church of England (1534), Thomas More, who was his Chancellor, resigned and was executed. Oliver Cromwell, Henry VIII's secretary of state, launched an anti-catholic campaign, dismissing all monastic orders. Before, Henry VIII caused William Tyndale, translator of the Bible into English, to be executed; after the separation from Rome, this same Henry VIII authorized an English translation of the Bible (the Great Bible, 1538). After the death of Henry VIII came the brief but bloody reign of Queen Mary with its strong Catholicism but things turned back in favor of the Protestants with Queen Elizabeth I who stabilized the country and under whose reign England flourished so much so that the second half of the 16th century has received the name of the Elizabethan Period. Elizabeth's reform of the Church of England was acceptable to most Englishmen, except the Roman Catholics, and except the Puritans, the more radically reformed Protestants. As a result of these religious negotiations we have a large body of religious and theological texts from this period, ranging from treatises and sermons to *The Book of Common Prayer* (1549), the fundamental piece of Anglican liturgy until this day, on the one hand, and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563), celebrating Protestants who were executed by Queen Mary. The most famous English translation of the Bible, the King James Bible, was published in 1611.

Besides theological concerns the Elizabethan Age, with its flourishing of the arts, including literature (and this must be seen in the context of the increasing economic prosperity of the time and also of the spread of the printing press), brought specifically aesthetic debates about the nature of art and of literature. Hence we have in this period the first literary theoretical work in English literature,

Sir Philip Sidney's essay called *The Defence of Poesy* (called in its earlier version *An Apology for Poetry;* 1595). Sidney (1554-1586) was a courtier, diplomat and soldier who died a heroic death fighting against the Catholic Spaniards in the Low Countries. He was also a poet but like Chaucer, wrote only in his spare time, and his poems and works were not printed until after his death. Sidney is famous for his prose work *Arcadia,* a pastoral-chivalric novel involving many different characters and love stories, mistaken identities and gender confusion and also allegorical commentaries on Queen Elizabeth's reign. Sidney is also the author of a sonnet cycle called *Astrophil and Stella* (1591), a collection of love poems about a lover (Astrophil – lover of stars) and his beloved (Stella – star). Following the tradition of love sonnets, this cycle very likely had some ground in Sidney's own unfulfilled love to a woman whom he loved and who was forced to marry someone else. Sidney is here joining the Renaissance sonnet tradition, cultivated most notably by Petrarch in the 14th century and developed by countless other poets throughout Europe. The **sonnet,** most often a love poem, but over time extended also to other topics (the religious or occasional sonnet), has a given form. Typically, it is a poem divided into an octave and a sestet with a set rhyme structure (typically *abba abba cdecde*). In English literature we get English variations on the sonnet form, so for example Shakespeare's sonnets are divided into three quatrains and a couplet (*abab cdcd efef gg*).

Astrophil and Stella
Sonnet 30
Whether the Turkish new-moon minded be
To fill her horns this year on Christian coast;
How Poles' right king means without leave of host
To warm with ill-made fire cold Muscovy;
If French can yet three parts in one agree;
What now the Dutch in their full diets boast;
How Holland hearts, now so good towns be lost,
Trust in the shade of pleasing Orange-tree;
How Ulster likes of that same golden bit
Wherewith my father once made it half tame;
If in the Scotch Court be no welt'ring yet:
These questions busy wits to me do frame.
I, cumbered with good manners, answer do,
But know not how, for still I think of you.

Defence of Poesy: Sidney does what the title of the essay suggests, he defends the role and importance of poetry (as representative of all literature) in society. He argues that poetry is the main source of man's cultivation; ever since the antiquity it has been poetry that has helped turn man from a beast into a cultivated human being. Compared to scholars and scientists, poets are working on a more universal level: they are not tied to particular disciplines but their reference is all of Nature. Sidney accepts Aristotle's classical definition of poetry as mimesis — imitation, and he also draws on Horace's classical understanding of poetry as an art whose purpose is to teach and delight. The mimetic understanding of poetry does not mean that the poet should merely imitate "what is"; rather,

the poet imitates Nature as he imagines it should be. As Sidney puts it: "[the world of Nature] is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden."

Sidney is writing under the influence of Aristotle's *Poetics* but he is also making an argument for literary qualities as understood by the Elizabethans. Good literature imitates nature — not nature as it is, but nature idealized. It provides moral teaching (following Horace: literature teaches by delighting), and literature must keep to "decorum" – a fitness of subject and genre and style. It is important to note Sidney's argument that the poet is a maker, a point he draws from the etymology of the Greek word; in other words, in artistic creation, the author imitates God's act of creation. So poetry is "mimesis," imitation, but not of nature as it is, but of ideal nature, and it is not a "mindless" copying of nature but an act of creative power.

Sidney also goes to create a classification of poetry: religious; philosophical (moral or historical); and a highest third category: the kind of poetry which is not connected to any given discipline, but that which creates freely. That poetry fulfils its goal best, it is the best way to move people toward good, toward the cultivation of their character; in this, poetry is more efficient than philosophy and history.

For these three [third] be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight; and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be; but range only, reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be, and should be. These be they, that, as the first and most noble sort, may justly be termed "vates"; so these are waited on in the excellentest languages and best understandings, with the fore-described name of poets. For these, indeed, do merely make to imitate, and imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move men to take that goodness in hand, which, without delight they would fly as from a stranger; and teach to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved; which being the noblest scope to which ever any learning was directed, yet want there not idle tongues to bark at them.

vates - Latin: poets, prophets

Then Sidney goes to create a list of literary genres, again with emphasis on their order from low to high, and he reserves the highest appreciation for heroic poetry. In the final part of his essay Sidney considers contemporary English literature: while he has some appreciation for Chaucer, for example, he has difficulties appreciating contemporary Elizabethan drama, mainly because it does not follow the rule of dramatic unities (of time, place and action), and he disapproves the mixing of genres (tragedy/comedy).

What stands out as surprisingly modern in Sidney is his insight into the artistic freedom of the poet:

Now for the poet, he nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth; for, as I take it, to lie is to affirm that to be true which is false: so as the other artists, and especially the historian, affirmeth many things, can, in the cloudy knowledge of mankind, hardly escape from many lies: but the poet, as I said before, never affirmeth; the poet never maketh any circles about your imagination, to conjure you to believe for true what he writeth: he citeth not authorities of other histories, but even for his entry calleth the sweet Muses to inspire into him a good invention; in troth, not labouring to tell you what is or is not, but what should or should not be. And, therefore, though he recount things not true, yet because he telleth them not for true he lieth not (…).

We can understand this as an argument for artistic freedom, exempting the poet from blame, but note how surprising the argument is: the poet never makes any pretense of telling the truth. In this the poet differs fundamentally from the philosopher, the historian, the scientist. But Sidney implies, in fact, is a claim that there is no single, secure connection between the work of art and reality —that poetry cannot be understood as a simple commentary upon reality, that literature, or the work of art in general, cannot be reduced to one single interpretation. This is a very modern (and postmodern) argument that we find fledging in this Renaissance text by Sidney.

Here we get some picture and some understanding of Elizabethan thinking about literature: the permeating concern with the Classics and the question of whether contemporary literature in English attains the qualities of the Classics; the concern with the moral aspects of literature; the concern with literary forms and appropriateness, levels of style (high and low artistic forms – epic and tragedy are higher than comedy and satire or the pastoral); the lingering interest in allegory which grows out of the theological conviction that everything in the natural and the spiritual world is interconnected through the Great Chain of Being and ordered by God to be in symbolic relationships. Also, we must never forget that Elizabethan writers never thought of writing their works in a literary vacuum. They would always engage and rely on the very rich and broad canon of literary traditions, from the Classics to the great English writers like Chaucer, great Renaissance authors elsewhere in Europe, and to the Renaissance liking of the emblem (a connection of image and a short saying, a proverb, a piece of wisdom), to folk culture, tales, songs, to religious literature of the time, etc.

Another very important common feature of Renaissance literature is the presence of paradox. Many poems from this time period pivot on paradox: Sidney and Shakespeare employ paradox frequently, as do the so-called metaphysical poets whom we will discuss later. Here is an example of a poem that works with paradox: a sonnet written by Philip Sidney's younger brother **Robert Sidney.** Robert Sidney was also a prominent man at the court, like his brother Philip, was involved in some diplomatic missions and had a long appointment in the Netherlands during the conflicts between the English and the Spanish. Robert Sidney's poetry was unknown for long centuries because it was lost; his manuscript notebook wasn't discovered until the 1960's. Here is an interesting sonnet of his that uses this central Renaissance device of the paradox, playing on the tension between absence and presence.

Sonnet 30
Absence, I cannot say thou hid'st my light,
Not darkened, but for ay sett is my sun;
No day sees me, not when night's glass is run;
I present, absent am; unseen in sight.
Nothing but I do parallel the night
In whom all act of light and heat is done:
She that did all in me, all hath undone;
I was love's cradle once, now love's grave right.
Absence, I used to make my moan to thee;
When thy clouds stayed, my joys they did not shine;
But now I may say joys, cannot say mine.
Absent, I want all what I care to see,
Present, I see my cares avail me not:
Present not hearkened to, absent forgot.

ay - ever; night's glass - hour glass; in whom all act of light and heat is done - done: finished/accomplished

The network of traditions that functions as a framework for Renaissance literature is also the background for the works of **Edmund Spenser** (1552-1599), perhaps the chief Elizabethan poet, certainly the most prominent representative of courtly poetry and an experimenter with form. Born in London, he worked as a secretary and aid to some prominent men. He spent about half of his life in Ireland because of his work; during an uprising his house in Ireland burned down and Spenser returned to London to die in poverty. His first publication was *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579), a collection of pastoral poems deliberately old-fashioned in language as an homage to Chaucer whom Spenser admired. The poems take us through the year and the seasons, drawing a parallel between the changes from spring to winter and human life. His most famous work is *The Faerie Queene* (1590), strongly influenced by the Italian epic tradition. This is an unfinished allegorical epic. The fairy queen represents, on one level, Fame, and on another level Queen Elizabeth herself, and the various books are allegorical representations of various virtues (holiness, temperance, chastity, justice etc). The story is set in Fairy Land, ruled by the Fairy Queen and inhabited by her subjects, Fairies and Elves, and also by Britons, like King Arthur, whose search for the Fairy Queen is a central motif of the book.

Spenser developed a special poetic form for this book, which later came to be called the Spenserian stanza, a complex nine-line stanza with a set meter and rhyme structure: eight lines iambic pentameter, ninth line iambic hexameter (called alexandrine), with a rhyme scheme of *ababbcbcc*.

The Faerie Queene is an ambitious work, trying achieve a synthesis of almost all values of contemporary society, and trying to do it in an appropriately complex form. With Spenser the complexities of Renaissance literature in English really reach their peak. *The Faerie Queene* of course joins the centuries-long tradition of allegory, which was a persistent literary mode from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. By this time the fictional possibilities of the allegorical mode have become vast: Spenser's story is full of marvels and surprises, the plot is very complex, parts of the story are borrowed from classical literature, from folk tales, from Christian theology; characters are allegories of virtues but there is also a level of contemporary political allegory, referring to Spenser's contemporary times and the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

In his classical study of love in the medieval tradition, C.S. Lewis discusses the concept of "courtly love" and its transformations through medieval literature. The ideal of courtly love (the whole concept of "Frauendienst," service to the lady, as it originated in French medieval poetry), as you might remember from the story of, for example, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* has according to Lewis the following four characteristics: humility, courtesy, adultery and a religion of love. With Spenser, Lewis argues, we reach one of the turning points in the history of the concept of love in English literature: in the final books of *The Faerie Queene,* courtly love is replaced by a romantic marriage. "In the history of sentiment [Spenser] is the greatest among the founders of that romantic conception of marriage which is the basis of all our love literature from Shakespeare to Meredith" (*The Allegory of Love,* p. 360).

Spenser's long poem *Epithalamion,* a wedding poem, an ode, also provides an example of this. Most likely it was inspired by Spenser's own love of Elizabeth Boyle, his second wife. Let's look at a part of it, three stanzas from the middle of the poem, where the groom, at the end of the busy wedding day, longs to finally be left alone with his bride.

Ah when will this long weary day have end,
And lende me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the houres theyr numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
Hast thee O fayrest Planet to thy home
Within the Westerne fome:
Thy tyred steedes long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,
And the bright evening star with golden creast
Appeare out of the East.
Fayre childe of beauty, glorious lampe of love
That all the host of heaven in rankes doost lead,
And guydest lovers through the nightes dread,
How chearefully thou lookest from above,
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many which for joy doe sing,
That all the woods them answer and their echo ring.

Now ceasse ye damsels your delights forepast;
Enough is it, that all the day was youres:
Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast:
Now bring the Bryde into the brydall boures.
Now night is come, now soone her disaray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lillies and in violets,
And silken courteins over her display,
And odourd sheetes, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my faire love does ly
In proud humility;
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her tooke,
In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,
Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brooke.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gon,
And leave my love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shal answere, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome night, thou night so long expected,
That long daies labour doest at last defray,

And all my cares, which cruell love collected,
Hast sumd in one, and cancelled for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see,
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From feare of perrill and foule horror free.
Let no false treason seeke us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy:
But let the night be calme and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad afray:
Lyke as when Jove with fayre Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome:
Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie,
And begot Majesty.
And let the mayds and yongmen cease to sing:
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

Jove - king of gods in Greek and Roman mythology (also known as Jupiter; Zeus in Greek mythology);
Maia - one of the Pleiades, Zeus slept with her and conceived Hermes; Alcmena - Zeus deceived
Alcmena to sleep with her and so conceived Heracles (here referred to as the Tirynthian groom)
aye - ever; sable - dark

This poem, too, has a complex structure. It consists of 24 stanzas, which correspond to the 24 hours of a day and night; it has 365 lines, to correspond to the days of the year; the first 16 describe the busy day and sounds from the woods, the last 8 stanzas are set at night when the woods are quiet. All this brings the wedding song from a personal level to a more universal one: the motif of the passing of time, the cycle of time, in which this Christian marriage stands as an event with eternal significance and permanence.

The Elizabethan Age with its prosperity and cultural flourishing also becomes a golden age of the theater. A number of Elizabethan playwrights created a very strong and rich tradition of drama, so that in the 17th century we have the full range of theater plays, some written intentionally for the court and some intended for a broader public. Theater gradually reached wider audiences: authors like Thomas Kyd or Christopher Marlowe, and of course William Shakespeare, wrote their plays with an eye for the general public, and no longer exclusively for the court. This helped to make English drama richer and broader: while the theoretical discussions about rules for good writing and rules for good drama were quite normative (there was general agreement, for example, on the classical rule of three unities in drama), the Elizabethan playwrights deliberately ventured beyond the classical literary norms. Starting in the 1570's, public theaters opened in England and attracted visitors from all layers of society: from members of the court to tradesmen and villagers. Obviously authors who wrote for

such theater had to work differently than those who wrote for the closed circles of the court or for private performances at schools (such drama focused more on performances of classical Greek and Latin plays).

Among those authors who wrote for wider audiences were Thomas Kyd and Christopher Marlowe. **Thomas Kyd** (1558-1594) worked particular in the tradition of tragedy, adapting classical themes for the new broad audiences. His most famous play is *The Spanish Tragedy* (written 1589), a revenge tragedy which has many connections to Shakespeare's later play *Hamlet*. The plot centers around a Spanish warrior Hieronymo, who revenges the death of his son in a clever way: to kill his son's murderer he organizes a theater performance in which he stabs the killer of his son. The play ends with Hieronymo killing also the murderer's father and finally himself.

Another very important playwright of this period was **Christopher Marlowe** (1564-1593), Shakespeare's contemporary (born about the same time as Shakespeare, but Marlowe died very young, at the age of 29; the story goes that he was stabbed to death during an argument in a pub). Despite his short life Marlowe wrote several tragedies which were very successful in the public performances. He is best known for his heroic characters: individual heroes who revolt and transgress some boundaries. These heroes might not be necessarily good; they are ruthless characters who seek power, money, or knowledge. Among Marlowe's most famous plays are *The Jew of Malta,* about the villainous Jewish merchant by the name of Barabas, who refuses to be violently Christianized and then plots a number of revenges against the Christians and the Turks on Malta. His schemes then involve double dealing with the Turks, with whom he allies against the Christians, but then he cheats also the Turks. Finally he dies tragically in a trap which he himself had set up for the Turkish prince. Even as he dies he does not repent but insults hatefully the Christians and the Turks alike. This tragic story of course has a satirical-critical dimension: the Christians, the Turks, the Jews are all equally cruel and treacherous. *The Tragical History of Dr Faustus* (printed 1604 but censored, so that we don't have the full text of the play) depicts the character's transgressive desire for knowledge; Faustus is another "overreacher," a scholar who gives his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge. Faustus, a character originally from German folklore, is discontent with the contemporary state of knowledge and science and he longs for "progress" in human knowledge. Faustus, however, unlike Barabas in the previous play, is a character with whom the reader eventually sympathizes and experiences his inevitable doom as tragic. After twenty-four years of knowledge, wisdom and experience, Faustus' time has come to an end; he has lost his soul to the devil and no late repentance can save him.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

was born in the town of Stratford upon Avon. Not much is known of his youth except that he got married and had a family, but we know that by 1592 he was in London, already as an actor and playwright. He was associated with a company of actors called the King's Men and eventually became not only their actor but also the main shareholder and playwright. His earliest texts were long poems but he is most famous for his theater plays.

- plays: tragedies (examples: *Romeo and Juliet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth*); romantic comedies (examples: *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It*); history plays (examples: *Henry IV, Henry V, Richard III, Richard II*); Roman plays

(examples: *Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Julius Caesar*); romances (examples: *The Tempest, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale*)

- the history plays especially helped to establish the reputation of Shakespeare as a "national" poet in subsequent history; they focus on kings from the English past and at the same time depict these characters as human beings, and explore the relation between the state and the individual (again, focus on the individual is characteristic for the Renaissance and humanism)
- Shakespeare's plays often combine both the tragic and the comic: there are comic characters in tragedies, and comedies sometimes deal with serious moral or social issues – this is part of the complexity for which Shakespeare is admired
- language of plays: modern English (not archaic), blank verse, metaphors, puns and allusions, songs included in the plays

YOUTUBE:
Shakespeare's songs: It was a lover and his lass by Thomas Morley; Jennifer Kampani with Voices of Music
3 min
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eePvx9LPXYU
a song referred to in *As You Like It*
Note the underlying traditions: pastoral imagery, spring as the setting for love

- **tragedies**: genre conventions: tragedy is a "high" genre, it involves high noble characters, and ends unhappily; typically involves deaths (murder and/or suicide) and the tragedy is caused by the hero's own mistake; sometimes tragedies are "problem plays" - there is no easy solution of the tragic event
- *King Lear* – a play set in ancient times of English history (before the arrival of Christianity), based on legends; a tragic story of the ageing King Lear and his three daughters. Lear trusts his hypocritical scheming daughters Goneril and Regan more than the humble and honest Cordelia and divides his kingdom between Goneril and Regan, leaving nothing to Cordelia, although she has always been his favorite daughter. Goneril and Regan gradually deprive him of all power and honor and he lives as an outcast, accompanied only by his Fool and his loyal Earl of Kent; at one point he becomes a madman. He pays for his mistake by losing his power, his only loyal daughter, and finally his own life: his loving daughter Cordelia returns to England with her husband, the King of France, to restore order, but she and Lear are captured and Cordelia's execution is ordered by Goneril and Regan. Goneril poisons Regan and Goneril commits suicide when she sees power slipping out of her hands, but it is too late to save Cordelia. Lear, who has by now seen through the falsity of his two older daughters and regrets having wronged Cordelia, cannot be reunited with her: Cordelia was hanged. Lear despairs over her dead body, in vain hoping to see some sign of life in his child, and finally dies next to her.
- themes: power and powerlessness, parent-child relationship, old age, deceit, madness, wisdom and self-knowledge achieved only at a tragic price

- Lear's Fool is a comic character who tries to protect Lear and reminds him of his tragic mistake; his replies are both comic/ironic and wise
- in its combination of bleakness and comedy (black comedy) and in the recurring motif of "nothingness" the play is close to the theater of the absurd as we know it in the 20th century. "Nothing" is Cordelia's answer at the beginning of the play which so displeases Lear that he disowns her, and it is repeated several times in the play. Nothing, blank, vacuum - this is what we find also in Lear's final words, as he expresses his desperate grief over the dead Cordelia:

And my poor fool is hanged! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more;
Never, never, never, never, never.

- **comedies**: genre conventions: lower genre, characters often include (though are not limited to) lower class people; often the higher characters speak in verse and the lower characters speak in prose; romantic comedies typically feature young lovers who must overcome some obstacles (like the opposition of parents, a series of misunderstandings or mistaken identities) and then are happily united at the end of the play; there are jokes and puns, witty repartees; comic effect is often produced by a reversal of expectations; sometimes there are magical or supernatural elements
- female characters – often beyond the traditional norms ascribed to women, gender blurring
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: example of romantic comedy with magical elements; set in classical Antiquity; three groups of characters: young lovers (two pairs who are eventually happily united: Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius), fairies (Queen Titania and King Oberon and their servant Puck whose magic intervenes into the human affairs of the lovers and whose mistakes complicates the lives of the young lovers, nearly mixing the two couples), and the "mechanicals" — workers who are rehearsing a play to be performed at the undesired wedding of one of the young lovers (a play-within-a-play motif); very complex plot, many things happening at the same time, there are mistaken identities, magic transformations, magic unpredictability and contrast between the high sentiments and manners of the lovers and the crass, bawdy low speech and manners of the mechanicals (who think they are being very high class and noble in their performance, but only betray they ignorance and boorishness); because of the fast pace, the density of the plot and the magical elements the play has a dream-like quality (following its title)

- **romance:**
- *The Tempest:* example of a "romance," a play with magical, fairy-tale creatures in which order and reconciliation is restored after chaos. The story is set on a remote island, inhabited by Prospero - a former ruler of the Italian city of Milan, who loved occult learning so much that he didn't pay enough attention to his duties as a ruler and was ousted by his brother and sent away on a boat with his toddler daughter Miranda. They were saved on an island and

Prospero through his knowledge of magic books and his occult powers has become a ruler of the island. He has two servants: Ariel, a spirit of the air, and Caliban, a monster character. Ariel is indebted to Prospero because Prospero saved him from torture when he came to the island, he serves him well and looks forward to being set free from the service, as Prospero promised. Caliban is the son of a witch who was sent to the island as a punishment and who died later. Caliban is something between a man and an animal, Prospero rules over him and Caliban is his slave. He hates Prospero. Miranda is now a beautiful young woman, and innocent: she has spent her life on the island with just her father and Caliban, she doesn't know anything else or anyone else. The play opens dramatically with a horrible sea storm in which a ship is wrecked. Soon we learn that the storm was planned and ordered by Prospero. The crew survives magically and they are magically guided to Prospero. The ship carried the king of Naples, Alonso, and his son Ferdinand, and Prospero's brother-usurper. Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love immediately (according to Prospero's plans); the treachery of Prospero's brother is exposed and Prospero is restored to honor and may return to Italy.

- play-within-the-play: Prospero not only orchestrates the sea storm with the help of Ariel, but with his help he also stages other "performances" and tricks: to bring the travelers to himself, to celebrate the engagement of Miranda and Ferdinand, to punish the treachery of two noblemen who plotted together with Caliban to kill Prospero. Through magic (which is closely related to art - Ariel performs various characters and makes music), Prospero exercises control over other people.

- Caliban - his name is closely connected to "cannibal"; a "native" character, monstrous, ugly, deformed, and hateful; yet at the end Caliban returns to Prospero as his rightful master. Written at the time when the British were already venturing into the New World and news were arriving of native inhabitants, the theme of colonialism resonates very clearly through this play, and the character of Caliban has received much attention from a postcolonial perspective.

- Miranda - her name suggests "miracle, marvel"; she marvels at the "real world" that has now entered her island. Her innocent comments have a very dark undertone when the readers realize that the world which she considers wonderful and marvelous is full of vice and treachery. Here are her famous words, as she sees the Italians come:

O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't.

What Miranda admires as a "new world" is not really new, it is the old world from which she and her father had to escape, and among the "goodly creatures" she sees are several men who are plotting murder. In 1932, Aldous Huxley used this line as a title for his dystopian novel about a future totalitarian society.

Sonnets – a series of sonnets; the first part of the collection was published in London in 1609, probably without Shakespeare's knowledge, and was not much reprinted in the following decades; *The Sonnets*

were truly rediscovered in the second half of the 18th century. Shakespeare's sonnet form is three quatrains and a couplet, in iambic pentameter. There are love poems and meditative poems – in several unmarked groups: poems to "a fair youth" (a young man who is encouraged to marry and have children); poems related to "the Dark Lady"; poems about a love triangle between two men and a woman; sonnets on the passing of time and the value of poetry.

Sonnet 66

Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplac'd,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill.
  Tir'd with all these, from these would I be gone,
  Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

YOUTUBE:
Martin Hilsky a Gabriel Andrews: Shakespeare Sonety; by LLionTV
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVO6M7Y9Orc
sonnet 66: watch from 1:13:00 (or from 1:20:35) to 1:23:00

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